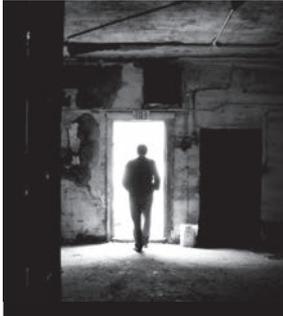


JOIN US ON THE ADVENTURE!



Setting aside time to pray and fast opens an entirely new world for us at many different levels. It provides a way to discover and develop your spiritual senses, to bring your natural appetites under control, and to experience greater spiritual clarity in your knowledge of God and yourself as we see ourselves in the light that God is. This dynamic process opens the way to a growing richness in our worship, answered prayer, and guidance by the Holy Spirit.

THE VALUE AND PURPOSE OF PRAYER & FASTING

1. Prayer & Fasting Deepens our Awareness of the Spiritual Dimension

- It's important that we realize the spiritual dimension of life we are transferred into at the moment of our conversion. This is described in Colossians 1:13 where Paul taught, *"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love."*
- This journey to develop our spiritual senses begins with a complete reorientation of who we are and the realm of the Spirit in which we live.

2. Prayer & Fasting Develops our Spiritual Senses

- **We Have Spiritual Sight**

"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling." –Ephesians 1:18

"We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." –2 Corinthians 3:18

- **We Have Spiritual Hearing**

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." –Revelation 2:7

- **We Have Spiritual Taste**

"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" –Psalm 34:8

- **We Have Spiritual Intuition**

"This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, 'Stand up straight on your feet!' And he leaped and walked." –Acts 14:9-10

"And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there" –Acts 20:22

- **We Have Spiritual Gifts**

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them” – Romans 12:6 (See also 1 Cor. ch. 12-14.)

- 3. Prayer & Fasting Enriches Our Worship, and Helps us Discover God’s Will**

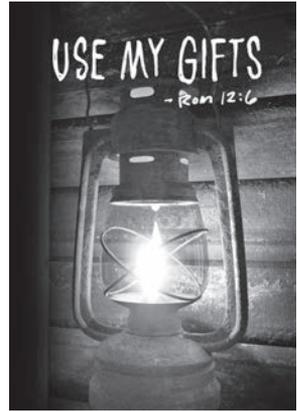
“As they ministered to [worshipped] the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.” –Acts 13:2-3

- 4. Prayer & Fasting Prepares our Hearts for Sincere Repentance for Sin**

“‘Now, therefore,’ says the LORD, ‘Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.’” –Joel 2:12

- 5. Prayer & Fasting Empowers our Intercession for Others**

“And they said to me, ‘The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire.’ So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” –Nehemiah 1:3-4



WHAT FAST WILL WORK BEST FOR YOU

Over the years I have chosen different approaches to prayer and fasting based on the type of work I have to do and how much time I can give exclusively to prayer and fasting. However, here are a few options to consider.

- 1. Fast from Distractions**

Fasting is primarily a special time where you set aside your normal routine to pursue God with as little distraction as possible. Regardless of the type of fast, apart from what’s needed for work or in nourishing your spiritual life, it’s extremely helpful to set aside all forms of media, which greatly enhances your focus during a time of fasting and prayer. At first this will be difficult. But as you replace the time you watch TV and use other forms of media and exclusively look for things that nourish your spiritual growth, you will love it.

- 2. Complete Fast – fasting from everything but water**

“And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.” –Matthew 4:2

- 3. Partial Fast – limiting nutrition to juices or one or two small, simple, healthy meals a day**

“In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.” –Daniel 10:2-3

4. Group Fast – Joining with others who share in a passion to seek God together based on a united purpose

“And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to ask help from the Lord; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.” –2 Chronicles 20:3-4

“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’” –Acts 13:1-2

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR FASTING

- It’s helpful to slowly reduce the amount of food you eat a day or two before the fast. It helps your body to adjust to less food.
- Eat healthy foods prior to a fast, i.e. whole foods, fruit, vegetables, and reduce fat and sugar.
- Be sure to drink plenty of water during your fast. It not only helps fill your stomach, but you can take advantage of your fast to cleanse your system.
- I find it extremely helpful to fast from the various forms of media other than what is necessary for work, or what helps strengthen and focus the core purpose of a time of prayer and fasting.

DEVELOPING A DAILY RHYTHM OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this time of fasting and prayer to begin integrating into your life spiritual discipline to maintain a daily rhythm of spiritual depth and progress.

Live your life in a balanced 24-hour cycle. Be sure to include the most important things in life that strengthen your love for God and others.



*taste
& see
that the
LORD
IS GOOD
-Psa 34:8*

- Develop a daily rhythm that includes a time and place for worship, prayer, and time to meditate on the wisdom of God’s Word. For this to be possible it’s vital that you maintain discipline over how much time you give to the many different forms of media that bombard us from our smart phones to our TVs. The following passages will help in developing spiritual discipline that deepens your relationship and intimacy with God through prayer and His Word.

1. A Life Enriched by Prayer

- A daily rhythm of prayer supported by an appointment with God.
“And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, [Daniel] knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.” –Daniel 6:10
“Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.” –Psalm 55:17
- Praying through the day as you process what’s before you and upon your heart.
“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers” –1 Thessalonians 1:2
- Daily taking advantage of praying in the Spirit as well as through the intellect.
“I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.” –1 Corinthians 14:15 (see 14:13-19)



2. A Life Enriched by the Word of God

- A daily rhythm meditating on God’s Word as you slowly integrate key words and concepts into your thinking and life.

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.” –Psalm 1:2-3

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” –2 Timothy 3:16

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” –Romans 12:1-2

CONCLUSION

God is equal-opportunity when it comes to developing our relationship with Him through a life of prayer in the Spirit and being informed by the Word of God. Whoever seeks Him He promises will find Him. Fasting, prayer, and meditation on God’s Word will position you to experience God not only intellectually, but in the realm of the Spirit. Remember, your spirit has the capacity to interact with God who is Spirit in deep and transforming ways. Go deeper! You’ll be glad you did.