

The Reset: Fasting and Prayer- A Renewal of Spiritual Power

Isaiah 58:3-5

³ ‘Why have we fasted and You do not see? *Why* have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?’ Behold, on the day of your fast you find *your* desire, And drive hard all your workers. ⁴ “Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like *you do* today to make your voice heard on high. ⁵ “Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one’s head like a reed And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the Lord?

Fasting (done God’s way) gets God’s attention.

Fasting (done God’s way) leads to breakthroughs in Impulse Control, which is akin to Self-Control.

The close friend of Fasting is Prayer- “to make your voice heard on high.”

Fasting is a humbling of ourselves before God.

What definite effect does fasting have on the spiritual life of a believer?

Matthew 17:14-21

¹⁴ When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying, ¹⁵ “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶ I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said, “You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.” ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not drive it out?” ²⁰ And He *said to them, “Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. ²¹ But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

In New Testament faith, Fasting and prayer together bring about a renewal of spiritual power!

How does fasting bring this about?

When a man or woman fasts, God deals with the deep places of the heart, where unbelief and sinfulness reside.

1 Peter 4:1-2

⁴ Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

While you are fasting, “suffering in your flesh”, God is working! He is uprooting and overpowering sin in your heart!

Just as Faith and purity work together, so do Unbelief and Impurity- one feeds the other.

Matthew 17:17

¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said, “You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.”

Fasting and prayer work in a continuum: Fasting prepares the heart for more of God, which increases faith.

Faith leads to Purity, which increases faith, and Faith and Purity together allow us to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 17:18

¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once.

Where did the faith come from?

Hebrews 10:22

²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Matthew 5:8

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

1 John 3:3

³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

In times of fasting and prayer, God grows faith in leaps and bounds, and deals with sin at its source.

We emerge, as Jesus did, to face mountains that need moving, but we find that now the power is present to move them!

Matthew 17:19-21

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" ²⁰ And He *said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. ²¹ But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Jesus addressed His disciples in the context of "When you fast....."

If we will set apart a fast to the Lord, we will know his nearness, purity, and power!