

LESSON 2 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?

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 rereward.

2. To undo heavy burdens. To solve problems, inviting the Holy Spirits aide.

Ezra 8:21-23

21 ¶ Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

Le 16:29; 23:29; 1Sa 7:6; 2Ch 20:3; Ps 5:8; Isa 58:3,5

22 For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.

2Ch 15:2; Ezr 7:6,9,28; Ps 33:18-19; 34:15-16,22; Ro 8:28; 1Co 9:15

23 So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us.

Before breaking down this particular fast, lets look into some principles concerning problem solving.

You can understand a problem better when you understand its cause. There are three basic causes of problems.

Changes

Differences
Circumstances

No one likes to change. It challenges our comfort zones. Even changes in the Church program causes problems with some people. The church in Acts fasted when a major change in church strategy was enacted.

Acts 13: 1-2

1 ¶ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Ac 11:22-27; 14:26; 15:35; Ro 16:21

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Nu 8:14; Mt 9:38; Ac 9:15; 14:26; 22:21; Ro 1:1; 10:15; Ga 1:15; 2:9; Eph 3:7-8; 1Ti 2:7; 2Ti 1:11; Heb 5:4

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
Ac 6:6

In the physical world all motion causes friction. The friction from motion in human relationships causes breakdowns and problems. Whenever you go through major changes in your-Marriage, a new job, about to loose a present job-stress and friction occur. This is the time for fasting.

Differences- Ethnic, doctrinal, or family backgrounds. Life philosophy-The best way on how to live life. What will you do and how you respond to problems that arise because of differences.

Circumstances- Strikes, lay-offs, downsizing, recessions. Buying a home, sell a home, re-location..

Three questions to ask.

How big is the problem? Who is involved in the problem? What does the family or all involved think about the problem?

How big is the problem?

Problems seem much larger than they actually are. Take time to think through the problem and its ramifications. Fasting helps shrink problems to be able to see them objectively, or brings the true significance of the problem to your forefront.

Determine and write down the basic issues. Define the problem through prayer. A well define problem is a half solved problem.

Who is involved in the problem? Never limit yourself to the eyes of the person who brings up a problem. See your problems through God's eyes. Pray to understand people's motives. Most problems are a conflict of attitudes rather than a conflict of circumstances. Often when our attitudes become correct, most problems solve their selves.

What does the family or all involved think about the problem? Fasting accomplishes two purposes-allows God into the problem and asks for His solution. Invites everyone involved to be a part of the solution.

EVERY BATTLE IS NOT WORTH FIGHTING.

2 Chronicles 20:1

Fasting develops three problem solving eyes.

Eyes to see the positive

Eyes to see the people

Eyes to see the facts

Eyes to see the positive- Do not enter a fast or prayer problem-centered. This will make you negative and unable to pray in faith.

Luke 17:1-5

17:1 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the **Lord, Increase our faith.**

Keep our eyes on Jesus as we run this Race!

Heb 12:1-3

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,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

We are mentally, emotionally, or spiritually blinded when we don't see properly.

Emotional eyes are blinded with tears.

Fearful eyes are blinded with terror.

Blinded eyes surrender their values, blame other people and make us guilty. Fasting will bring focus on your priorities in the word of God, open up to you the cause of the problem, and help us confess our faults and stand forgiven in Christ.

Problems grow when you lose perspective. You need a positive perspective toward the problem and God's plan for your life. Don't give in to people around you, to your problem, or give up your values.

Eyes to see people. Those who criticize your seeking God, resist your fresh desire to improve your life, or do things to undermine your faith can be part of your problem. Fasting gives you opportunity and strength to pray for them.

Eyes to see the facts. Look for scriptural solutions and write out those principles. How have people in the Bible or in the Church solved a similar problem.

Strive to keep a balance between head knowledge of the Word and heart expression of the Spirit. The right balance between the two will cause you to grow up-mature.

2 Tim 1:7

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

STEP-BY-STEP Problem Solving-

Get the Facts

Establish biblical principles

Evaluate the facts

Determine the various solutions

Choose a solution

Get the Facts- You make good decisions on good information. You make bad decisions on bad information. Without any information, you make lucky decisions.

Gather and collect all the info you can. Examine it and re-examine.

Evaluate the facts-Write out the problem from the top of your head. Then rewrite the problem from the bottom of your heart. There can be a difference from the top of your head to the bottom of your heart just as there is a difference from your objective analysis and your emotional commitment.

Find the problem, define it, refine it, and redefine it.