

Failure to Launch! ***Part 3: Fasting, The Way It Moves Us!***

Failure to launch is mildly funny as a movie script... Not always funny in real life... And can actually precipitate a tragedy!

Like Israel's experience wandering around in the desert 40 years because of unbelief! Like the Early Church stepping back into the "house" because new faith was enough... for them! Or a near tragedy: The demoniac boy/powerless disciples!

Matthew 17.14-21 "And when they came down from the mountain they were met by a large group. A man approached from out of the crowd and said, 'Lord, have mercy on my son, he is crazy and terribly tormented, and I brought him to Your disciples *and they couldn't help him...*' FTL!

When we are being called to step up, we step out on the Word of God, make our declaration and launch out in faith... God expects us to respond to Him and to life in faith!

The disciples... Were seeing something that was keeping them from believing what they knew... They could not help him! They brought the boy to Jesus and He cast the spirit out with a word... Asked Jesus why they couldn't cast it out... **"Because of your unbelief!" "But this kind only comes out by prayer with fasting!"**

The disciples... Had a doubt, not a demon problem... Knew what to do with demons... plenty of experience! Didn't know what to do when their eyes and senses were telling them to doubt! Part of the right group to get help! They brought the boy to Jesus! Needed to get themselves fixed!

That kind of doubt only comes out by prayer with fasting...

Fasting is... Revealed 55x in the Bible! Need to take a look at it! **Not a good way to diet/lose weight!** Will lose a pound a day on extended fast... But gain back a pound and a half... "You won't catch me off guard again!" **Not a good way to cleanse your body!** Lots of cultic/new age applications... Need a good cleanse see a proctologist... **Not menu restriction!** Refuses compromise/consecration **Dan 1** 21 day partial fast while "mourning" **D10** See his devotional fast! **D9.3 Is a part of every consecrated life!** "When you give alms, pray, *fast...*" **Mt6 Not a good way to prove your piety!** **Luke 18.9 Matthew 6.17,18** "Hypocrites have all the reward they're going to get!" **Only dietary deprivation w/o prayer!** Pray, during eating times/Soul food! **Not a way to move God!** God doesn't have to be moved, we do! And if He did need to be moved we wouldn't be able to do it by "not eating!" Not coercive activity! (Ghandi/British).

God moves in answer to faith... And fasting moves us toward faith!

Fasting is... A way to move us! An expression of sorrow/grief for death... Joseph for Jacob **Gen 50.10** David and Israel for Saul. **2Sam1.12** Job for his children. **Job 2.12** Shibah/seven. Drawing near to God to extinguish the sorrow/gain perspective/disposition. *Of grief and repentance from sin!* **Dan9.3ff Neh 1.4ff, 9.1ff Jonah 3.5** A preparation for a renewal!

"As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate Barnabas and Saul for the work I have called them to!' And when they fasted and prayed they laid hands on them and sent them out!" **A13.2,3** "And when they ordained elders and prayed with fasting they commended them to the Lord... **A14.23 (Ezra 8, Esther 4)**

A way to move us! To free us from the grip of our flesh!

“Fight for me against my enemies... I will rejoice in you... they rewarded me evil for good... when they were sick I humbled my soul with fasting... I behaved as though they were my friends...” **Ps 35** “Howbeit, this kind comes out only by prayer and fasting!” **Mt 17.21**
When flesh weak/spirit strong! **2C12.10**

Fasting removes our enemy’s primary audience – the flesh! We can use fasting to break the hold of our flesh on anything that is defeating our faith!

Fasting is... MOSTLY linked to “mourning,” a sense something is wrong/deficient/coming...

“they asked, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast often, but Yours don’t? And Jesus replied, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? *But the days will come, when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then will they fast.*” **Mt 9.14, Mk2.18, Lk5.33**

“There is a plague coming on the world and it fills us with sorrow...” **Joel1.14ff**

“And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast. And Judah gathered together, to ask help of the LORD...” **2Chron 20.3**

“I proclaimed a fast that we might afflict ourselves before God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.” **Ezra 8.21**

Fasting is... an intentional abstinence from food for the purpose of subduing our flesh in response to a rising sense of a looming problem, a need for direction, and greater faith to believe God for the greatest outcome...

Practicing Fasting... Pray first! This is not just a mental issue so it’s not just a mental decision! **Short term fast:** 1-3 days no special prep. Drink plenty of water/dilute stomach acids looking for food/take an aspirin/rebellion. Pray during the times you would be eating. Notice a clarity/force/focus. Chew sugarless gum for bad breath/no sugar. **Long term fast: 3 days to weeks:** ease up on food intake 1-2 days ahead. Drink plenty of water. Prepare for conversion to “stored reserves”/toxins (3-5 days). Pray/read Word/listen. Break a long term fast over a couple of days to avoid “issues.” Broth/soup/soft foods-fruit/regular menu

Disciples Fast... As a matter of discipleship... When holiness breaks down... When a nation is out of order... When an enemy has besieged us... When we need clear direction/choice... When the atmosphere needs to be cleared... Because fasting brings us closer to God!

Fasting is... A planned abstinence from food for the expressed purpose of subduing of our flesh so that we can draw near to God and from His vantage point gain perspective that defeats all doubts that faith will accomplish all things...