



DANIEL FAST DEVOTIONS

21
DAY

January 6-January 27
2019

led by Pastor Michael Steve Brown

TVC
TRUE VISION CHURCH

A spiritual journey of
feeding your soul,
strengthening your spirit
& renewing your body
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Monday, January 7, 2019 TVC Devotional

Subject: Fasting

Title: Daniel the Poster Child for Fasting

In the Book of Daniel, you will find three different accounts of the prophet's fasting experiences. In Daniel 1, we learn that Daniel refused the meat and wine previously offered to Babylonian gods so that he would not defile his body, consecrated to our God. Daniel asked those in charge to allow him and his companions to eat differently, "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink" (Daniel 1:12). What was the outcome? The Bible says, "And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies (Daniel 1:15, 16).

Daniel 9:3 includes another account of the prophet fasting. Here Daniel writes, "Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes." This was probably a more typical three-day fast with Daniel eating no food and drinking only water. As Daniel prayed and sought the Lord, the angel Gabriel visited him and told the prophet about what was to come.

The third fast that Daniel writes about is in Chapter 10. Because he was upset about a dream, Daniel engaged in a longer, partial fast. "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. "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 10:1-3). From this we see that Daniel denied some foods, but still ate something.

These accounts, along with Jewish tradition and dietary laws, are the basis for the Daniel Fast. The Daniel Fast is not linked to any specific time of year, however at True Vision we choose to engage corporately in this fast in January for 21 days, as a way to focus our New Year.

The primary factor with the Daniel Fast is that it is a biblically based partial fast that provides sound guidelines for one to follow. Not only can the fast be a powerful spiritual experience, but it is also very good for one's physical health since sugar, alcohol, preservatives and animal products are all not allowed on the Daniel Fast.

That's why I call the Daniel Fast a "whole body experience." It's great for your spirit, your soul and your body!

Prayer Point: Pray that God help us to have a greater discipline over the thoughts and desires for a successful fast.

Tuesday, January 8, 2019 TVC Devotional

Subject: Faith

Title: Fasting not required but Divinely recommended

Matthew 6:16-18

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

Today is the 3rd day of our 21 day fast. We are volunteering to suffer so we may walk in the victory of success. There are 3 things I have learned on this journey as it relates to fasting. First of all, the temptation of food is always around us. Secondly I learned that people think we have lost our minds and are part of some crazy cult because we practice fasting. Lastly I learned that people, Christians even, do not understand and therefore do not practice fasting.

Food, one of the very things that God has given us to sustain our lives, because of our lack of discipline, has become the destroyer of our lives. Instead of eating to live, many of us just simple live to eat. Instead of eating food, our food is eating us for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Jesus tells us in Luke 12:23, "Life is more than food".

Know this, we are not crazy because we fast, we fast because we are Christians and our Lord, the Christ, fasted often. He started His ministry with a 40 day exhaustive fast. The Old and New Testaments lift up fasting as a practice and discipline. In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus is assuming that we are living a lifestyle that includes fasting. Listen to His words in verse 16, "...Moreover, when you fast...", Jesus is not telling us to fast here, He assumes we already are participating in this blessed and proven discipline of the church.

Sadly, fasting as a believer's discipline, is no longer taught and practiced in the Christian Church regularly. This is partly because we do not understand fasting. In truth, fasting is not a requirement for the believer but it is strongly recommended to the believer. This is what every able-bodied believer should be doing. Biblical fasting is "not eating" for a period of time with spiritual communication in mind. Fasting is not the end but the means to a greater end. It is not the goal but a ship that carries us to our God given goals. Our goal in fasting is always to get closer to and hear God's will for our lives.

Prayer Point: Pray that you stay focused and disciplined for our fast.

Wednesday, January 9, 2019 TVC Devotional

Subject: Fasting

Title: What's Your Assignment?

Luke 4:1-2, 14-15 NIV

"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 essential to receiving a clear vision of God's specific path for our lives. Many times following a season of prayer and fasting we 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 conclude your fast, pray that God continually reveal His purpose and give you ever increasing clarity and strength to walk it out.

Prayer Point: Let's pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to walk in the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Thursday, January 10, 2019 TVC Devotional

Subject: Fasting

Title: Adding on to the House of Prayer

Matthew 6:16

16 "Moreover, when you fast..."

Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7 comprise what is called the Sermon on the Mount. Why? Because Jesus gave this sermon, while on a mountain. More than a geographical elevation, significantly Jesus was bringing the people to a greater spiritual elevation. In this 3 chapter 107 verse sermon, Jesus addresses many subjects and among these subjects, He taught on prayer and fasting.

There seems to be a close relation between prayer and fasting. You will often see prayer mentioned in the Bible without fasting but you will hardly see fasting mentioned in the Bible without it somehow being connected to prayer. Daniel was a man of prayer, known to pray 3 times a day and the Bible records that he fasted. When Elders were appointed in the church, this appointment was with prayer and fasting. There was a prophetess named Anna who never left the temple but served God day and night with pray and fasting.

In this sermon on the mount, in verses 5 through 15, Jesus was teaching on prayer and right after the subject of prayer, He teaches about fasting. A coincidence? I think not. Like in a marriage, Jesus puts these two together. And what God has put together, let not man put asunder. Prayer leads the family and fasting is the help prayer needs to accomplish the assignment God gives us.

In connecting the two, prayer and fasting, Jesus uses the word, "moreover". The word moreover connects the subject of fasting with the subject of prayer. The word moreover means "in addition to". Jesus once called His house a house of prayer. Let's make sure we add on to this house of prayer with fasting.

Prayer Point: Pray that the Holy Spirit prompts us to pray as we fast, especially when we are tempted to quit or fail.

Friday, January 11, 2019 TVC Devotional

Subject: Fasting

Title: The Battle is not Yours

2 Chronicles 20:3-4

3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set [c]himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. 4 So Judah gathered together to ask help from the Lord; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

Isn't it funny that right after Jehoshaphat returned to seeking the Lord that the other nations came to battle against him? Has something like this ever happen to you? Have you noticed, just when you decide to straighten up and fly right, you began to be attacked? This happens because the enemy wants to stop our progress in God and turn us back to our old ways. Let's learn from Jehoshaphat, how to handle such things.

First he feared, but don't get it twisted, in his flesh he feared the enemy but more so he feared God. Here is how I know this, he did not give into the enemy, he sought the Lord first. This is what good spiritual leaders do. He first went to the Lord.

The second thing Jehoshaphat did was that he proclaimed a fast for the people. Jehoshaphat called the nation to express their humility and total dependence upon God through a public fast. Here it is again, the relationship between prayer and fasting. He sought the Lord, this includes prayer and then led the nation in a fast.

Here is the result of Jehoshaphat and Judah's prayer and fasting before the Lord. The Lord answered their prayers. As recorded in verses 13-15, all of Judah stood before the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord came upon a man named Jahaziel and he said this, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.

Through prayer and fasting, the people released their issues to God and God took the battle onto Himself.

Prayer Point: Pray that in times of trouble and trials we will turn to God and give Him our fight.