

2019 *Daniel* FAST

FIGHT

BECAUSE YOUR _____ IS WORTH IT

day 1. The Battle Is Not Yours

Daniel 10:12-14

The Live Oak Church Daniel Fast has become one of the most powerful times of the year for this ministry. We believe that God has ordained this time for us to come together as a corporate body, consecrate ourselves and set aside a brief moment in our calendar year to prepare for what He has next.

Fasting is a spiritual discipline whereby we deny ourselves some food to make room for HIM. This is an action that speaks a statement of truth... *"Less of what I want, and more of what YOU want for me."*

Daniel was fasting for 21 days because he desperately wanted to better understand what his God was saying to him. He consecrated himself to the Lord, disciplined himself and humbled himself to focus on what God was saying to him. What's interesting to me about Daniel 10:12-14 is that the Bible tells us that on the FIRST DAY of his fast, the Lord sent the answer. But the enemy didn't want that answer to get to Daniel by way of the angel. In an effort to stop the divine communication from God, the enemy dispatches his own fallen angel, the prince of Persia - a principality - to hinder the answer from getting to Daniel. For the next 21 days that was a battle taking place that Daniel didn't know anything about. It wasn't until Daniel *completed* his 21 day fast that God sent Michael to help the angel with the answer to be released to come to him.

Daniel is fasting and there is a battle, a conflict, taking place in the spirit realm. The answer was there. The angel had been dispatched. But it was Daniel's fasting that released the hand of God to fight for him in places that he didn't know he needed help.

I felt compelled to begin this first day giving you a word of caution as you enter into this fast. You're *"not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, AGAINST SPIRITUAL HOSTS OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES..."*. The enemy is fully aware that you mean business and that you are in waiting with a spirit of expectation as to what God's answer is going to be concerning the issues of your life that you are fasting about beginning

today! But I also want to encourage you. Don't worry. Don't get anxious. Don't doubt. Because it is your *fasting* that releases the hand of God to fight for you. I believe the answer has already been given. And though the enemy will *attempt* to hold it up, be encouraged that he cannot win!

This is a time to position yourself and to understand the divine movements of God. As you do, trust that God is taking care of every spiritual hindrance and every contrary force that may attempt to frustrate you. Be blessed today knowing that God is on your side, and the battle is not yours!

Today as you begin this spiritual journey, this is my prayer for you:

Lord, I pray for angels to be released. I pray for release of supernatural help. Dispatch help to your sons and daughters, not just natural help, but supernatural help. I believe God for angelic forces to fight on your behalf, to protect and watch over you, to minister to the heirs of salvation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

day 2. tune in

John 10:22-30

Have you ever been searching for a radio station only to be frustrated by finding static rather than music? You then focus to fine tune the dial again, and suddenly you hear a clear signal. The fact is, the signal always existed on the airwaves; the only difference is that now you have adjusted your tuner to the right frequency.

In our hectic lives, there are so many signals bombarding our senses that it can become difficult to distinguish God's voice from the deafening "static noise" of life. Fasting enables us to tune out the world's distractions and tune in to God. As we fast, we deny our flesh. When we deny our flesh, we become more in tune to the Holy Spirit and can hear God's voice more clearly. If you truly listen for God's voice, you will hear it. When you hear it, it will build faith within you.

If you desire to tune out the static of life and really tune into the voice of God, come to Him first and foremost with ears that are willing to listen and a heart that is ready to obey what he says. (Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 66:2) The more we practice being in His presence, the clearer and more recognizable His voice becomes.

- In this time of fasting, what is your mind tuned to?
- What distractions do you need to remove so that you can focus on God?
- Prepare your heart to hear the voice of God, and ask God to help you remove distractions that keep you from focusing on Him and hearing Him clearly.

additional reading:

Psalm 34:18: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Isaiah 66:2: Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the Lord. "These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word.

Isaiah 64:8: Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

prayer:

Lord, help me to tune in to You. As distractions and temptations come, give me strength to turn to You. Teach me. Give me eyes and ears to hear Your voice. Open my heart to Your Word. As I'm challenged

in the days ahead, please give me what I need to humble myself and honor You. Help me to take time to be holy, to spend time with You in secret, to trust in Your Word. You are the potter. I am the clay. Mold me and make me according to Your will. Thank You for being a God who I can trust. You are so faithful to me. I am Yours.

day 3. unwavering in faith

James 1:2-7: Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

What do you expect when you pray? When we pray with earnest expectation, we are exercising our faith. The earnest prayers of people walking in step with God can produce powerful results, and the most earnest prayers come from us recognizing our need for God.

There can be a natural tendency to shrink back when praying for the seemingly impossible, but we must remember that nothing is impossible with God. If we know the promises that God has given us, and understand His character and the principles by which He works, we can pray with confidence and trust Him for the answer. The Kings James Version of the Bible refers to it as being "*unwavering in your faith*." What has caused you to waver in your expectation with God? James reminds us that faith and wavering are actually contradictory – he says "nothing wavering". Know that God never wavers in His love for you. You can trust Him completely.

- What are you trusting God for in this season?
- How can you line up your expectations with the Word of God when you pray?

- Find promises in His Word that answer your need and write them down today.

additional reading:

Matthew 17:20: He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Romans 8:28: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 12:2: Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

prayer:

Lord, please help me to stand firm in my faith as I walk with You. You are my strong tower. I know I can trust in You. Guard and renew my mind, body, soul and spirit in Christ Jesus according to Your will. May each one line up with the Word of God. May my life be filled with faith and expectation that You are working all things for good. Give me faith to move mountains, knowing that You have promised to do the impossible so that You may be glorified. May my life, thoughts and expectations reflect Yours, my King and my God.

day 4. spiritual food

Psalm 34:8: Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the one who take refuge in Him.

Your Bible, God's Word, is life-giving, spiritual food. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, He said, "*Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matthew 4:4). Psalm 19 says this about God's words: "*They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.*" Proverbs 4:22 says, "*For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.*"

God's Word is life changing, miracle working, alive, holy, true, perfect, empowering, encouraging, trustworthy and healing. It guides us, gives wisdom, judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart, is a mighty weapon and is to be treasured! Jesus was the Word made flesh, our bread of life. When we open the scriptures, we begin to know Him better.

In John 4, we read about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman. When Jesus met her, His disciples had gone into town to get food. When they returned with the food, they found Jesus' hunger satisfied. They were confused by this, wondering if He had eaten while they were gone. But Jesus said, "*My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.*" Jesus was sustained spiritually by doing His Father's will. He then told them in John 6:27, "*Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.*"

These first few days are typically the hardest days of this fast. But it's important to keep in mind WHAT we are fighting for. As you do, remember that we are spiritually nourished by feeding on God's Word and by doing His will. Ask God to open your spiritual eyes and ears to receive His Word as life-giving and sustaining. Drink deeply from His Word. Listen

for His voice. Obey His promptings. Trust Him to sustain you as you pray and fast. Believe that God's Word is *"sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb."* He will do more than you can imagine.

- How can you create time to be in God's Word?
- Do you believe that it will nourish you and bring life to you?
- Ask God to meet you personally through this time as you seek Him. He desires to teach you. He delights in you.

additional reading:

John 4:1-34: The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well

John 6:35: Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

John 6:63: The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

Matthew 24:35: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

John 1:1,14 (KJV): In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Psalms 19:7-10: The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.

Ephesians 6: 10,11,17: Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12: For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

prayer:

Lord, thank You for nourishing me with Your Word. It is life to my body and soul. Help me to realize the power of Your Word in my life. Open my eyes and ears to know You better as I spend time in the scriptures. Teach me, renew me and make me strong in You. Help me to keep Your words in my heart and to do Your will. Show me how to use Your Word to bring renewal to my life and to bring others to You. I trust You to sustain me. You are more than enough.

Day 5. cultivating spiritual hunger

Mark 1:12-13: Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

Even Jesus disconnected from the world to fast and pray. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke speak of Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. They also describe other times Jesus pulled away from the demands of the crowds, His ministry and even His closest friends to pray.

There are times that we, too, need to pull away from the things of the world and focus on God. "The things of the world" can certainly include more than just food. In fact, in our world, it is more likely to be television, movies, Facebook, Twitter, cell phones and internet that keep us "tuned in" to the world. None of these things are wrong in and of themselves, but they are avenues for a mental and spiritual "crowd" to gather around us and drown out the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit.

Fasting is a means of disconnecting from the distractions of daily life and consciously choosing to bring God into greater focus. Giving up physical nourishment is the first step in engaging that process. If you think about it, though, we nourish our souls as well as our bodies. We do so through reading, talking, socializing, playing and leisure. When we fill our souls up with all those things, we don't feel a hunger for God.

During this time of fasting, we may feel physical hunger, but let's be intentional about cultivating spiritual hunger as well. Let's draw away from the crowds, and lay aside for a season the activities we use to nourish our souls. Instead let's allow ourselves to enter a state of spiritual hunger – a hunger for righteousness. Jesus said that being spiritually hungry is a blessed state, because we can be sure of being filled with food that truly satisfies our deepest needs. (Matthew 5:6)

During this time, you will find that being still before the Lord will set you in a place of increased strength, peace and hunger for God.

- Are you disconnected from the things that nourish your body and soul?
- What do you need to deny yourself so that this can be a powerful time in your life?
- Take time to pray and read God's Word during the time you would normally do what you are fasting from. God will honor your heart and commitment.

additional reading:

Matthew 5:6: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Matthew 6:19-21: Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

2 Timothy 2:20-22 (NASB): Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to

the Master, prepared for every good work. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

prayer:

Lord, give me a spiritual hunger that I have never known. Increase my thirst for righteousness, for purity, for holiness, for You! Break the power of sin and worldly habits that keep me from You. Pour Your cleansing, living water through me and make me a vessel that You can use to refresh others. Make me an instrument of Your healing and compassion. Use me in Your service. Help me to remember the brevity of my life and to store up treasures in Heaven.

Day 6. fasting with prayer removes unbelief

Matthew 17:18-21: 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, that 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."

When we pray and fast, we don't do so to change God or His will. By praying and fasting, we are the ones changed. Coming into alignment with God helps us curb our doubts and fears. When we pray and fast, one thing that leaves is our unbelief. It is when we have faith to believe, that we can pray with confidence and know that "nothing will be impossible" as we live to bring glory to God.

Ask God to strengthen our hearts to fully believe Him and believe His word. It is okay to recognize and acknowledge if you struggle with unbelief. It's the first step in allowing God to strengthen your faith and bring you into alignment with His plan for your life.

- What is it that you need faith to believe God for?
- Align yourself with God's Word and will during this fast. Ask the Holy Spirit to free you from your unbelief.
- Pray with confidence, knowing "nothing will be impossible for you."

additional reading:

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Mark 9:24: Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

prayer:

Lord, I confess my unbelief. I am weak, but You are strong. Increase my faith. Remind me of the relevance of Your Word for my life. I know it is powerful. Help me to use it to strengthen my spirit and to war against Satan and his efforts against me. Help me to take every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ. Make me an overcomer as I receive in faith the victory You have for me. I do believe. You are not finished with me yet. I praise You for Your grace and goodness to me.

Day 7. reliance on God

Romans 7:18-20 (NLT): And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong, it is sin living in me that does it.

There's an internal war that often wages within each and every one of us. Paul describes this so well here in Romans 7 – we desire to do the right thing, but in our own efforts, we don't have the power to and we mess up.

The good news is that we don't have to rely on our own strength to make right decisions. We don't have to be dominated by our sinful nature and end up doing the things we don't want to do. But the only way we can live this kind of life is by yielding to the Holy Spirit and relying on the strength of Jesus Christ, not our own.

When we're facing struggles, we must rely on God's power alive within us through the Holy Spirit. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit resides in us and places in us the desire to do what is pleasing to God. (Hebrews 10:16) The Holy Spirit always wants to do what is right. He always wants to uphold the perfect will of God, pleasing the Father in every way. It is our job to lay down our stubborn fleshly will and yield to the will of God. In that moment, the Holy Spirit will be there to help us in our time of need. Instead of trusting in our own strength, let's learn to yield to and become totally reliant upon the Holy Spirit.

- Are there areas in your life causing an internal struggle?
- Make a decision today that you will yield to the Holy Spirit and lean on His strength, not your own, to overcome obstacles of sin and selfishness in your life.

- Surrender and release those areas to God, knowing He will help you.

additional reading:

Hebrews 10:16: "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds."

Colossians 3:12-14: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

I Corinthians 13:2-13:

Ephesians 4:22-32:

prayer:

Lord, give me the desire to please You in all things. I confess I want to do things my way. Forgive my stubbornness and pride. Help me to choose Your way. I humbly ask You for grace and a willingness to yield to the Holy Spirit who lives in me. May my life reflect Your will for me. Help me to put away childish things and to put on love. Help me to stop actions that are harmful to me and others. Today I put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Give me grace to forgive as You have forgiven me. I love You.

day 8. fervent prayer

James 5:16b: The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Fervency speaks of our level of intensity, passion and persistence. Many times, we can lose our passion in prayer or stop praying for certain things altogether because we lose heart or give up. But God invites us to keep them before Him and trust Him for an answer in His time. (Matthew 7:7-11)

The Old Testament prophet, Elijah, practiced a lifestyle of fervent, intense prayer and he witnessed incredible miracles in his lifetime as a result. In 1 Kings 17:17-24, we read of a woman whose only son became ill and died. When Elijah heard the news he quickly took action and did what he knew best – he fervently cried out to God. Elijah fully believed that God could bring the boy back to life, and he didn't pray just once. It is recorded that he prayed three times for the boy's soul to return to him. He prayed fervently, repeatedly and he wasn't going to give up. Verse 22 reads, "then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived."

God honored Elijah's obedience and fervent prayers and brought the boy to life. God hears your prayers as well and will bring an answer in His perfect timing. But don't be discouraged or disheartened if the answer is not exactly what you expected. Commit to praying to God with passion and persistence, trusting the answer will come in God's perfect way and in His perfect timing.

As we close out this first week, continue to pray fervently for the main areas of concern in your life. Trust God to bring an answer as you journal your thoughts and inspirations through this time.

additional reading:

Matthew 7:7-11: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

Matthew 6:9-13: This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Ezra 8:23: So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

Psalms 141:2: May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

Matthew 21:22: If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

Acts 2:42: They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Romans 12:12: Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Ephesians 6:18: And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Philippians 4:6: Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Colossians 4:2: Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Peter 3:12a: For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer.

prayer:

Lord, teach me to pray. You have given me the gift of partnering with You in prayer. Stir my heart to prayer and give me ears to listen as You speak to me in the quiet places of my heart. Increase my faith as I trust You for the answers to my prayers. Thank You for hearing me. I seek Your face and humbly, persistently ask that You will do a mighty work in my life. Use my prayers to bless and encourage others. Teach me to praise You in my prayers. You are worthy of my praise.

day 9. spoken word

John 11:38-44: Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

The story of Lazarus' death and resurrection reflects the power of Jesus' spoken Word. He already knew in His heart the miracle that was about to take place, but His words spoke the miracle into existence.

While prayer is our declaration of our dependence on God, our spoken words can be the manifestation of what's happening in our hearts. There is power in our spoken words – whether they are used to build up or tear down. It is so important to keep our hearts filled with the truth from God's Word so that our words will produce good fruit.

As you seek God in prayer, ask Him for the words and discernment that may help someone today. Pray that your words would be encouraging, edifying and aligned with the truth of God's word. Building others up around us with our words allows us to be God's instrument – a vessel for His good work.

As God continues to fill us through this season of prayer and fasting, He wants to take what is now in our hearts and share it with others. How can you use the power of your spoken words to speak God's truth in the lives of others?

additional reading:

Isaiah 50:4: "The Sovereign LORD has given me a well- instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed."

Ephesians 4:29: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Matthew 12:33-37: "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Proverbs 18: 21: "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

Proverbs 12:18: "The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

prayer:

Father, Thank You that Your Word is life and power to me and to others. Your Word brings hope to things that appear to have no hope. May Your words take root in my heart so that I can bring life, power and encouragement to others who are weary. Place a deep hunger in my heart for Your words so that I can memorize and recall Your words when needed. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing in Your sight, oh Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

day 10. humble yourself

Matthew 17:14-16: "And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

What a great example of humility – this man approached Jesus and knelt before Him in the midst of a crowd. As the father approached Jesus, he believed that Jesus would bring his son relief. But even in his belief, his approach was humble and submitted to what Christ would choose to do. Looking further into the story, we find the father was also persistent and resisted taking offense. Though the disciples were not able to help him, he set aside his temporary disappointment in their failure and continued to seek after Jesus – the solution to his circumstance, the source of relief through his trial.

Being humble before God is realizing our need of Him, submitting to His will, pursuing Him and being confident the outcome will occur in God's perfect timing.

Be encouraged that approaching God with a heart of humility will always position you to find relief in Jesus. Don't be ashamed to humble yourself before God, even in the midst of others looking on. Offenses and disappointment may come but continue in your pursuit of Jesus. You may not get relief right away but know that God is never late and His solution is always perfect.

Prayer is a posture of humility. Humble yourself before the Lord each day and bring your cares to Him. You may want to consider how you present your body to the Lord in prayer. Getting down on our hands and knees or stretching out on our faces on the floor puts us in positions of humility that can help us focus. He wants to meet you where you are and answer your every need. Is there discouragement in your heart today? Write it down and release it to our perfect God.

additional reading:

Isaiah 66:2: "Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being? declares the LORD. These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word."

Colossians 3:12-14: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

James 4: 6-10: " But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

prayer:

Lord, I bow before You realizing You are sovereign, almighty, and all powerful. I thank You that in Your greatness You still love and care for me. Your ways and thoughts are so much higher than mine, and I acknowledge my need for You. May I have a meek and humble spirit like Jesus. Remove pride from my life, for I confess I am nothing without You. I submit my life to You once again. I pray You remove disappointment and discouragement from me as I trust in You and Your perfect will. Help me to be humble and gentle to those around me. Thank You for working in my heart. I love You.

day 11. clean house

Romans 8:5-6: For those who live according to the flesh, set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Have you ever looked up at your ceiling fan blades or in the deep recesses of your couch cushions and noticed the filth that builds up over time? Even though we might clean on a regular basis, there are times when we need to go... a little deeper. We realize that what appeared to be clean on the surface was in all actuality, quite filthy.

The same thing can happen spiritually. As we go about our daily lives, there are things that can build up over time. Even if we regularly worship, pray and read our Bible, the different pressures and cares of this world can quietly build up, and end up consuming our lives. Without even realizing it, we can lose our peace, our joy, and our passion for the things of God. Our service to God, which used to fill us with life and excitement, becomes a duty that we must fulfill.

Fasting is the deep cleaning that helps us take our mind off of the things of this world and instead have a refreshed focus on the things of the Spirit. It is an incredibly effective way to get into the nooks and crannies of our soul and bring all those dusty old habits, broken mindsets and rusty attitudes out into the light of God's truth. In fasting and prayer, our service to God returns to something we want to do rather than something we have to do.

As you pray and fast today, ask God to show you any areas where you could use a refreshed spiritual focus. Like David, in Psalm 51:10-12, pray that God will cleanse your heart, renew your spirit, and restore the joy of your salvation. Pray with confidence, knowing that He wants to fill you with His life and peace.

additional reading:

Psalm 51:

Psalm 139

Philippians 4:8-9: " Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

prayer:

Lord, at times I grow tired and lukewarm in my love and service for You. Forgive me for allowing the distractions of the world to take my focus off of You. Please renew the joy of my salvation and give me a fresh passion for You. I want to love You more than life. Thank You that You never grow weary and that Your passion for me is always secure.

day 12. what's your assignment?

Luke 4:1-2, 14-15: Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days He was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them He was hungry...Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him.

Fasting and prayer are helpful to receiving a clear vision of God's specific path for our lives. Many times following a season of prayer and fasting we can have a more defined understanding of the part that we play in the body of Christ and a greater sense of our particular spiritual giftings. (1 Corinthians 12)

This chapter in the Gospel of Luke describes the circumstances surrounding the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Notice that He went into the desert "full of the Holy Spirit." However, He returned to Galilee, "in the power of the Holy Spirit." Being full of the Spirit is knowing God and his character; walking in the power of the Spirit is when we know that we have the God-given strength and authority in our lives to walk out His will.

The power of the Spirit is essential for us to accomplish the assignment God has for our lives. God could be leading you to fast so that you can receive His specific instructions for your life. He will empower you, not just to know Him, but to walk in His power to accomplish what He has called you to do.

- Are there areas of your life that need more clarity?

- Are you walking in the power of the Spirit and living in God's purpose for your life? Write down those things God is speaking to you.
- As you continue your fast, pray that God continually reveals His purpose and gives you ever increasing clarity and strength to walk it out.

additional reading:

Psalms 37:3-7: Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

Isaiah 48:17-18: This is what the LORD says— your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a

river, your well-being like the waves of the sea.

Romans 1:1-2: Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then

you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

prayer:

Holy Spirit, thank You that Your power lives within me. I want to live more in Your power, so I ask that You come into my soul and fill me again. I do not want any sin in my life to block You, so I ask You cleanse my heart. I know You have a purpose for my life, but I don't always know what that is. I ask for a clear calling and discernment as I desire to live out the assignment You have given me. Thank You that when You call me to something, You also completely equip me. I pray that You alone will work through me and that others will see You in me. Thank You for choosing me and giving me a purpose. May my life shine brightly for You!

day 13. don't worry – pray instead

Philippians 4:6-7 (MSG): Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

Worry seems to be an inescapable fact of modern life. No doubt there is plenty to worry about: our future, the economy, global warming, war, disease... the list could go on forever! Sometimes it might seem that worry has even replaced Jesus as the focal point of our lives. Jesus Himself admonished us several times not to worry. And the great apostle, Paul, tell us in the passage above that there is an antidote to worry...prayer.

When we worry about something, we are spending energy on it, wondering what might happen, rehearsing the "if only's" and "what if's" in our mind. Why not take that same energy and refocus it on prayer instead? When we worry, we are simply talking to ourselves about our fears, but when we pray, we are taking those fears to God. We can't control the future, but in the words of Anne Graham Lotz, God is already there! He knows exactly what is going to happen and He promises to be with us every step of the journey.

As we continue this season of prayer and fasting, let's make an effort to convert our worry into prayer. As Paul says in the verse above, "let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers," and you will find that the peace of God will guard your heart.

- Are there things that you consistently worry about?
- As you go through your day today, recapture each worried thought and send it up to God as a prayer. See how dramatically your outlook improves when the peace of God is activated through prayer!

additional reading:

Proverbs 3:1-6: My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years, and bring you peace and prosperity. Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Jeremiah 29:11-13: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Isaiah 41:10-13: So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

prayer:

Lord, You know how often my mind goes to worry and not to trusting You. May my thoughts be quicker to turn into prayers to You, my Almighty God, because You know the plans You have for me, and they are plans to prosper me and not to harm me. Thank You for Your peace that surpasses all understanding as I place my confidence in You and believe You are at work in my life.

day 14. praying boldly

1 Kings 18:36 (KJV): *And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant..."*

The sacrifice referenced above was a declaration that Elijah was a servant of the Most High God. Elijah belonged to God, and he represented God to the people. However, Elijah's boldness was not a result of who he was; it was the result of knowing God!

As children of God under the new covenant of Jesus, we don't have to be timid or fearful when coming to God in prayer. We can approach God boldly. The Amplified Bible puts it like this:

Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it]. Hebrews 4:16

It's hard to imagine taking a fearless, confident, bold attitude when coming before God in prayer. Yet this is exactly what we are admonished to do! God has already settled the issue of our access to Him, but we can be assured, our access is not because of our own righteousness. It's because of what Jesus did on the cross. We can come to the throne in such outrageous boldness because Jesus was outrageously righteous! When we pray, we come to God in the authority of Jesus' name, and we can be confident that we will find grace, mercy and perfectly- timed help.

- Do you approach God with timidity of confidence?
- Seek God boldly today knowing you are fully forgiven and Jesus has made you righteous. When you approach God in prayer, seek a fresh revelation of who He is in your life.

additional reading:

Matthew 9:18-26: While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, "My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples. Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed." Jesus turned and saw her.

"Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed at that moment. When Jesus entered the synagogue leader's house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, he said, "Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. News of this spread through all that region.

Ephesians 3:16-21: I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of

Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

prayer:

Father, I thank You that I can approach You boldly and with confidence because I am righteous through Christ. Lord, please give me a boldness in asking from You. Nothing is too difficult for You, and I pray for a renewed revelation of who You are today. You hold all things in Your hands and have a perfect plan for my life. Thank You. I love You.

day 15. alignment with heaven

Matthew 6:10 (KJV): “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

We have all heard the phrase, “just like heaven on earth.” When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, in Matthew 6:9-13, He provided some insight into what “heaven on earth” might look like. In reality, heaven is a place where God’s will reigns supreme. If we want to have a taste of heaven on earth, then our prayer should be like Jesus’: “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done...” The purest motivation for our prayers is that God will be glorified and that His will would reign supreme in our lives, just like it does in heaven.

On a more personal level, we can pray that His will be unhindered in our own lives. Rather than imposing His will upon us, God gives us the choice to surrender to it with trust and gladness. As we yield to the Lordship of Christ over every area of our lives, we come into agreement with Him. We experience alignment with heaven and position ourselves to taste a little bit of heaven here on earth. His will then becomes what we desire and the thing we most seek after. We enter into the incredible adventure of participating in God’s plan to move His kingdom forward on the earth. This is where we find the most fulfilling and joyous life, but it all starts with one, personal “yes, Lord” on our part.

- What does God’s will “on earth as it is in heaven” look like in your life?
- Do the desires of your heart line up with the will of God?
- As we seek God together, let’s pray as Jesus taught us, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.”

additional reading:

Isaiah 58:1-12

James 1:27: Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

prayer:

Father, Your word is very clear about what Your will is. You desire for us to reach out to the lonely, oppressed, marginalized and lost. You have great compassion on them and desire us to be Your hands and feet. Please help my will to line up with Yours. Please enable me to care about others being lost more than I care about the comforts or problems in my life. May Your kingdom come, may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And may I be willing to bring Your kingdom to earth by the way I treat others around me. Please open my eyes to who You want me to bless today.

day 16. confession

Psalm 51 (NLT):

Consider the things that come between you and God, and starting with the words below, hold them up to God as a confession. Confession causes us to face our nature, and can be a frightful thing, but it is also a bridge to God. Sincere confession is always followed by God's drawing near in forgiveness. As you read, don't be limited by what is written here. Add your own words as you are moved to.

Holy and merciful Father: We confess to You... that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word and deed; by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. We have been deaf to Your call to serve, as Christ served us... We have grieved Your Holy Spirit.

Father, I confess to You my great pride, impatience, self indulgence, prejudice, contempt, cruelty and dishonesty. I confess my exploitation of others, envy of those more fortunate, lust for worldly goods and comforts, negligence in prayer and worship, and my failure to stand firm and be a witness to Your reality. Father, by way of the cross and passion of Your Son our Lord, teach me the joy of resurrection.

As the scripture says, *"If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong"* (1 John 1.9). Now is the time to search our hearts and to be fully known by God. As we focus on the cross and resurrection, we need to be honest with God, hiding nothing. Remember as well that there is no darkness too deep for God: His own Son suffered death on a cross under a greater burden than any have known before or after Him – He descended deeper into the darkness. There is no depth to which we may sink, where He has not been, or where we will be out of reach of the mercy of God.

Suggestion: For fasting from various media, continue the practices from last week and add to them if you can. Cut back on, or eliminate, TV, the radio, the internet, the computer, etc. And finally, whenever you have free time because you have given something up, be sure to give the time to God.

- Have you acknowledged your sinfulness to our Most Holy God?
- Have you repented and turned from your ways?

- Please spend time asking God to reveal the sins you need to confess. Name the sins and take ownership of them. After listening for His Spirit to reveal your sins repent and turn from those sins.
- After you are finished, please close with this prayer.

prayer:

Father, I often find myself buried under the weight of my own dark thoughts, and so fearful of these thoughts that I cannot even face them. But Lord, You promise that because of what Jesus did, I am not to be punished according to my sin. With this promise and the hope of freedom, God help me to face my own heart: shine Your light inside of me. I want to be known by You. Help me to let You in.

day 17. pride and humility

Our godliness can often be measured by the line between our pride and humility. Scripture tells us that God has placed a spirit of "fierce desires" in us. Pride can ignite these God-given desires into an occasion for doing wrong. Humility, on the other hand, makes room for God, who tempers and directs our desires, and guides us to lasting fulfillment.

Scripture tells us that Jesus humbled Himself and was obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (a more humiliating event could not have been imagined). So we practice humility as a way to follow Jesus, and to cast off all our ineffective, prideful attempts at self-promotion, self-salvation and self-satisfaction.

When we remember that Jesus' death is our only hope, and that all our efforts to save ourselves are at best short-term solutions and doomed to fail, we weep for our condition. But we also need to remember that humiliation and remorse, both appropriate responses to God, are temporary. Through Christ's resurrection, the humble are lifted up, and those who mourn are comforted with an everlasting comfort.

James 4:1-10: *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

John 16:19-22 (NRSV): *(Jesus speaks to his disciples before his death) "Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn... you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labor, she has*

pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

Psalm 23 (NLT): *A psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You welcome me as a guest, anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.*

- In what area of your life or in what relationship do you need to ask God to grant you humility?
- Is there someone you need to humbly approach and ask for forgiveness?
- Is there an area you need to surrender to God and no longer seek your will, but to trust in Him for His will to be done?

prayer:

God grant me the ability to see myself as You see me. Yet protect me from what I find in my own heart, for surely it is more awful than I can bear. Forgive me, and carry my burden of grief when I see my failings. And God, don't let me take credit for the good things You have given me. In Your mercy help me to see the pride in my own heart. Heal and renew my spirit; refine the passion of my heart; and help me to walk in humility.

day 18. passion for God

The day Jesus entered Jerusalem before His death and resurrection is known as Palm Sunday. This marks the beginning of the week of Christ's passion. The word 'passion' comes from a Latin word which means 'suffering'. The suffering of Jesus Christ on the cross has always been referred to as The Passion. There is even a movie by that name. In modern times, we have come to apply the word passion to mean any kind of strong feeling, or commitment, even though it more properly it describes a suffering for some worthwhile thing.

In many ways we have lost this sense of the word, in part perhaps, because there is so little of this kind of passion left in the western world. We ascribe the word passion to how we feel about sports teams, music, or our political views. Would you be willing to suffer for those things?

How different is the passion of Jesus: directed by God and willingly accepted. Jesus actively chose His path and the sufferings that followed. In Jesus we see not only the full depth of God's passion for us and the suffering that was a necessary part of it, but also the full depth of one perfect human's passion for God (in Jesus): obedience that led to death.

How do we respond to God's call to follow Him? Are we passionate? Or passive? To walk with Jesus, who said, "take up your cross and follow me," we must accept God's direction and choose to follow the path laid out for us. This is a path of certain passion (suffering), but also certain hope because of the victory we have through Christ's resurrection.

Matthew 10.24-32, 38-39 (TEV): *(Jesus teaches his disciples) "No pupil is greater than his teacher; no slave is greater than his master. So a pupil should be satisfied to become like his teacher, and a slave like his master. If the head of the family is called Beelzebul, the members of the family will be called even worse names! So do not be afraid of people. Whatever is now covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. What I am telling you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight, and what you have heard in private you must announce from the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell. For only a penny you can buy two sparrows, yet not one sparrow falls to the ground without your Father's consent. As for you, even the hairs of your head have all been counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows! Those who declare publicly that they belong to me, I will do the same for them before my Father in heaven. "Those who do not take up their cross and follow in my steps are not fit to be my disciples. Those who try to gain their own life will lose it; but those who lose their life for my sake will gain it."*

Psalms 130 (NLT): *A song for the ascent to Jerusalem*

From the depths of despair, O LORD, I call for your help. Hear my cry, O Lord. Pay attention to my prayer. LORD, if you kept a record of our sins, who, O Lord, could ever survive? But you offer forgiveness, that we might learn to fear you. I am counting on the LORD; yes, I am counting on him. I have put my hope in his word. I long for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, yes, more than watchmen wait for the morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is unfailing love and an overflowing supply of salvation. He himself will free Israel from every kind of sin.

- How are you passionate in your love for the Lord?
- In what areas do you actively choose God's ways and desire to live for Him?
- Or, do you passively follow Him?
- In what ways do others look at your life and see your passion and consuming love for Jesus?
- Ask God to enable you to passionately love and follow Him.

prayer:

Lord, thank You for Your passionate love for me that You would die for me. And thank You for Your passionate love for the Father, that You would obey Him, even to death. Lord, I am so often harassed and helpless, like a sheep without a shepherd—how can I find my way unless You help me? Have mercy on me. Lead me Lord. Come, and give me the strength I need to follow You in doing the Father's will. Bless the time I give to You this week. Pour Your blessing over me. Give me a passionate love equal to Yours.

day 19. love

On the Friday that Jesus died it might seem that the wrath of God has eclipsed the love of God. But it isn't so. Mercy triumphs over Judgment at Easter: love triumphs over wrath.

At the last supper Jesus washed the disciples' feet. He also gave them a new commandment, *"Love one another as I have loved You."*

But the disciples don't fully comprehend how deeply Jesus has loved them. After all they had been through, it took a king on His knees with a towel around His waist to prove to them the loving, servant heart of God (what if our president, or a king, were to wash the feet of a bunch of fishermen today? What if it were your feet?). But even so, Peter the disciple doesn't understand why Jesus would defile Himself in this way.

If that night Peter finds it hard to accept that Jesus His king would humiliate Himself by washing His followers' feet, he will be even more confounded the next day. For there will be another demonstration of how God loves on Good Friday, when the perfect love of God in Jesus faces the wrath of God against evil, and triumphs in the end. All for the love of us.

John 13.1-15 (NLT):

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He now showed the disciples the full extent of his love. It was time for supper, and the Devil had already enticed Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to carry out his plan to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he had around him. When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, why are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now why I am doing it; someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "But if I don't wash you, you won't belong to me." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!" Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you are clean, but that isn't true of everyone here." For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean." After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because it is true. And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor are messengers more important than the one who sends them. You know these things – now do them! That is the path of blessing. Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you. I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you. Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now

leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you. By this shall the world know that you are my disciples: That you have love for one another. (BCP)

- Are you washed in the love of Jesus?
- Whose feet do you need to wash in humility and love?
- In what areas of your life and in what relationships do you need His Spirit of love and humility?
- How can you serve others, especially those you are the closest to? How can you grant another the peace He has freely given us?

prayer:

Wash me clean Lord. I want to receive all You have for me. I am blessed and honored when You serve me; I am humbled by Your humility. Help me remember Your healing and cleansing. Don't let me forget my salvation. In darkness help me call on Your name. Jesus. In darkness, be the light of my heart; may I never be afraid. I am longing for Your sunrise, Jesus. In Your mercy, give me the gift of hope. And by Your love, help me to love others. Teach me Your way in the coming days. Help me to understand how You have loved me, and how You love me still.

day 20. it won't work Numbers 22:36-23:14

One of the truths of Daniel's Fast is that God had already dispatched the angel with Daniel's answer, but he was held up by a principality from hell. But as Daniel reached the end of his fast, God dispatched Gabriel to fight for him so the answer could be released. Daniel had no idea what was going on, and yet God arose on his behalf.

The same was true for the Israelites in Numbers 22. They had no idea that their enemy was employing spiritual warfare against them. Balak's employment of Balaam proved to be counterproductive for him, however. Balaam could only say what God instructed him to say, and as a result, every curse was turned into a blessing.

Balak's name means waster. He didn't know it, but he was wasting his time! And I need you to know as we approach the end of this fast, the devil has been wasting his time trying to hold up what God has for you! He's been trying to curse you and stop you - he's been trying to use weapons of destruction against you, all because he's intimidated by you. Your fasting greatly disturbs him. But all of his plots, plans and ploys won't work.

Years ago we had a member of our church deployed to Iraq. As he was lying in his bed reading a book, he told me that he could hear a mortar coming in that the enemy had fired on them. He said that it landed 18 meters from where he lay, but for some reason it didn't detonate upon impact. It was a dud!

Had it exploded, he wouldn't be here right now. He later told me that he immediately remembered what I said to him before he left - *no weapon formed against you shall prosper!*

I don't care how many weapons the enemy utilizes against you, it won't work! He can fire all the rounds he wants, but you have a hedge of protection surrounding your life. You might even hear it coming, but it's a dud!

I want you to be encouraged this morning that God is fighting for you. Angels have been dispatched for you. And no matter what the enemy tries, *IT WON'T WORK!*

Today, thank God for his divine protection and for fighting for you in unseen places!

day 21. Confirm It

Genesis 15:1-11

There's no doubt that every one of us desire to live the blessed life and see the things we've been praying about for the last 21 days come to fruition. Those possibilities can stir our spirits and motivate us to give God praise for what He's about to do. I believe that this fast is positioning us for the manifestation of those blessings. But this fast cannot be the conclusion of our vow. In order for things to come together, the fact still remains that you won't see the manifestation of what you shout about if you don't activate it.

God wants us to be conformed to the truth of His word. When you "know the truth, the truth shall make you free." When truth becomes reality, you will prioritize your life around that truth.

When Abraham was unsure of how God would bring to pass the word He had spoken over his life, he asked God how he could be assured it would come to pass. God's response was, "bring me an offering." In other words, establish a covenant between Me and you and that will serve as the confirmation that what I said, I will do. That one offering changed the course of his future!

Participating in this fast alone will not manifest the blessed life. You have to activate it through consistently maintaining your commitment to God. That means that tithing and giving must be a priority in your life in order to activate the word spoken over you. People that don't tithe operate out of self-effort. Those that do tithe are sending a message that they rely on God's effort. And God's effort is always more powerful than ours.

Active stewardship is the key to the blessed life. God has already downloaded a word of revelation into your spirit that you are blessed, prosperous, the head and not the tail, the lender and not the borrower. But that word doesn't become useful until you activate it.

1 Samuel 10:7 (NLT) said, "...when these confirming signs are accomplished, you'll *know* that you're ready..."

I believe that as we come together today for the culmination of this 21 day fast, the Confirmation Seed Offering that we are bringing could be the one seed that changes your life and confirms to God that you believe everything you're praying for WILL come to pass!

Today, act on the direction God gives you to sow to confirm his promise for your life!



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