

Part 10 Practical Guide on Fasting

Jesus said, “When you fast...”, not “if you fast”.

And when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, of a sad face. For they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men to fast. Truly I say to you, They have their reward. (Mat 6:16 MKJV)

It is said reality that the fasting part of our walk with Jesus has been undermined for some time in the Body of Christ. Unless some health reason prevents a believer from fasting, believers should become accustomed to fasting just as prayer and studying of the bible are non-negotiable part of our walk with the Lord.

Then the disciples of John came to Him saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, Can the sons of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast. (Mat 9:14-15 MKJV)

Do we need more scripture to understand what Jesus taught on the importance of fasting? But what is the purpose of fasting?

No one puts a piece of new cloth onto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up takes from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do men put new wine into old wineskins; else the wineskins burst, and the wine runs out, and the wineskins perish. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved together. (Mat 9:16-17 MKJV)

Please understand that the context of these words of Jesus are about fasting, for it is the continuation of the Lord’s response to the question of fasting. But in Jesus’ response, fasting is directly connected to the outpouring of the new wine which is the new covenant in Christ through the Holy Spirit. So, we see that when we fast in Spirit, we drawn closer to the Lord. Generally fasting has been used to deal with calamities in our lives, like sickness, mourning, spiritual warfare, etc. But Jesus here emphasises the importance of fasting for drawing closer to Him.

My first advise to you fellow believers are to make fasting a regular practice. Choose a day for fasting during the week and let it become a regular practice. All the issues and burdens that you experience, on your day of fasting you can make them an offering to the Lord.

The other purpose of fasting is for petition, for a particular issue. Daniel fasted for 21 days to petition for mercy upon Israel.

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no food for delight, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, until three whole weeks were fulfilled.
(Daniel 10:2-3 MKJV)

Just like Daniel prayed for his nation so we believers should petition in fast and prayer for any burden the Lord lays on our hearts.

Fasting is also very important for spiritual warfare purposes.

And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he departed out of him. And the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus apart, and said, Why could we not cast him out? And Jesus said to them, Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, If you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Move from here to there. And it shall move. And nothing shall be impossible to you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. **(Mat 17:18-21 MKJV)**

From these scriptures we can understand that fasting is very important when we need to persevere in spiritual warfare.

Lastly, fasting is important when we face an important decision, or if we struggle with sin, or if we face something we cannot overcome.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, So, then, separate Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them. Then having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they let them go. **(Acts 13:2-3 MKJV)**

We can notice here that fasting was practiced by the early Church. The Holy Spirit spoke during the time of fasting to announce the sending of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles. This changed the world upside down, causing the eventual Christianising of the

Roman Empire at the time. It all happened after faithful prayer with fasting offered to God.

This brings the important question of fasting corporately. A prayerful Church is a mighty fortress, but a fasting Church can shake the foundations of hell as evident from the example of Paul and Barnabas.

Here is a list of few important issues that one should always take them to the Lord in FAST and prayer, not only prayer:

1. If one seeks deliverance from demons;
2. If one struggles with sin that cannot overcome;
3. If one must decide for a marriage proposal or other important decision;
4. If one is called for ministry;
5. If one is facing a calamity too heavy to handle.

In summary the main purposes of fasting are:

1. For drawing closer to Jesus;
2. For petitioning;
3. For spiritual warfare and deliverance;
4. For important decision making;

If one is not used to fasting, or never fasted, I urge you to try light fast, like going without one of your three daily meals. As you become accustomed to this then try fasting with only one meal a day. From there you can try fasting on fruits or vegies only, and finally, if you are confident enough you can try fasting on water.

The most important point about fasting that I want to tell you is to always ask the Holy Spirit to help you. Remember that Jesus called Him a Helper that will come to lead us. He is here, in you, and ready to lead you in fasting.

Dear fellow believers, more than ever we need to fast and pray. The Bride of Christ is about to experience the greatest trial before the Lord takes her home. We need to fast and pray for nothing less than a miracle of revival if we are to defeat the scourge of lukewarmness in the Body of Christ.

Our next part 11 is on Practical Deliverance from Demons and Curses.