

Spiritual Growth

Repairing & Rebuilding Firm Foundations In Christ

Session Nine

Fasting throughout the Bible

Opening Prayer

Overview

Explain to class: Throughout the Bible we see example after example of saints fasting and praying before God for certain issues going on in their life either individually or as a corporate body of people. We see **Esther calling a solemn fast** while she prepared to go before the king not knowing if she would live or die. **Daniel fasted to receive wisdom and understanding** regarding dreams and visions. **Nehemiah, Ezra, Joel and Jeremiah speak specifically of fasting** to bring about a desired result in the lives of people.

What Fasting Produces in the Life of a Believer

Fasting chastens the soul...

Ps 69:10 B When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, That became my reproach. NKJV

Fasting is a part of preparing ourselves for God=s service.

Jeremiah 36:6 B You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house on the day of fasting. NKJV

Fasting accompanies prayer (Daniel=s prayer for the People of Israel and the vision of Jeremiah)

Daniel 9:3 B Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. NKJV

God Himself commands fasting before restoration will take place.

Joel 2:12 B "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." NKJV

What did Jesus say about fasting?

Matt 6:16-18 B "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting . Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting , but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. NKJV

Some issues in our life and others will not come out except by fasting and prayer.

Matt 17:17-21 B Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting ." NKJV

Fasting opens the way for supernatural intervention.

Acts 10:30-31 So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing (the arch angel Gabriele) NKJV

Fasting strengthens our resolve and increases our self control

1 Cor 7:5 B Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control NKJV

The God kind of Fast...

Isa 58:3-7 B 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high. Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast? And, an acceptable day to the LORD?

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness,

To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out.
NKJV

Result of Fasting

When you do these things your healing will spring forth speedily. And the presence of God will rest upon you in a heavy way.

Types of Fasts

Pleasant bread - Certain types of food or things; anything that is enjoyable to us and steals our time from God, for example television.

Full Fast - No food at all, water and juice only

40 day fast - Synonymous with Moses on the Mountain and Jesus in the Wilderness

21 day fast - Synonymous with Daniel (Breaking Habits!!)

3 day fast - Synonymous with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ

Until 3pm during the day - Through the hours of prayer, 3am, 6am, 9am, noon, and 3pm

Closing Prayer

This week's assignment:

- ❖ Fast and pray for at least one day regarding a specific situation
- ❖ Journal the results