

## Fasting for spiritual breakthrough

### Isaiah 58: 5-8

5 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?

6 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?

7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8 ¶ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

1. To loose the bands of wickedness-freeing ourselves and others from addictions, or addictive sin.
2. To undo heavy burdens. To solve problems, inviting the Holy Spirits aide.
3. To let the oppress go free. Physically and spiritually. For revival and soul winning. To be able to identify with people enslaved to sin.
4. Break every yoke. Conquering mental and emotional problems that would control our lives.
5. To give bread to the hungry and provide the poor with housing. To meet the humanitarian needs of others.
6. Allow the peoples light to break forth like the morning. Bringing clearer insight and perspective to make crucial decisions
7. Cause their health to spring forth speedily. For healing, healthier life.
8. Cause their righteousness to go before them. That our influence and testimonies will be enhanced before others.
9. Cause the glory of the Lord to be their reward( or “ rear guard”). Protection from the evil one.

## **LESSON 1 FASTING FOR SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH**

Humility is said to be the foundation of the spiritual edifice, but in a sense inferior to that in which faith is called its foundation. Humility is the first virtue inasmuch as it removes the obstacles to faith -- per modum removens prohibens, as St. Thomas says. It removes pride and makes a man subject to and a fit recipient of grace according to the words of St. James: "God resisteth the proud, and giveth his grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

True humility must be differentiated from false humility. False humility consists of deprecating ones own sanctity, gifts, talents, and accomplishments for the sake of receiving praise or adulation from others.

Humility comprises the following behaviors and attitudes:

1. submission to God and legitimate authority
2. recognition of the virtues and talents that others possess, particularly those which surpass ones own, and giving due honor and, when required, obeisance
3. recognition of the limits of ones talents, ability, or authority; and, not reaching for that which is beyond ones grasp

Submission is to put your-self under someone or something. Tests or temptations are a challenge to comeout from under God. Satan does not want us living under God. A temptation, no matter how it comes, is always a challenge for you to do your own thing.

### Mark 2:18-20

18 ¶ And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

Mt 9:14; Lu 5:33

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

Fasting is a means by which we can worship the Lord and submit ourselves in humility to Him. It is not an end in itself. God does not love us anymore if we fast, or

fast longer. The goal of any discipline is freedom. Gal. 5:1 ¶ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. If the results are not greater freedom something is wrong.

Matt. 6:14-34

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: Mr 11:25-26; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Mt 18:35; Jas 2:13

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.

Isa 58:5

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

Ru 3:3; Da 10:3

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Pr 23:4; 1Ti 6:17; Heb 13:5; Jas 5:1

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

Mt 19:21; Lu 12:33-34; 18:22; 1Ti 6:19; 1Pe 1:4

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Isa. 58:3-4

3 ¶ Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Le 16:29,31; 23:27; Mal 3:13-18

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Isa 58:3-4 NIV

3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it?

Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?'

"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

4 Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists.

You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.  
God not pleased-Israel ignored the way fasting should change their lives.

We can't manipulate God. We fast and pray for results, results are in God's hands.  
We should become more attentive to God. Become more aware of our own inadequacies and His adequacy. Our own contingencies and His Self sufficiency.  
Able to listen to what He wants us to be and do.

We are looking for spiritual results that glorify God!  
A purpose of worship, which includes fasting, is to change the worshipper in ways to have social and interpersonal impact. We want transformation- This brings empowerment to change our world and the world.

5 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?

Le 16:29; Es 4:3; Job 2:8; Da 9:3; Jon 3:6; Zec 7:5

6 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?

Ne 5:10-12; Jer 34:9

7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Ge 29:14; Ne 5:5; Job 31:19; Eze 18:7,16; Mt 25:35

8 ¶ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

Ex 14:19; Job 11:17; Isa 52:12

1. To loose the bands of wickedness-freeing ourselves and others from addictions, or addictive sin.

Matt. 17:14-20

14 ¶ And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

Mr 9:14; Lu 9:37

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.  
Mt 21:21; Mr 11:23; Lu 17:6; 1Co 12:9; 13:2

Heb. 12:1 ¶ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

“besetting sins”- Habitual sinful behavior or attitudes that victimize and enslave people. A sin that takes away your will. Forced to play a game where you always lose and then can't quit the game. Some are in bondage to alcohol, drugs, sex, and tobacco addictions. Others struggle with compulsive eating, extra-marital affairs, and lying. Any sin that can't be broken with ordinary will power is a besetting sin..

John 8:44 44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. Satan is a liar. He lies about sin, we believe him instead of God. The three lies or compulsions about besetting sins.

I tried before, and can't break it.

I don't want to do this but can't help it.

I need an answer but can't find it.

Spiritual bondage grows from seeds that are planted in our minds. The seeds send their roots into our sub-conscious minds influencing our emotions, physical capacities and desires. Those who are in bondage may yet believe in God's omnipotence, however are hapless victims unable to break the power of sin, our old nature, Satan, or our addictive habits.

A person can change his desires and find the answer, but many believe they are powerless because they have surrendered their wills to Satan rather than to God. Satan controls their thoughts, he controls their lives. We are in bondage.

1Co. 10:13

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

When we take control of our physical appetite, you develop strength to take control of your emotional life.

When you make a vow and reinforce it with this kind of fasting, you move into strength of decision making.

2 Cor 10:4-5

The fast in Matthew 17: 14-20 states 5 principles- “A Disciples Fast”

1. It will bring you to a point of decision to be delivered. You must want it!

John 5:6 Do you want to be made well? God wants you to desire to be free from the bondage that holds you. He desires to build will power or “choice power” with in you. God wants us to love Him voluntarily and quit sinning voluntarily. Demonstrate commitment unto Him by making godly choices and acting on those choices. Not one big quick change- “Clark Kent into Superman”

2. Helps you to recognize an external power is responsible for your bondage.

Verse.18

Some believe they are an alcoholic because their father was an alcoholic.

Some have convinced themselves they were born homosexual.

External problems bring internal depression. Some say of themselves that they are worthless and give up.

Recognizing an external issue has made us weak is the first step in recovering control of our selves. By gaining control of your body through fasting, you can take control of your inner humanity.

3. Confess previous lack of faith. Verse 19, 20

It is a statement of faith to recognize what God can do.

It is also a statement of faith to recognize what a person cannot do.

Faith is recognizing God’s strategy and submitting to it.

#### 4. Specifically state your besetting sin. Verse 20

When you are fasting to break bondage, write out the specific bondage you want to break.

By principle:

You strengthen your will by stating what you want

You focus your energies on the problem

You build up anticipation to break the problem

You build up your faith in God to expect an answer

Faith is never a blind faith-such as walking to the end of a diving board, jumping into a pool, hoping there will be water in it. Faith is confidence. When you say “I believe” you are saying “I know”. When Jesus said, “If you have faith” He was saying, “If you know you can break this bondage it will happen to you”.

New Testament faith is believing what you know is so! When you write a faith purpose statement you begin to exercise faith. This faith experience leads to a faith expression (what you say) that leads to the faith event (fasting).

Important: fast specifically for a specific sin, don't list specific acts. Identify the bondage by its principle. Reliving the details can ignite the fires of lust rather than producing power to overcome it.

#### 5. Fast repeatedly until you get a breakthrough. Verse 21.

Fasting- verb action in the original language is continuous. Continuously fast to get power over “besetting sins”.

Sometimes you can pray once, God hears and answers. Other times you must continue to ask in faith before an answer will come (Matt. 7:7). Often times it takes time for conditions to set for fulfillment of our prayers. Example, we may pray for rain, but it takes time for rain clouds to form.

God sees our perspective; we need to pray continually and fast often to build up our faith and spiritual character. The longer we fast the more we obey God. The more determined we will become.