

Notes from the Christian Living Series on **“Fasting for a More Powerful Relationship with God”**

Let’s begin with a little quiz on the subject of fasting:

1. Who was the first person who fasted in the Bible?
2. What was the longest length of time of a fast?
3. Who were the three people who fasted for 40 days each?
4. Do you fast on a periodic basis?

From those early years of ministry until this day, fasting has to become a lifestyle.

Major biblical characters fasted.

When you feel yourself growing dry spiritually, when you don't sense that cutting-edge anointing, or when you need a fresh encounter with God, Fasting is the secret key that unlocks heaven's door and slams shut the gates of hell.

Fasting is needed:

1. When you feel yourself growing dry spiritually,
2. When you don't sense that cutting-edge anointing,
3. When you need a fresh encounter with God,

In the life of a Christian, the discipline of Fasting releases the:

1. Anointing of God,
2. Favor of God,

Blessing’s of God.

Fasting is not merely going without food for a period of time. That is dieting-maybe even starving-but Fasting it is not. Stated simply, biblical fasting is refraining from food for a spiritual purpose.

Fasting has always been a: “normal *part of a relationship with God.*”

Prayer and fasting should not be a burden or a duty, but rather a celebration of God's goodness and mercy to His children.

Personally, I think it’s wise to start the New Year with prayer and fasting. (Matt 6:33)

The purpose of fasting is to draw closer to God, to pray that His will be done, and to study the Word and the ways of the Lord.

In these shaky times you and I can either be controlled by circumstances and the tough times – or we can partner with the Lord and through our prayer release His will into our lives and our situations.

Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God. As expressed by the impassioned plea of David in Psalm 42.

Psalm 42

¹As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

²My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

³My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?

⁴When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

⁵Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

⁶O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.

⁷Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

As David stated, "Deep calls unto deep" (Ps. 42:7).

David was Fasting. His hunger and thirst for God were greater than his natural desire for food.

As a result, he reached a place where he could cry out from the depths of his spirit to the depths of God, even in the midst of his trial.

Fasting brings one into a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord.

When you eliminate food from your diet for a number of days,
Your spirit becomes uncluttered by the things of this world
Your spirit becomes amazingly sensitive to the things of God.

By taking our eyes off the things of this world, we can more successfully turn our attention to Christ.

Fasting is not a way to get God to do what we want.

Fasting changes us, not God.

Fasting is not a way to appear more spiritual than others.

Fasting is to be done in a spirit of humility and a joyful attitude.

Matthew 6, Jesus provided the pattern by which each of us is to live as a child of God.'

That pattern addressed three specific duties of a Christian:

- A: Giving,
- b. Praying,
- c. Fasting

Jesus said, "When you give..." vs. 2/3

And "When you pray..." vs. 6/7

And "When you fast." vs. 16

He made it clear that Fasting, like giving and praying, was a normal part of Christian life. And in each case, He will reward us opening.

As much attention should be given to Fasting as is given to Giving and to Praying

The three duties of every Christian are:

Giving, Praying, and Fasting.

Solomon, when writing the books of wisdom for Israel, made the point that a cord, or rope, braided with three strands is not easily broken

(Eccles. 4:12)

Likewise, when giving, praying, and fasting are practiced together in the life of a believer, it creates a type of threefold cord that is not easily broken.

Daniel fast is eating only fruits and vegetables for a certain amount of time and abstaining from meat and dairy products. During our Daniel Fast we will spend time examining our hearts and work to align our ways with the way of the Lord.

Pastor Baker