

Prayer and Fasting for Life and Awakening

WEEK 2: FASTING—THE BIG SHIFT—FROM ACTIVISM TO RECEPTIVISM.

GREETINGS

CONSECRATION

THE SONG: TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS.

RECAP

Abbot Lot came to Abbot Joseph and said: "Father, to the limit of my ability, I keep my little rule, my little fast, my prayer, meditation and contemplative silence; and to the limit of my ability, I work to cleanse my heart of thoughts; what more should I do?" The elder rose up in reply, and stretched out his hands to heaven, and his fingers became like ten lamps of fire. He said: "Why not be completely changed into fire?"

*Feeding empty with fullness
Indulgence aside
Tasting weakness
Shattering pride*

*Spiritual gasping
Ironic self care
Inhaling mercy
Exhaling prayer*

*Hunger for knowing
Beyond taste's delight
Divine craving
Soul's appetite*

*Love's yoke of longing
Dross churning within
Crucible burning
Heaven consumes sin*

*Deer panting for water
Soul feasting on God
Reveals crucified power
True authority's Rod*

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT FOOD. IT IS ABOUT FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER, AND THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Luke 4:1-2

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

Fasting is about learning to carry physical hunger in a way that physical hunger becomes integrated with spiritual longing.

The human condition is one of comprehensive brokenness and emptiness—of deep longing—of hunger and thirst—of need and want.

Psalm 84:1-3

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty. My soul longs and even faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

How are we trying to satisfy the longing of our souls and the cries of our heart and flesh?

Food is sustenance but food so easily becomes more than sustenance and moves into a source of comfort.

Fasting would return food to its rightful place in human life and restore and integrate the longings of our bodies for the Living God.

Spiritual longing is the key to the fellowship of the friendship of Jesus.

NOR IS FASTING ABOUT SETTING UP A DUALISM OR A DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE BODY AND THE SPIRIT. IT IS ABOUT A DEEP INTEGRATION OF THE BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT RELIGIOUS LEGALISM, SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM, PUBLIC PIETY, aka VIRTUE SIGNALING, or any other such thing. FASTING IS ABOUT PURSUING FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS, AND SHARING IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Mark 2:18-22

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. 20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. 22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT GETTING GOD TO DO SOMETHING. IT IS ABOUT GOD MOVING IN US, HIS AGENTS, TO DO MANY THINGS.

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT RELIGIOUS DEVOTION OR DISCIPLINE. IT IS ABOUT RAW HUNGER AND RIGOROUS HONESTY.

LUKE 18:9-14

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. **12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'**

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Luke 18:18-22

18 A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 20 You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'"

21 "All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said.

22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT POWER BUT POVERTY.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT ACTIVITY OR ACTIVISM BUT RECEPTIVITY AND RECEPTIVISM.

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT RELIGIOUS DEVOTION OR PIETY BUT HIDDEN WORSHIP.

FASTING IS NOT ABOUT GETTING GOD'S ATTENTION. IT IS ABOUT GIVING OUR FULLNESS OF ATTENTION TO GOD.

John 4:1-7; 27-34

4 Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and

baptizing more disciples than John— 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. 3 So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

4 Now he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

The Disciples Rejoin Jesus

27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 29 "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" 30 They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

31 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

33 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. 35 Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. 36 Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. 37 Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. 38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

