

General Word About Fasting

Fasting is a spiritual practice where we intentionally give up something in our lives in order to make space and time to seek God more passionately. It is an act of humility, coming before God and acknowledging that we do not live by bread (material things) alone but by Him and His Word. So, the primary focus and purpose of fasting is God and intimacy with Him.

A time of fasting is also an opportunity for us to examine ourselves, allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal to us areas of our lives that need to be transformed – and that which enslaves our spirits. In his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, Foster wrote,

“...fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David writes, ‘I humble my soul with fasting’ (Ps. 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear – if they are within us, they will surface during fasting. At first we will rationalize that our anger is due to our hunger; then we will realize that we are angry because the spirit of anger is within us.” (p.55)

When food and other good things are purposefully denied, the condition of our hearts reveals itself. Not only will we discover things that control us, but we will also see more clearly the “disorder” in our lives – we might come to discover we have given more attention and priority to things that really are not that important when seen under the Light of Christ. Fasting really is a journey of freedom - *from* things that bind and blind us *to* real freedom of spirit.

It is important to point out the importance of prayer during a time of fasting. As said above, fasting leads us to discover and deal with areas of bondage in our lives and hearts. But the taking off or shedding of enslaving things in our lives needs to go hand in hand with filling ourselves with more of Christ. Prayer gives space for the Holy Spirit to do that. In prayer, the Spirit does the work of revealing, delivering, healing, and transforming. As Foster says, “Fasting is feasting!” (p.55) So as you fast these next few days, make more time to be in God’s Presence in worship and in prayer. Let your hearts be opened to encounter Jesus and His truth.