

Why Pray

Well, first of all, **WHY NOT?** There is something about prayer & fasting that rub the flesh the wrong way! First thing the flesh says is...DO I GOTTA?

ANSWER: YES! ==> well, that is if you want to be successful in God! If you want to be a spiritual failure...No you don't have to Pray & Fast.

We will assume that since your here, you want to make it!

PRAYER & FASTING ARE NOT OPTIONAL FOR A CHILD OF GOD!

These are issues of Spiritual discipline...they are a must: HERE'S WHY:

1. IT IS YOUR MOST POWERFUL WEAPON:

Mark 9:25-29 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, [Thou] dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And [the spirit] cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. (we'll come back later)

Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. (AND HE WAS SET FREE)

James 5:15-16 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Many battles you will face will be coming from Satanic forces & Devils. But by prayer & fasting you will overcome!

2. WE ARE TOLD TO PRAY:

I Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Romans 12:11-12 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them [to this end], that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

I Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Colossians 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

Matthew 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites [are]: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Note that Jesus said WHEN you pray... not IF you pray. Prayer was expected. But Jesus taught us to pray with sincerity... not for show like pharisee.

DON'T MESS AROUND, PRAY MEANING BUSINESS ==>BELIEVE!

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive [them], and ye shall have [them].

AS A YOUNG CHRISTIAN, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT A PRAYER LIFE IS WHAT BUILDS YOUR FOUNDATION:

EVERYTHING RISES OR FALLS UPON YOUR ABILITY TO TOUCH HEAVEN.

*** You must have a relationship with Jesus Christ.. Not just the church!

3. WHAT SHOULD WE BE PRAYING FOR?

A. Leaders... both spiritual & secular...

I Timothy 2:1-3 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, [and] giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and [for] all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this [is] good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

Did you notice that you don't start by praying for self? Gimme Gimme... We should be praying for those in authority, not just bashing them verbally!

***YOU SHOULD DAILY PRAY FOR YOUR PASTOR, HIS FAMILY & YOUR CHURCH ***

I Thessalonians 5:11-13 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. [And] be at peace among yourselves.

B. That your counted worthy to escape...

Luke 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

C. For the lost...

Matthew 9:38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

D. To overcome Satan...

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Romans 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

E. To be spiritually minded & overcome the flesh...

Romans 8:5-9 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

II Corinthians 10:4-5 (For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

F. To maintain a forgiving humble spirit...

Matthew 6:14-15 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD [is] to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

G. To keep from fainting...

II Corinthians 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward [man] is renewed day by day.

Proverbs 24:10 [If] thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength [is] small.

***** PEOPLE OF PRAYER ALWAYS HAVE THEIR REWARD!*****

Cornelius found salvation: Peter was freed from prison: TO NAME A COUPLE!

A FEW WORDS ABOUT FASTING:

Matthew 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (NOT IF!)

Like prayer: fasting must not be done for show... mean business!

First of all, fasting is always linked with prayer... fasting with out prayer is a diet... Nothing wrong with that... but it won't have SPIRITUAL PUNCH! *** YOU CAN PRAY WITH OUT FASTING, BUT NOT VICE - VERSA

Matthew 9:14-15 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisee fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

Jesus said there will be plenty of time for spiritual battle & heaviness... But while I'm here, I want you to enjoy it! (OH WE NEED THOSE TIMES!)

FASTING'S GREATEST WORK: = To help us subdue our flesh & be sensitive to the Holy Ghost. Notice God's direction came after fasting...

Acts 13:1-4 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted,

the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

FASTING IS CONNECTED WITH MOURNING:

Esther 4:3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, [there was] great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

Psalms 35:13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing [was] sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

Psalms 69:10 When I wept, [and chastened] my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

FASTING MOVES GOD:

Ezra 8:21-23 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God [is] upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath [is] against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us.

Look at what Fasting will do:

Isaiah 58:5-6 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? [is it] to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes [under him]? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? [Is] not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ANSWERED

A. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I FAST?

No set amount in Bible... But should be regularly. Paul gave a hint...

II Corinthians 11:27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

B. ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTS? Yes, several. Here are 3 basic types.

1. Partial: Fasting certain things of enjoyment but not total food.

Daniel 1:8-12 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which [are] of your sort? then shall ye make [me] endanger my head to the king. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

2. Normal: Jewish fast was water only... for 24 hour periods.

3. Absolute: No water or food. This is not recommended for long.

Even in the Bible, the longest fast of this type was 3 days... except for occasions when supernatural strength was given.

*** REMEMBER: you are not fasting for ego, or to appease God.

Your fasting to draw close to God. If you fail during a fast, and slip, don't let guilt destroy you... get back in it! If you come to a situation of complete weakness... eat some raisins or light fruit or honey. Then keep right back on it. You will notice how after 3 days fasting becomes simple after you get over the hump.

LET'S MARCH INTO SPIRITUAL VICTORY WITH FASTING & PRAYER!

I Corinthians 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except [it be] with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

We need to give ourselves to prayer & fasting. It will kill out this old man, and open doors to the spirit for us.

IF THE FIRST CHURCH NEEDED IT, HOW MUCH MORE SHOULD THE LAST?

This online Bible Study is offered by:



Website: www.thesanctuarycares.com

Phone: 423-833-8050