



THE

House

O F P R A Y E R

A 21 DAY PRAYER GUIDE

PASTOR SEAN DAVIS

How to Fast

BY P. DOUGLAS SMALL

IF YOU HAVE NEVER FASTED BEFORE, HERE ARE SOME QUICK TALKING POINTS FOR REVIEW:

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WAYS YOU CAN FAST - WATER FAST (NO SOLID FOODS, ALSO CALLED A BIBLICAL FAST), A PARTIAL FAST (SELECTED MEALS), A JUICE FAST (ONLY LIQUIDS), A DANIEL FAST (NO MEAT OR DESSERTS [SEE APPENDIX B]), A DESSERT FAST (NO SWEETS OR DELICACIES), A COFFEE-SODA-CAFFEINE FAST, AN INTIMACY FAST (NO SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS, BY CONSENT), AN ENTERTAINMENT FAST (NO TV, SPORTS, GAMES, ETC.), A 'TALKING FAST' (COMMITMENT TO QUIET FOR SPECIFIC HOURS), A SOCIAL MEDIA FAST (NO FACEBOOK, TWITTER, EMAIL, ETC). YOU CAN FAST FOR 21 DAYS, OR FOR THREE DAYS A WEEK, OR ONE MEAL A DAY, OR TWENTY OF THE 63 MEALS IN THE 21 DAY PERIOD.

(SEE APPENDIX A FOR MORE DETAILS ON WAYS TO FAST)

REMEMBER THIS, FASTING IS NOT ABOUT NOT EATING. IT IS A SPIRITUAL MATTER. IT IS A DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST THE DOMINATION OF THE FLESH OVER THE SPIRIT, AND THE FLESH AND THE BODY ARE NOT SAME. THE 'FLESH' IS THE DARK SPIRITUAL ENERGY THAT WE WRESTLE WITH FROM WITHIN. FASTING IS ALSO A SHOT FIRED OVER THE HEAD OF THE EVIL ONE. AND IT OFTEN WAKES UP VERY REAL RESISTANCE - FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT. DON'T OVER-SPIRITUALIZE. AVOID SENSATIONALIZING RESISTANCE, BUT EXPECT IT - FROM WITHIN, FROM OTHERS, FROM SITUATIONS THAT SEEM TO CALL YOU TO BREAK THE FASTING EFFORT, AND FROM YOUR VERY REAL ADVERSARY, SATAN.

THREE THINGS CONTROL ALL OF LIFE - PRAYER, FASTING AND GIVING. PRAYER IS OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD, TIME AND ETERNITY. IT IS THE ONE THING THAT KEEPS WORKING AFTER WE DIE. AND PRAYER IS A DECLARATION THAT WE VALUE GOD AND OUR USE OF TIME - BY TAKING TIME TO PRAY, WE MAKE ROOM FOR GOD IN OUR DAILY SCHEDULE. FASTING CONTROLS ALL THINGS INTERNAL. IT IS A CALL TO DISCIPLINE THE BODY, AND MAKE IT A SERVANT OF THE SPIRIT. TO SUBORDINATE ALL APPETITES TO THE GREATER HUNGER FOR GOD. GIVING CONTROLS ALL THINGS EXTERNAL. IT IS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORLD. IF THERE IS SOMETHING WE CANNOT GIVE AWAY, WE DON'T OWN IT, IT OWNS US. IN THESE THREE DISCIPLINES IS THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN LIFE. IN PRAYER, WE CONNECT WITH GOD. IN FASTING, WE SUBMIT OUR WILL TO THE WILL OF THE FATHER. IN GIVING, WE ENGAGE THE WORLD.

FASTING IS NOT DIETING. DURING THE TIME WE WOULD HAVE EATEN - WE ARE TO PRAY! AND FOOD WE WOULD HAVE EATEN, WE ARE TO GIVE AWAY. THUS - ALL THREE ELEMENTS COME TOGETHER. SEEKING GOD (PRAYER). SURRENDERING TO HIM (FASTING). AND SERVING HIM (GIVING). SO THE ROAD YOU ARE NOW TRAVELING IS TRANSFORMING.

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HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT.

1. GREAT DISCIPLINE WILL BE REQUIRED – BUT THAT IS THE PATH TO BECOMING A TRUE DISCIPLE.
2. JUST SAYING ‘NO,’ SO CONSISTENTLY TO TEMPTATION WILL PRESS YOU TO GREATER SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY. THE GOAL IS NOT TO MERELY SAY ‘NO!’ TO THE WORLD AND THE FLESH, BUT TO SAY, ‘YES!’ TO THE WILL AND WAY OF GOD.
3. AS DISTRACTIONS ARE PUSHED ASIDE AND GOD IS PURSUED DAILY, SPIRITUAL CLARITY WILL INCREASE. DISCERNMENT WILL GROW.
4. AS YOU ‘DRAW NEAR TO GOD’ EXPECT HIM TO REVEAL HIMSELF. THE SCRIPTURES MAY COME ALIVE WITH NEW CLARITY. YOU SHOULD FIND YOURSELF PRAYING MORE, PRAYING THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BECOMING MORE AWARE OF GOD’S PRESENCE.
5. FAITH SHOULD INCREASE AS WILL A SENSE OF JOY. IF YOU ARE ON A TOTAL FAST, THE FIRST THREE DAYS ARE BRUTAL. BEYOND THE 5TH DAY, YOU FEEL RENEWED ENERGY. YOUR BODY BEGINS TO PURGE ITSELF; AND SO DOES THE SPIRIT. YOU WILL EMERGE FROM THE FOG OF HUNGER AND EARLY SPIRITUAL CONFUSION. THE PHYSICAL PANGS LEAVE YOU, AND THERE IS A FRESH APPETITE FOR THINGS SPIRITUAL.
6. THE TRAP NOW IS PRIDE. OVERCONFIDENCE. YOU ARE DEFEATING THE FLESH, SAYING ‘NO’ TO THE WORLD. WATCH OUT FOR THE THIRD NEMESIS. EXPECT UNCANNY RESISTANCE. STAY COMMITTED. THE BEST IS YET TO COME.
7. FASTING IS ONLY A TOOL, A GATEWAY, A PLATFORM TO INVERT THE DYNAMIC OF OUR LIVES FROM BEING SO WORLDLY AND SELF-CENTERED, TO BEING CONSCIOUS OF ANOTHER WORLD. IT IS NOT AN END. IT IS A DOORWAY INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION, A WAY OF LIVING A SPIRIT-DIRECTED LIFE. DON’T FAST, AND SIGH, “I’M GLAD THAT IS OVER WITH.” IT IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE THAT YOU SEEK, BUT A LIFE-STYLE CHANGE.

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CAUTIONS

JUMPING INTO A FAST CAN BE BRUTAL. YOU MAY EXPERIENCE WITHDRAWAL FROM CAFFEINE ABSTINENCE, SUGAR AND SWEETS. YOUR BODY MAY REACT RATHER ABRUPTLY. FOR SOME, PREPARING THEMSELVES FOR A FAST IS GOOD ADVICE. CREATE AN APPROACH RAMP TO THE FAST. DAYS BEFORE, EASE OFF ADDICTIVE BEVERAGES AND FOOD.

A FAST GIVES YOUR BODY A CHANCE TO CLEANSE ITSELF OF TOXINS. YOU MAY EXPERIENCE HEADACHES – EVEN MIGRAINE-LIKE MOMENTS. HUNGER PANGS ARE NATURAL, BUT EASE UP AFTER ABOUT THREE DAYS. AT TIMES, THEY DISAPPEAR ALMOST COMPLETELY. METABOLISM CHANGES AND YOUR BODY DRAWS ON ITS RESERVES, SO LIMIT STRENUOUS EXERCISE AND ACTIVITIES. TAKE TIME FOR EXTRA REST. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER. DURING A FAST, THE LIVER – THE BODY'S FILTER – IS WORKING OVERTIME. AND IT NEEDS LIQUIDS, ESPECIALLY WATER TO FUNCTION WELL. DON'T CONFUSE FRUIT 'JUICES' WITH FRUIT 'PUNCH.' THE LATTER IS LOADED WITH SUGAR, MORE TOXINS, AND LACKING IN GENUINE NUTRITION. IT CREATES A PROBLEM RATHER THAN SOLVE ONE. YOUR BODY WILL OFTEN TELL YOU WHEN IT NEEDS TO BREAK THE FAST. IF SEVERE HUNGER PANGS RETURN BEFORE THE 21 DAYS ARE OVER, AND YOU ARE EXPERIENCING FAINTNESS OR OTHER PHYSICAL PROBLEMS, CONSIDER – FOR HEALTH REASONS – BREAKING THE FAST.

IF YOU ARE PREGNANT OR NURSING, REMEMBER THAT YOUR VOLUNTARY CHOICE TO FAST IS A FAST FORCED ON ANOTHER – AND THAT IS VIOLATION OF AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE. PREGNANT AND NURSING MOMS NEED TO CONSULT A PEDIATRICIAN BEFORE EVEN A PARTIAL FAST. IF YOU ARE DIABETIC OR HAVE OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS, FOR EXAMPLE, AN EATING DISORDER – DON'T TEMPT FATE. BE CREATIVE, BUT WISE. GET THE ADVICE OF A GODLY PHYSICIAN WHO UNDERSTANDS FASTING, AND LISTEN TO SOUND RECOMMENDATIONS.

WHEN YOU COMPLETE YOUR FAST, ESPECIALLY A TOTAL FAST – EXERCISE RESTRAINT. GOING FROM FASTING TO FEASTING CAN BE TREACHEROUS. YOUR BODY MAY REACT VIOLENTLY. START WITH LIQUIDS. MOVE TO SEMI-SOLIDS. EASE BACK TOWARD A NORMAL MEAL. YOU MAY WANT TO TAKE AS MUCH AS THREE DAYS TO MAKE THE TRANSITION. SOME THINGS, YOU MAY WANT TO PERMANENTLY FOREGO. LIFE DOES GO ON WITHOUT COFFEE AND SUGAR-WEIGHED DESSERTS. CONSIDER MAKING FASTING A REGULAR PART OF YOUR LIFE – ONE DAY A WEEK, ONE WEEK OUT OF THE MONTH, ONE MEAL A DAY FOR A THREE-DAY PERIOD WEEKLY DURING WHICH TIME YOU REGULARLY PRAY.

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READY TO BEGIN?

1. HAVE A PLAN-KNOW YOUR FASTING CAPACITY. IF YOU HAVE NEVER FASTED, YOU MAY NOT WANT TO TAKE ON A 21-DAY SOLID FOOD FAST. THEN AGAIN? CHOOSE WHAT FITS YOU AFTER PRAYER.
2. CHOOSE THE TYPE OF FAST YOU WILL EMPLOY. GET THE FOODS LINED UP IF IT IS A PARTIAL FAST.
3. MAKE THE NECESSARY CALENDAR ADJUSTMENTS - LUNCHES THAT NEED TO BE CHANGED. TRAVEL THAT MIGHT NEED TO WAIT.
4. MONITOR AND PACE YOURSELF PHYSICALLY. THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO LEARN TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BODY, WITHOUT LETTING IT CONTROL YOU. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IF YOU HAVE ANY PHYSICAL CHALLENGES OR HEALTH CONCERNS.
5. DON'T BE LEGALISTIC. BE SENSIBLE. YOU MAY CHOOSE IN THE COURSE OF THE FAST, TO INTENSIFY YOUR EFFORT-TO MOVE TO A MORE RIGOROUS SCHEDULE; OR YOU MAY NEED TO LACE INTO YOUR FAST SOME GRACE! REMEMBER, THE GOAL IS NOT FASTING - IT IS A DEEPER ENCOUNTER WITH GOD, AND THAT IS ALWAYS BY GRACE. FASTING IS THE DISCIPLINE WE IMPOSE ON OURSELVES TO 'PRESENT OURSELVES A LIVING SACRIFICE' THAT DRAWS THE FIRE OF GOD, TO BREAK THE WORLD'S GRIP, AND OFFER OURSELVES TO GOD.
6. SET A PRAYER AND BIBLE READING GOAL ALONGSIDE YOUR FASTING GOAL.
7. CARVE OUT SEASONS OF TIME FOR PRAYER. BEGIN TO MEET GOD EARLY IN THE MORNING, WHEN YOU WOULD HAVE EATEN BREAKFAST. FIND A PLACE FOR A SPIRITUAL LUNCH-BREAK. TAKE WHOLE DAYS TO GET AWAY AND READ THE BIBLE, AND PRAY. PLAN A SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER WITH YOUR SPOUSE AND FAMILY.

AS YOU READ THE SCRIPTURE, USE THE READ-REFLECT-REASON-REST-RENEW MODEL. WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T MERELY READ PASSIVELY. READ IT, AND ENGAGE IT. ENTER INTO A DIALOGUE WITH GOD OVER YOUR OPEN BIBLE. REFLECT ON MEANINGS, IMPLICATIONS FOR YOU. REASON WITH YOURSELF, AND GOD. AND THEN REST - LET GOD READ YOU. TELL HIM, THAT ONLY WITH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN YOU LIVE-OUT, BECOME WHAT YOU HAVE READ. LET HIM RENEW YOU!

DAY 1

What is Prayer?

PRAYER SIMPLY MEANS TALKING TO GOD, AND LISTENING TO GOD.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THIS DEFINITION CAN BE COMFORTING, BECAUSE IT MEANS THERE ISN'T A LONG LIST OF FORMALITIES THAT HAS TO BE FULFILLED IN ORDER FOR YOUR PRAYER TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. IN FACT, JESUS MENTIONED THIS MINDSET ABOUT PRAYER.

HE SAID:

"AND WHEN YOU PRAY, DO NOT HEAP UP EMPTY PHRASES AS THE GENTILES DO, FOR THEY THINK THAT THEY WILL BE HEARD FOR THEIR MANY WORDS." (MATTHEW 6:7)

GOD ISN'T LOOKING FOR YOU TO JUMP THROUGH HOOPS FOR YOUR PRAYER TO QUALIFY. HE JUST WANTS YOU TO SPEAK WITH HIM. THIS DOESN'T MEAN THERE AREN'T SOME GOOD PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW IN PRAYER, BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT GOD VASTLY PREFERS AUTHENTIC INTERACTIONS WITH YOU OVER A RITUALISTIC PERFORMANCE.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** WHEN YOU GO TO PRAY TODAY, DO YOUR BEST JUST TO TALK TO GOD CONVERSATIONALLY. THIS DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD BE DISRESPECTFUL BUT WITHOUT PRETENSE OR CEREMONIAL LANGUAGE.
- **REFLECTION:** AFTER PRAYING, DID SPEAKING WITH GOD THIS WAY IMPACT THE WAY YOU EXPERIENCED PRAYER? DID IT GIVE YOU THE SENSE THAT HE WANTS RELATIONSHIP RATHER THAN RITUAL?

DAY 2

Abba

YESTERDAY WE SAW THAT PRAYER JUST MEANS TALKING TO GOD, AND LISTENING TO GOD. BUT THIS SIMPLE DEFINITION OF PRAYER CAN FEEL SO OPEN ENDED THAT SOMETIMES WE AREN'T SURE WHERE TO START! WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY ABOUT? IS THERE A PARTICULAR ATTITUDE WE SHOULD HAVE IN PRAYER? IS PRAYER QUIET OR LOUD? SHOULD PRAYER ONLY BE HAPPY, OR SHOULD IT BE SOMBER AND SERIOUS? THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT PRAYER.

JESUS' DISCIPLES HAD QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER TOO. IN LUKE 11:1 WHEN JESUS HAD JUST FINISHED PRAYING, THEY SAID 'LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY...' HIS RESPONSE TO THEM CAN BE FOUND IN BOTH LUKE 11:2-4 AND MATTHEW 6:9-13.

MATTHEW 6:9-13, SAYS:

9 "...YOU SHOULD PRAY LIKE THIS:

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, YOUR NAME BE HONORED AS HOLY. 10 YOUR KINGDOM COME. YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. 11 GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD. 12 AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS. 13 AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE. FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER. AMEN.

JESUS GIVES US AT LEAST 4 FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS THAT BECOME THE BASIS FOR EVERYTHING ELSE WE SEE IN SCRIPTURE ABOUT PRAYER. HE STARTS WITH: "**OUR FATHER**".

WHILE THE EXACT MEANING OF THIS PHRASE HAS BEEN DEBATED, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MOMENT IS UNDENIABLE. JESUS IS TEACHING US TO FRAME OUR WHOLE UNDERSTANDING OF PRAYER ITSELF AS INTERACTION WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. IT'S THE FIRST TIME EVER THAT THE BIBLE SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS PEOPLE TO CALL GOD FATHER. IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT JESUS WAS IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US (MATT. 1:23), THIS IS ALSO THE MOMENT THAT GOD HIMSELF STOOD AMONG US AND INSTRUCTED US TO CALL HIM "FATHER".

ADDITIONALLY, JESUS' COMMUNITY SPOKE ARAMAIC, SUGGESTING THAT THE WORD JESUS SAID HERE WAS MOST LIKELY "**ABBA**"; A TERM WE KNOW JESUS LIKED TO USE TO REFER TO THE FATHER (MARK. 14:36), AND THAT HIS FOLLOWERS WOULD LATER USE (ROM. 8:15, GAL. 4:6). THIS WAS A VERY INTIMATE WAY TO REFER TO GOD. IN FACT, BECAUSE IT WAS OFTEN THE FIRST WORD HEBREW CHILDREN WOULD LEARN, MANY HAVE EVEN LIKENED IT TO CALLING GOD "DADDY".

WHETHER THE TERM IS "BABYISH" OR NOT, JESUS' INTENTION IS CLEAR: TO REVEAL THE KIND OF INTIMATE, LOVING RELATIONSHIP GOD WANTS US TO HAVE WITH HIM IN PRAYER.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** BEGIN YOUR TIME OF PRAYER TODAY BY CALLING HIM FATHER, WHETHER YOU SAY "FATHER" OR "ABBA" OR "DADDY". REMEMBER, OUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS NOT NECESSARILY LIKE OUR EARTHLY FATHERS.
- **REFLECTION:** DID SPEAKING TO GOD IN SUCH AN INTIMATE WAY HELP YOU FEEL CLOSER TO HIM? IF IT FELT AWKWARD, DOES IT GIVE YOU A GREATER AWARENESS OF OUR NEED TO GROW CLOSER TO HIM?

DAY 3

Worship

YESTERDAY JESUS SHOWED US HOW TO PRAY BY TEACHING US TO FRAME ALL OF OUR PRAYERS WITH THE AWARENESS OF WHO GOD IS: OUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER. JESUS THEN CONTINUES HIS TEACHING:

MATTHEW 6:9

"THEREFORE, YOU SHOULD PRAY LIKE THIS: OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, **YOUR NAME BE HONORED AS HOLY.**"

RIGHT AFTER SEEING GOD AS FATHER, JESUS GROUNDS HIS PRAYER IN WORSHIP.

WORSHIP IS A FOUNDATIONAL ASPECT OF PRAYER. IN FACT THE GREEK WORD FOR PRAYER HERE IN VERSE 9 IS "PROSEUCHOMAI" WHICH BY DEFINITION MEANS "TO WORSHIP WITH PRAYER".

ONE OF MY FAVORITE BIBLE TEACHERS ONCE SAID, "IF YOU ONLY HAVE 10 MINUTES TO PRAY, SPEND 8 OF THEM IN WORSHIP." WORSHIP TAKES OUR FOCUS OFF OF OURSELVES AND PUTS IT ON GOD. WORSHIP ALSO TAKES OUR FOCUS OFF OF OUR PROBLEMS AND REMINDS US THAT GOD IS SO MUCH GREATER THAN ANYTHING THAT WE FACE! WORSHIP IS MUCH MORE THAN WORDS OR A SONG; IT'S OUR WHOLE LIFE BEING POSTURED TO HONOR GOD (ROM. 12:1-2). WORSHIP IS AN ACT OF ADORATION AND LOVE EXPRESSED TO GOD REGARDLESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES (ACTS 16:25-26). AND THE CONTENT OF OUR CONVERSATION WITH GOD SHOULD BEGIN WITH, AND BE GREATLY COMPRISED OF, **WORSHIP.**

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** BEGIN YOUR TIME OF PRAYER TODAY WITH WORSHIP. BEFORE YOU ASK FOR ANYTHING, THANK HIM FOR ALL THAT HE HAS DONE, AND REFLECT ON HOW GREAT HE IS. SINGING IS A GREAT WAY TO DO THIS, AS LONG AS YOUR HEART REMAINS FULLY ENGAGED (COL. 3:16, ACTS 16:25)!
- **REFLECTION:** HOW DOES WORSHIP AFFECT THE REST OF YOUR PRAYER TIME? YOUR DAY? DID YOU NOTICE A CHANGE IN YOUR DEMEANOR OR LEVEL OF EXPECTATION?

JESUS CONTINUES HIS FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING ON PRAYER IN MATTHEW 6:10 BY TEACHING US TO SAY TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER...

"YOUR KINGDOM COME. YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

JESUS SAYS OUR FIRST REQUEST TO GOD SHOULD BE FOR HIS KINGDOM AND WILL TO COME AND BE DONE ON EARTH. MANY PEOPLE VIEW PRAYER AS A WAY OF GETTING SOMETHING THEY WANT OR NEED, LIKE PUTTING A QUARTER IN A COSMIC VENDING MACHINE. BUT JESUS TAUGHT US THAT PRAYER SHOULD START WITH OUR HEARTS BEING REALIGNED TO GOD'S DESIRES.

IN MATTHEW 6:31-33 HE SAID IT LIKE THIS:
"THEREFORE DO NOT BE ANXIOUS, SAYING, 'WHAT SHALL WE EAT?' OR 'WHAT SHALL WE DRINK?' OR 'WHAT SHALL WE WEAR?' FOR THE GENTILES SEEK AFTER ALL THESE THINGS, AND YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER KNOWS THAT YOU NEED THEM ALL. BUT SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS WILL BE ADDED TO YOU."

WHILE THE BIBLE ABSOLUTELY TEACHES THAT GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND OFTEN GRANTS OUR REQUESTS, JESUS TAUGHT US THAT PRAYER IS FIRST MEANT TO RECALIBRATE OUR HEARTS TO GOD'S HEART, BY TEACHING US TO **SEEK** GOD AND HIS WILL FOR OUR LIVES FIRST.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** AFTER YOU SPEND TIME IN WORSHIP, ASK GOD TO HAVE HIS WAY IN YOUR LIFE. ASK HIM TO SPEAK TO YOU AND SHOW YOU HIS WILL AND TO USE YOU FOR HIS KINGDOM TODAY!
- **REFLECTION:** HOW DID PRAYING LIKE THIS AFFECT THE REST OF YOUR DAY? WERE YOU MORE AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPACT OTHERS IN A GODLY WAY?

JESUS CLOSES HIS FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING ON PRAYER WITH VERSES 11-13.

MATTHEW 6

11 GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD. 12 AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS. 13 AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE. FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER. AMEN.

THIS SECTION OF JESUS' EXEMPLARY PRAYER IS ABOUT MAKING REQUESTS OR **ASKING** GOD FOR SOMETHING. NOTICE THAT BOTH PHYSICAL NEEDS (BREAD AND DEBT) AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS (FORGIVENESS AND TEMPTATION) ARE MENTIONED. IT'S NOT WRONG TO ASK GOD FOR EITHER OF THESE!

IN FACT WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, YOU CAN BRING IT TO GOD IN PRAYER! 1 PETER 5:7 SAYS, "GIVE ALL YOUR WORRIES AND CARES TO GOD, FOR HE CARES ABOUT YOU."

WE CAN EVEN ASK GOD FOR THINGS THAT ARE "WANTS" AND NOT JUST "NEEDS" AS LONG AS WE REMEMBER TO SEEK HIS WILL FIRST ABOVE OUR OWN (MATT. 6:9-10). PSALM 37:4 SAYS, "DELIGHT YOURSELF IN THE LORD, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART."

MATTHEW 7:7-11

7 "ASK, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEEK, AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT WILL BE OPENED TO YOU. 8 FOR EVERYONE WHO ASKS RECEIVES, AND THE ONE WHO SEEKS FINDS, AND TO THE ONE WHO KNOCKS IT WILL BE OPENED. 9 OR WHICH ONE OF YOU, IF HIS SON ASKS HIM FOR BREAD, WILL GIVE HIM A STONE? 10 OR IF HE ASKS FOR A FISH, WILL GIVE HIM A SERPENT? 11 IF YOU THEN, WHO ARE EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO YOUR CHILDREN, HOW MUCH MORE WILL YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN GIVE GOOD THINGS TO THOSE WHO ASK HIM!

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** ONCE YOU'VE SPENT TIME WITH YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER IN WORSHIP, AND SEEKING HIS WILL, ASK HIM FOR WHAT YOU NEED, AND EVEN WHAT YOU WANT! TRUST THAT HE LOVES YOU AND WANTS WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU, EVEN IF THE ANSWER IS "NO".
- **REFLECTION:** REMEMBER TO ASK AND KEEP ASKING (LK.18:1-8)! REMEMBER WHEN GOD ANSWERS YOUR PRAYER TO THANK HIM FOR IT (LUKE 17:11-19)!

DAY 6

To the One True God

PRAYER IS NOT A CONCEPT EXCLUSIVE TO CHRISTIANITY. MANY RELIGIONS PRACTICE PRAYER IN SOME FORM. AS SUCH, IT'S IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN PRAYER AS DISTINCT FROM PRAYER AS A GENERAL CONCEPT. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BIBLE IS NOT ENCOURAGING US TO PRAY TO JUST ANY DEITY (AS SOME MIGHT SUGGEST). THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT PRAYER SHOULD ALWAYS BE DIRECTED TO THE ONE TRUE GOD ALONE; NEVER TO OTHER GODS AND NEVER TO ANGELS.

REVELATION 22:8-9

I, JOHN... I FELL DOWN TO WORSHIP AT THE FEET OF THE ANGEL WHO HAD BEEN SHOWING [THESE THINGS] TO ME. 9 BUT HE SAID TO ME, "DON'T DO THAT! I AM A FELLOW SERVANT WITH YOU AND WITH YOUR FELLOW PROPHETS AND WITH ALL WHO KEEP THE WORDS OF THIS SCROLL. **WORSHIP ONLY GOD!**"

COLOSSIANS 2:18 (NIV):

"DO NOT LET ANYONE WHO DELIGHTS IN FALSE HUMILITY AND THE WORSHIP OF ANGELS DISQUALIFY YOU. SUCH A PERSON ALSO GOES INTO GREAT DETAIL ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE SEEN; THEY ARE PUFFED UP WITH IDLE NOTIONS BY THEIR UNSPIRITUAL MIND."

THE BIBLE ALSO SHOWS US THAT PRAYING TO JESUS IS THE SAME THING AS PRAYING TO THE ONE TRUE GOD, BECAUSE HE IS GOD!

ACTS 7:59 (NIV): "WHILE THEY WERE STONING HIM, STEPHEN PRAYED, 'LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT.'"

JOHN 14:13-14 (NIV): "AND I WILL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME, SO THAT THE FATHER MAY BE GLORIFIED IN THE SON. YOU MAY ASK ME FOR ANYTHING IN MY NAME, AND I WILL DO IT."

1 CORINTHIANS 1:2 (NIV): "TO THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CORINTH, TO THOSE SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS AND CALLED TO BE HIS HOLY PEOPLE, TOGETHER WITH ALL THOSE EVERYWHERE WHO CALL ON THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST—THEIR LORD AND OURS."

FOR MANY IT COMES AS A SURPRISE THAT CHRISTIAN PRAYER IS NEVER DIRECTED TO SAINTS, ANGELS, OR DEITIES IN GENERAL. IT IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP THAT IS RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE ONE TRUE GOD, JESUS (2 PET. 1:1).

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** WHEN YOU TALK TO THE LORD TODAY, TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ABOUT HOW HE ALONE IS GOD, AND HE ALONE DESERVES OUR PRAYER AND WORSHIP (IS. 42:8, 45:5).
- **REFLECTION:** HOW DID THIS CAUSE YOU TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT PRAYER? HAVE YOU EVER PRAYED TO ANOTHER DEITY OR TO A SAINT OR ANGEL IN YOUR LIFE BEFORE YOU WERE A CHRISTIAN? IF SO, HOW HAS PRAYER CHANGED FOR YOU SINCE BECOMING A CHRISTIAN?

DAY 7

In Jesus Name (PART 1)

IN JOHN 14:13-14 JESUS SAYS,
"WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME, THIS I WILL DO, THAT THE FATHER MAY BE GLORIFIED IN THE SON. IF YOU ASK ME ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT."

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHY CHRISTIAN PRAYER IS DONE **IN JESUS NAME**? WHY NOT IN THE "NAME" OF THE FATHER, OR THE HOLY SPIRIT?

PAUL SAYS IN EPHESIANS 2:18,
FOR THROUGH HIM WE BOTH (JEWS AND GENTILES) HAVE ACCESS TO THE FATHER BY ONE SPIRIT.

THEN AGAIN IN ROMANS 5:1-2.
5 THEREFORE, SINCE WE HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED THROUGH FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, 2 THROUGH WHOM WE HAVE GAINED ACCESS BY FAITH INTO THIS GRACE IN WHICH WE NOW STAND.

THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS ADDS
"AND SO, DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WE CAN BOLDLY ENTER HEAVEN'S MOST HOLY PLACE BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS. 20 BY HIS DEATH, JESUS OPENED A NEW AND LIFE-GIVING WAY THROUGH THE CURTAIN INTO THE MOST HOLY PLACE." (HEBREWS 10:19-20)

CHRISTIAN PRAYER IS DONE "IN JESUS NAME" BECAUSE IT'S ONLY THROUGH JESUS THAT WE HAVE ACCESS TO GOD, HIS PRESENCE, HIS PROMISES, HIS BLESSINGS, HIS SPIRIT, HIS PEACE, AND SO MUCH MORE. EVERYTHING GOD HAS MADE AVAILABLE TO US ONLY COMES THROUGH WHAT JESUS ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS FOR US (EPH. 1:3)!

EVERY TIME WE PRAY IN JESUS' NAME WE ARE DECLARING, "JESUS WON THIS FOR ME". IT'S A POWERFUL WAY OF SAYING THAT WE DON'T MAKE REQUESTS BASED ON OUR OWN RIGHTS OR WORTHINESS, BUT BASED ON, AND IN SUBMISSION TO, THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS, AND THE WONDERFUL BLESSINGS THAT GOD MADE AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH HIM!

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** REMEMBER TO MAKE YOUR REQUESTS TODAY IN JESUS NAME AS A STATEMENT OF CONFIDENCE IN WHAT JESUS DID FOR YOU
- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT THE FACT THAT EVERYTHING GOD HAS GIVEN US COMES THROUGH JESUS? HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL ABOUT JESUS?

DAY 8

In Jesus Name (PART 2)

YESTERDAY WE SAW THAT WHEN WE PRAY **IN JESUS NAME**, WE ARE PRAYING WITH THE ACCESS TO GOD AND HIS PROMISES THAT ONLY JESUS MADE AVAILABLE FOR US THROUGH HIS SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS.

BUT PRAYING IN JESUS NAME ALSO MEANS PRAYING IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS AUTHORITY, WILL, CHARACTER, AND PRESENCE. IN OTHER WORDS, WE DON'T JUST TACK HIS NAME ONTO THE END OF OUR PRAYERS SO WE CAN GET WHAT WE WANT (ACTS 19:13-17).

WHEN WE PRAY IN JESUS NAME, WE ARE SUBMITTING OUR DESIRES TO HIS. WE'RE CALLING UPON HIS PRESENCE TO BE WITH US TO GRANT OUR REQUESTS IN WHATEVER WAY PLEASES HIM.

REMEMBER, JESUS SAID:

"WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME, THIS I WILL DO, *THAT THE FATHER MAY BE GLORIFIED* IN THE SON." (JOHN 14:13-14)

WHEN WE PRAY IN JESUS NAME, WE ARE SAYING "GOD, I WANT MY PRAYER TO BRING YOU GLORY. I WANT WHAT YOU WANT. SO, IF WHAT I'M ASKING FOR IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT, LET YOUR WILL BE DONE, NOT MY OWN." (MATT. 6:10, LK. 22:42)

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** WHEN YOU PRAY IN JESUS NAME TODAY, REMEMBER THAT WE'RE ASKING FOR HIS WILL, NOT OUR OWN.
- **REFLECTION:** HOW DOES PRAYING IN JESUS NAME TAKE ON A NEW SIGNIFICANCE FOR YOU? DOES IT CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT YOU'VE ASKED FOR IN PRAYER?

DAY 9

He Hears You

DOES GOD REALLY HEAR US WHEN WE PRAY?
...AND IF HE DOES, DOES PRAYER ACTUALLY CHANGE ANYTHING?

YOU MIGHT HAVE HEARD SOMEONE SAY "PRAYER CHANGES US". WHILE THIS IS TRUE, IT MIGHT MISTAKENLY GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT PRAYER DOESN'T HAVE A TANGIBLE IMPACT ON SITUATIONS AROUND US.

DID YOU KNOW THAT FOR EVERY STATEMENT THE BIBLE MAKES ABOUT PRAYER CHANGING US, IT MAKES ALMOST TWICE AS MANY ABOUT PRAYER CHANGING THINGS AROUND US...?

PRAYER IS NOT JUST A SELF-HELP TOOL. PRAYER IS COMMUNION WITH THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE, WHO NOT ONLY HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE THINGS, BUT ALSO HEARS YOU WHEN YOU PRAY, AND CARES FOR WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH! THE BIBLE WANTS US TO KNOW THIS WITH GREAT CONFIDENCE:

1 JOHN 5:14-15 "THIS IS THE CONFIDENCE WE HAVE IN APPROACHING GOD: THAT IF WE ASK ANYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, HE HEARS US. AND IF WE KNOW THAT HE HEARS US—WHATEVER WE ASK—WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE WHAT WE ASKED OF HIM."

JEREMIAH 33:3 "CALL TO ME AND I WILL ANSWER YOU AND TELL YOU GREAT AND UNSEARCHABLE THINGS YOU DO NOT KNOW."

MATTHEW 7:7-8 "ASK AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEEK AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU. FOR EVERYONE WHO ASKS RECEIVES; THE ONE WHO SEEKS FINDS; AND TO THE ONE WHO KNOCKS, THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED."

PSALM 34:17 "THE RIGHTEOUS CRY OUT, AND THE LORD HEARS THEM; HE DELIVERS THEM FROM ALL THEIR TROUBLES."

MARK 11:24 "THEREFORE I TELL YOU, WHATEVER YOU ASK FOR IN PRAYER, BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED IT, AND IT WILL BE YOURS."

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** TAKE SOME TIME TO LET THESE VERSES SINK IN BEFORE YOU PRAY TODAY. PRAY WITH CONFIDENCE TODAY THAT GOD HEARS YOU!
- **REFLECTION:** WHEN GOD ANSWERS YOUR PRAYER, WRITE IT DOWN AS A TESTIMONY THAT GOD HEARS WHEN YOU PRAY!

DAY 10

Let His Spirit Lead You

ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND POWERFUL TRUTHS ABOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYER IS THAT WE NEVER DO IT ALONE. GOD LEADS US IN PRAYER BY HIS SPIRIT; HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE LIVING WITHIN US.

ROMANS 8:26

THE **HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US** IN OUR WEAKNESS. FOR EXAMPLE, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS US **TO PRAY** FOR. BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT PRAYS FOR US WITH GROANINGS THAT CANNOT BE EXPRESSED IN WORDS.

EPHESIANS 6:18

PRAY IN THE SPIRIT AT ALL TIMES AND ON EVERY OCCASION.

JUDE 20

BUT YOU, DEAR FRIENDS, MUST BUILD EACH OTHER UP IN YOUR MOST HOLY FAITH, **PRAY IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

GALATIANS 4:6

BECAUSE WE ARE HIS CHILDREN, GOD HAS SENT **THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO OUR HEARTS, PROMPTING US TO CALL OUT, "ABBA, FATHER.**

FOR CHRISTIANS, GOD'S SPIRIT LIVING WITHIN US EMPOWERS US AS WE PRAY. HIS SPIRIT SHOWS US HOW TO PRAY AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR. HIS SPIRIT HELPS US TO BE CONTINUALLY IN PRAYER. HIS SPIRIT REVEALS WHO GOD IS (ABBA) AND SHAPES OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST (HIS CHILDREN) THROUGH PRAYER.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** LET GOD'S SPIRIT LEAD YOU IN PRAYER TODAY! BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING ELSE, JUST LISTEN... THEN ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO LEAD YOU, AND SPEAK TO YOU.
- **REFLECTION:** DID YOU SENSE THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYING ANYTHING TO YOU TODAY? IF SO, WRITE IT DOWN, AND MAKE IT A POINT TO KEEP IT FRESH IN YOUR HEART. ASK GOD TO HELP YOU WALK IN IT!

DAY 11

Pray Without Ceasing

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 SAYS "**PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**"

ROMANS 12:12 SAYS "BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER."

COLOSSIANS 4:2 SAYS "CONTINUE STEADFASTLY IN PRAYER, BEING WATCHFUL IN IT WITH THANKSGIVING."

EPHESIANS 6:18 SAYS "PRAY IN THE SPIRIT AT ALL TIMES AND ON EVERY OCCASION."

IT SEEMS THE APOSTLE PAUL (WHO WROTE ALL OF THESE) THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE PRAY **AND KEEP ON PRAYING**. IN OTHER WORDS, PRAYER ISN'T MEANT TO BE AN OCCASIONAL OCCURRENCE. PRAYER IS MEANT TO BE CONTINUOUS.

THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE IDEA THAT PRAYER IS RELATIONAL AND NOT JUST TRANSACTIONAL. WE DON'T PRAY ONLY WHEN WE NEED HELP OR WANT SOMETHING. WE PRAY BECAUSE WE WANT TO KNOW OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, AND CONTINUOUS PRAYER FACILITATES AN ONGOING CONVERSATION WITH GOD.

BUT HOW CAN WE PRAY CONSTANTLY? WHAT ABOUT ALL THE WORK WE HAVE TO DO? WHAT ABOUT THE FAMILY WE HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF? SHOULD WE IGNORE THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES?

WHILE IT IS VITAL THAT WE SET ASIDE DEDICATED TIME TO PRAY, "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING" DOESN'T MEAN "DO NOTHING BUT PRAY". IT MEANS THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY, IN EVERYTHING YOU DO, KEEP TALKING TO THE LORD. INVITE HIM INTO EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE THROUGH PRAYER. AS YOU WEAVE PRAYER INTO THE VERY FABRIC OF YOUR LIFE, YOU WILL EXPERIENCE CONTINUALLY GREATER CONNECTION WITH HIM!

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **APPLICATION:** INTENTIONALLY TAKE PRAYER BREAKS THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY TODAY. EACH ONE MIGHT ONLY BE 30-60 SECONDS. PRAY ABOUT SITUATIONS THAT ARISE, OR JUST THANK HIM FOR HIS PRESENCE WITH YOU IN THAT MOMENT.
- **REFLECTION:** DID YOU SENSE A GREATER CLOSENESS TO GOD EITHER DURING THOSE PRAYER BREAKS OR FOR YOUR DAY OVERALL? THE MORE YOU DO THIS THE EASIER IT WILL BECOME!

Pray and Never Give Up

IN LUKE 18:1-8, JESUS TELLS A STORY ABOUT A WOMAN WHO WAS BEING MISTREATED. SHE PLEADED WITH THE JUDGE IN HER TOWN TO GIVE HER JUSTICE, BUT HE DIDN'T CARE. YET, SHE **NEVER GAVE UP**. FINALLY, THE JUDGE GAVE IN TO HER REQUEST, BECAUSE OF HER PERSISTENCE. VERSE 1 TELLS US THAT THIS STORY IS ACTUALLY ABOUT PRAYER...

"JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES [THIS] PARABLE TO SHOW THEM THAT THEY SHOULD ALWAYS **PRAY AND NEVER GIVE UP**." (LUKE 18:1)

THE AMPLIFIED VERSION OF THE BIBLE DOES A GREAT JOB OF BRINGING OUT THE ORIGINAL GREEK LANGUAGE'S USE OF PRESENT IMPERATIVES IN MATTHEW 7:7 TO EMPHASIZE THIS IDEA OF PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER. IT READS LIKE THIS:

MATTHEW 7:7 (AMP)

"ASK AND KEEP ON ASKING AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEEK AND KEEP ON SEEKING AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK AND KEEP ON KNOCKING AND THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU.

IT'S EASY TO GET DISCOURAGED IF WHAT WE PRAYED FOR DOESN'T HAPPEN RIGHT AWAY. WE DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHY, BUT WE DO KNOW THAT GOD HEARS US, HAS OUR BEST INTEREST AT HEART, AND IS DOING THINGS WE CAN'T ALWAYS SEE. WE SHOULD ALIGN OUR PRAYERS WITH GOD'S CHARACTER AND WORD; BUT IF GOD DOESN'T DO WHAT WE ASK HIM FOR AT FIRST, IT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN HE WANTS US TO STOP PRAYING FOR IT. IT'S LIKELY, HE'S TEACHING US TO **PRAY, AND NEVER GIVE UP**.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** READ LUKE 18:1-8. HOW DOES THIS PASSAGE AFFECT YOUR DISPOSITION TOWARD PRAYER REQUESTS YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANSWERED YET?
- **APPLICATION:** IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'VE BEEN PRAYING FOR THAT YOU HAVEN'T SEEN HAPPEN YET? ARE YOU STILL PRAYING FOR IT? WOULD YOU KEEP PRAYING FOR IT IF GOD STILL WANTED TO DO IT IN YOUR LIFE? ASK GOD FOR IT TODAY!

Humbly Bold

IN GENESIS 18 THERE WAS A CITY THAT WAS SO WICKED THAT GOD TOLD ABRAHAM THE OUTCRY AGAINST THEIR INJUSTICE WAS SO GREAT THAT HE WOULD GO DOWN TO SEE IT IN PERSON HIMSELF TO DECIDE WHETHER THE CITY SHOULD BE DESTROYED.

IT'S IN THIS MOMENT THAT WE SEE ABRAHAM PRAY ONE OF THE BOLDEST PRAYERS ANYONE HAS EVER PRAYED.

ABRAHAM ASKED GOD TO SPARE THE CITY IF THERE WERE 50 RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE THERE. GOD AGREED. BUT THEN ABRAHAM GOT EVEN MORE BOLD. HE REDUCED THE NUMBER TO 45. WHEN GOD AGREED AGAIN, ABRAHAM ASKED FOR 40...BUT HE WASN'T DONE... HE ASKED FOR 35... THEN 30... 25... ALL THE WAY DOWN TO 10, AND GOD AGREED--EVERY TIME.

ABRAHAM KNEW THIS WAS A BOLD PRAYER. THIS IS WHY HE KEPT SUCH A HUMBLE ATTITUDE AS HE PRAYED IT. WITH EACH REDUCTION IN NUMBER HE SAID THINGS LIKE: "NOW THAT I HAVE BEEN SO BOLD AS TO SPEAK TO THE LORD, THOUGH I AM NOTHING BUT DUST AND ASHES..." AND "MAY THE LORD NOT BE ANGRY, BUT LET ME SPEAK ONCE MORE..."

SOMETIMES WE GET THE IMPRESSION THAT ASKING BOLD PRAYERS IS OFFENSIVE TO GOD. WHILE IT'S TRUE THAT SELFISHNESS SHOULDN'T BE OUR FIRST MOTIVE IN PRAYER, GOD ISN'T UPSET AT US FOR ASKING HIM FOR THINGS WITH BOLD FAITH, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE DO IT WITH PROFOUND HUMILITY.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** READ GENESIS 18:20-33. HAVE YOU EVER ASKED GOD FOR SOMETHING WITH THIS KIND OF BOLDNESS? IS THERE ANYTHING YOU HAVEN'T ASKED GOD FOR BECAUSE YOU FELT IT WAS TOO BOLD OR SELFISH TO DO SO? WHAT WOULD YOU ASK GOD FOR IF YOU KNEW HE WANTED YOU TO ASK WITH THIS KIND OF BOLDNESS?
- **APPLICATION:** ASK GOD FOR SOMETHING YOU NEVER WOULD HAVE BEFORE READING THIS PASSAGE. REMEMBER TO DO IT WITH A HUMBLE ATTITUDE!

Before You Decide

FOR SOME, THEY THINK PRAYER PRODUCES GOOD FEELINGS, BUT DOESN'T HAVE A PRACTICAL IMPACT ON THE REAL WORLD. THIS MINDSET MAKES IT EASY TO GET INTO A RHYTHM OF MAKING DECISIONS WITHOUT TALKING TO GOD FIRST.

THE BIBLE, HOWEVER, TEACHES THAT PRAYER DOES IMPACT THE REAL WORLD, AND BECAUSE OF THIS, SCRIPTURE IS FULL OF PEOPLE PRAYING BEFORE THEY MAKE MAJOR DECISIONS. HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES:

- DAVID SOUGHT THE LORD IN PRAYER BEFORE GOING INTO BATTLE (1 SAMUEL 30:7-8)
- SOLOMON PRAYED THAT GOD WOULD ENABLE HIM TO GOVERN THE NATION OF ISRAEL WELL (1 KINGS 3:5-14)
- JESUS SPENT THE WHOLE NIGHT IN PRAYER BEFORE CHOOSING THE 12 APOSTLES (LUKE 6:12-13)
- THE CHURCH PRAYED BEFORE LAUNCHING PAUL AND BARNABAS INTO MINISTRY (ACTS 13:1-3)
- PAUL PRAYED ABOUT APPOINTING CHURCH LEADERS (ACTS 14:23)

BY THE SAME TOKEN, WHEN PEOPLE CHOSE NOT TO PRAY BEFORE MAKING DECISIONS, THINGS OFTEN DIDN'T GO AS WELL (JOSHUA 9:14, 2 CHRON. 12:14, 16:12) IN ISAIAH 30:1-2 GOD SAYS:

"WOE TO THE REBELLIOUS CHILDREN," SAYS THE LORD, "WHO TAKE COUNSEL, BUT NOT OF ME, AND WHO DEVISE PLANS, BUT NOT OF MY SPIRIT, THAT THEY MAY ADD SIN TO SIN; WHO WALK TO GO DOWN TO EGYPT, AND HAVE NOT ASKED MY ADVICE..."

GOD MUST FEEL GREAT SADNESS AND HURT WHEN HIS CHILDREN LEAVE HIM OUT OF THE DECISION MAKING IN THEIR LIVES! HE KNOWS WHAT WE NEED, AND WANTS WHATS BEST FOR US, AND WE OUGHT TO SEEK HIM FIRST, BEFORE WE DECIDE....

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER MADE AN IMPORTANT DECISION WITHOUT ASKING GOD ABOUT IT FIRST? DID YOU END UP WISHING YOU HAD? DO YOU HAVE ANY MAJOR DECISIONS COMING UP SOON?
- **APPLICATION:** ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOU FOR THE TIMES YOU MAY NOT HAVE PRAYED BEFORE YOU MADE A DECISION. MAKE SURE TO TAKE TIME TO ASK HIM ABOUT THE DECISIONS YOU HAVE TO MAKE, ESPECIALLY BIG ONES BUT EVEN THE SMALLER ONES!

Peace Beyond Understanding

PEACE IS THE EVER ELUSIVE DESIRE OF MANKIND. WE ALL WANT TO LIVE A PEACEFUL LIFE, FREE OF PAIN, AND TROUBLES. YET, PEACE IN OUR WORLD SEEMS TO BE A FLEETING PURSUIT, AND FOR ALL OUR EFFORTS, WHETHER IN FAMILIES OR IN NATIONS, WE FIND STRIFE INSTEAD.

HOWEVER, THE PEACE OF GOD IS SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST NOT HAVING PROBLEMS. SOMEONE ONCE SAID: "TRUE PEACE IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF A PROBLEM, IT'S THE PRESENCE OF A PERSON."

JESUS EXPRESSED IT THIS WAY:

"I GIVE YOU PEACE, THE KIND OF PEACE ONLY I CAN GIVE. IT ISN'T LIKE THE PEACE THIS WORLD CAN GIVE. SO DON'T BE WORRIED OR AFRAID."
(JOHN 14:27 CEV)

PAUL SAID:

"DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS." (PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7)

PRAYER IS THE PATHWAY TO PEACE, BECAUSE PRAYER CONNECTS US TO THE ONE WHO IS OUR PEACE (EPH. 2:14, JUDG. 6:24), AND NOTHING IN THE WORLD COMPARES TO THE PEACE OF JESUS.

HIS PEACE ISN'T BASED ON OUR SITUATION; IT'S BASED ON WHO GOD IS. SO, WHETHER THINGS ARE GOING OUR WAY, OR WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF DISASTER, PRAYER KEEPS US ROOTED IN THE PEACE OF JESUS, EVEN WHEN OUR SITUATION MAKES PEACE SEEM UNIMAGINABLE.

IT'S HIS PEACE THROUGH PRAYER, PROTECTING OUR HEART AND MIND, THAT MAKES PRAYER THE FOUNDATION OF SOUND MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH, AND IT'S THE KIND OF PEACE THAT ONLY JESUS CAN OFFER, AND ONLY PRAYER CAN PRODUCE.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF PRAYER AS A FOUNDATIONAL ASPECT OF MENTAL HEALTH? HOW DOES READING PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THIS?
- **APPLICATION:** WHAT ARE YOU ANXIOUS ABOUT TODAY? MAKE SURE TO MENTION IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER. SPEAK CANDIDLY ABOUT HOW YOU'RE FEELING BUT REMEMBER TO AFFIRM YOUR TRUST IN HIM

Build up Your Faith

JUDE 1:20

BUT YOU, BELOVED, BUILDING YOURSELVES UP ON YOUR MOST HOLY FAITH, PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, 21 KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD, LOOKING FOR THE MERCY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST UNTO ETERNAL LIFE.

AS WE GROW IN CHRIST WE SOMETIMES FOCUS ON “DOING” THINGS AS EVIDENCE THAT OUR FAITH IS REAL. SOME HAVE EVEN DOWNPLAYED PRAYER AS “OVER SPIRITUALIZING” AND PORTRAYED IT AS A LESS MEANINGFUL INDICATOR OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY.

WHILE IT’S TRUE THAT FAITH WITHOUT ACTION IS DEAD (JAMES 2:26), JUDE TELLS US THAT PRAYER BUILDS UP OUR FAITH. THE WORD FOR BUILDING UP IN THE GREEK HERE MEANS TO EDIFY, EMBOLDEN, RESTORE, REPAIR, ESTABLISH, PROMOTE GROWTH, OR CONSTRUCT A HOUSE.

PRAYER IS NOT AN INFERIOR SIGN OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY (EVEN IF SOME HAVE ERRONEOUSLY CITED PRAYER AS GROUNDS TO JUSTIFY THEIR WRONG CHOICES). GENUINE PRAYER IS THE HAMMER AND NAILS THAT BUILDS OUR LIFE INTO A STRONG HOUSE OF FAITH. PRAYER REPAIRS BROKEN FAITH, ESTABLISHES NEW FAITH, EXPANDS AND GROWS EVEN SEASONED FAITH, AND EMBOLDENS WEAK FAITH.

IT’S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER GONE FOR A LONGER STRETCH OF TIME WITHOUT PRAYING? HOW DID YOU FEEL? WHEN YOU STARTED PRAYING AGAIN, COULD YOU SENSE THE DIFFERENCE?
- **APPLICATION:** HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF PRAYER AS STRENGTHENING YOUR FAITH? TAKE NOTE OF THE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR DEemeanor AND THE STRENGTH OF YOUR FAITH AFTER YOU PRAY COMPARED TO BEFORE YOU PRAYED.

DAY 17

Invite God to Do the Miraculous

PRAYER IS AN OPEN INVITATION TO GOD TO COME AND DO THE MIRACULOUS.

JESUS SAID:

"TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, IF YOU HAVE FAITH AND DO NOT DOUBT...EVEN IF YOU SAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN, 'BE TAKEN UP AND THROWN INTO THE SEA,' IT WILL HAPPEN. AND WHATEVER YOU ASK IN PRAYER, YOU WILL RECEIVE, IF YOU HAVE FAITH." (MATTHEW 21:21-22 ESV)

AS A HOUSE OF PRAYER, THE CHURCH ALWAYS HAS, AND ALWAYS WILL, EXPERIENCE THE MIRACULOUS.

IN ACTS 9 A WOMAN NAMED TABITHA DIED, BUT PETER PRAYED FOR HER AND SHE ROSE FROM THE DEAD!

IN ACTS 12:5 PETER WAS WRONGFULLY IMPRISONED, BUT THE CHURCH PRAYED FOR HIM, AND GOD SENT AN ANGEL TO SUPERNATURALLY LEAD HIM OUT!

IN ACTS 16 PAUL AND SILAS WERE WRONGFULLY IMPRISONED, AND WHILE THEY WERE PRAYING AND WORSHIPPING, GOD SENT AN EARTHQUAKE WHICH LITERALLY DESTROYED THEIR CHAINS, AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE PRISON ITSELF!

IN ACTS 28:8 A MAN HAD A SEVERE FEVER AND DYSENTERY, BUT PAUL PRAYED AND HE WAS HEALED!

BY BEING A HOUSE OF PRAYER, WE BECOME A HOUSE OF MIRACLES. AS WE PRAY, WE INVITE THE GOD FOR WHOM ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE TO COME AND DO MIRACLES. WE SHOULD NEVER LOSE THE EXPECTATION FOR GOD TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE AS WE PRAY!

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER ASKED GOD FOR A MIRACLE? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN GOD DO A MIRACLE IN YOUR LIFE? HOW WOULD IT AFFECT YOUR PRAYER LIFE IF YOU EXPERIENCED GREATER EXPECTATION THAT GOD WOULD SHOW UP IN A MIRACULOUS WAY?
- **APPLICATION:** IS GOD LEADING YOU TO ASK HIM FOR SOMETHING SUPERNATURAL, MIRACULOUS, OR IMPOSSIBLE IN PRAYER? ASK HIM FOR IT, AND BELIEVE HIM TO DO IT!

Waging War

SPIRITUAL WARFARE CAN BE AN UNCOMFORTABLE SUBJECT, EVEN FOR CHRISTIANS. IT NOT ONLY INVOLVES ACCEPTING THE EXISTENCE OF SPIRITUAL ENEMIES, BUT ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR UNSEEN PRESENCE AND ACTIVITY BEHIND THE SCENES (1 PETER 5:8-9).

THANKFULLY, WE KNOW THAT NO MATTER HOW FORMIDABLE OUR ENEMY MAY BE, JESUS SECURED VICTORY OVER EVERY ENEMY ON THE CROSS (COL. 2:15, HEB. 2:14), REMOVING EVERY ACCUSATION AGAINST US (COL. 2:14), AND DEFEATING EVEN DEATH ITSELF (1 COR. 15:55-57).

SO WHEN WE FACE SPIRITUAL BATTLES AGAINST SPIRITUAL ENEMIES, WE DON'T HAVE TO FEAR, BECAUSE GOD IS OUR STRENGTH, AND HE HAS GIVEN US PRAYER AS ONE OF OUR WEAPONS IN THE FIGHT! HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS PRAYER HELPS US TO WIN SPIRITUAL BATTLES:

PRAYER CONNECTS US TO HIS STRENGTH

PSALM 138:3 "ON THE DAY I CALLED, YOU ANSWERED ME; YOU INCREASED STRENGTH WITHIN ME..."

PRAYER HELPS US OVERCOME TEMPTATION

MATT. 26:41 "WATCH AND PRAY SO THAT YOU WILL NOT FALL INTO TEMPTATION."

PRAYER HAS THE POWER TO DRIVE OUT SPIRITUAL ENEMIES

MARK 9:29 [JESUS] TOLD [HIS DISCIPLES], "THIS KIND [OF DEMON] CAN COME OUT ONLY BY PRAYER." (ALSO MATT. 17:21)

PRAYER INVITES GOD'S SPIRIT TO WEAPONIZE AND WIELD THE WORD OF GOD AGAINST THE ENEMY

EPHESIANS 6:17-18 "TAKE... THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD; PRAYING ALWAYS WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION IN THE SPIRIT"

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** WHAT SPIRITUAL BATTLE ARE YOU FACING RIGHT NOW? HAS PRAYER BEEN AT THE CENTER OF HOW YOU FIGHT? IF NOT, WHY?
- **APPLICATION:** WHATEVER SPIRITUAL BATTLE YOU ARE FACING, ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU STRATEGY IN PRAYER FOR HOW TO CONTEND IN THE FIGHT (COL. 4:12)

Stir Up Revival

PSALM 85:6 SAYS:

"WON'T YOU REVIVE US AGAIN, SO YOUR PEOPLE CAN REJOICE IN YOU?"

THIS VERSE IS A PRAYER! THE PSALMIST IS ASKING GOD TO REVIVE, OR BRING HIS PEOPLE TO LIFE AGAIN. WHENEVER SPIRITUAL DEATH AND DISCONNECTION FROM GOD HAS OCCURRED, PRAYER RECONNECTS US TO HIM, SO THAT HE CAN REVIVE US.

PRAYER ALSO BRINGS REVIVAL TO THE CHURCH. ACTS 1:14 SHOWS US THAT PRAYER PRECEDED THE OUTPOURING OF GOD'S SPIRIT (ALSO CALLED THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN ROM. 8:2, JN. 6:63, AND REV. 11:11) ON HIS PEOPLE IN ACTS 2.

ADDITIONALLY, 2 CHRONICLES 7:14 SAYS:

"IF MY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES, AND PRAY AND SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS, THEN I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, AND WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN AND HEAL THEIR LAND."

THIS SHOWS US THAT EVEN A NATION CAN BE REVIVED AND RESTORED THROUGH PRAYER AND AS GOD'S PEOPLE, THE CHURCH IS CALLED NOT ONLY TO EXPERIENCE BUT TO FACILITATE THIS KIND OF REVIVAL THROUGH PRAYER.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED REVIVAL PERSONALLY? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN PART OF REVIVAL IN A CHURCH? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN REVIVAL IN A REGION OR NATION? IF YES, HOW DID THOSE EXPERIENCES CHANGE YOUR PRAYER LIFE? IF NO, DO YOU WANT TO EXPERIENCE REVIVAL IN THOSE CONTEXTS? DO YOU REGULARLY ASK GOD FOR REVIVAL?
- **APPLICATION:** ADD REVIVAL TO YOUR PRAYER LIST DAILY. WE CAN'T FORCE REVIVAL TO HAPPEN, BUT WE CAN FAITHFULLY ASK GOD TO REVIVE US AND THOSE AROUND US!

Prophetic Insight

MANY OF US WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING BIG LIFE DECISIONS. WHILE GOD DOESN'T ALWAYS GIVE US THE ANSWERS, AND ALWAYS WANTS US TO TRUST HIM, NO MATTER WHAT, PRAYER CAN OPEN THE DOOR TO PROPHETIC INSIGHT FROM GOD ABOUT THE FUTURE AHEAD OF US. HERE ARE A FEW OF THE WAYS GOD USES PRAYER TO GIVE US THAT INSIGHT.

- **PRAYER CONNECTS US TO GOD'S WISDOM**

- JAMES 1:5 NOW IF ANY OF YOU LACKS WISDOM, HE SHOULD ASK GOD, WHO GIVES TO ALL GENEROUSLY AND WITHOUT CRITICIZING, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO HIM.

- **PRAYER SHIFTS OUR HEARTS FROM THE NATURAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL**

- MARK 14:38 STAY AWAKE AND PRAY THAT YOU WILL NOT FALL INTO TEMPTATION. THE SPIRIT IS WILLING, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK."

- **THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES US TO PRAY GOD'S WILL**

- ROMANS 8:26-27 IN THE SAME WAY, THE SPIRIT HELPS US IN OUR WEAKNESS. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT WE OUGHT TO PRAY FOR, BUT THE SPIRIT HIMSELF INTERCEDES FOR US THROUGH WORDLESS GROANS. AND HE WHO SEARCHES OUR HEARTS KNOWS THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT, BECAUSE THE SPIRIT INTERCEDES FOR GOD'S PEOPLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WILL OF GOD.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF PROPHETIC INSIGHT BEING GIVEN IN PRAYER:

- **ACTS 9:11** THEN THE LORD TOLD HIM, "GET UP AND GO TO THE STREET CALLED 'STRAIGHT,' AND AT JUDAS' HOUSE LOOK FOR A MAN FROM TARSUS NAMED SAUL. FOR HE IS PRAYING, 12 AND HE HAS SEEN IN A VISION A MAN NAMED ANANIAS COME IN AND LAY HIS HANDS ON HIM SO THAT HE MIGHT REGAIN HIS SIGHT."
- **ACTS 10 & 11** - PETER RECEIVED A PROPHETIC VISION AND WAS SENT TO CORNELIUS WHILE THEY WERE BOTH PRAYING.
- **IN ACTS 22:17-18** PAUL SAYS "WHEN I RETURNED TO JERUSALEM AND WAS PRAYING AT THE TEMPLE, I FELL INTO A TRANCE AND SAW THE LORD SPEAKING TO ME. 'QUICK!' HE SAID. 'LEAVE JERUSALEM IMMEDIATELY, BECAUSE THE PEOPLE HERE WILL NOT ACCEPT YOUR TESTIMONY ABOUT ME.'

WHAT A BLESSING IT IS TO KNOW THAT AS WE PRAY, GOD CAN GIVE US INSIGHT INTO THINGS WE OTHERWISE COULD NOT KNOW, INCLUDING THINGS THAT HAVEN'T HAPPENED YET.

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** HAVE YOU EVER ASKED GOD TO SPEAK TO YOU OR GIVE YOU INSIGHT IN PRAYER BEFORE? IF SO, DID YOU RECEIVE INSIGHT? HOW SO?
- **APPLICATION:** ASK GOD TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT THE SITUATIONS YOU'RE FACING RIGHT NOW. ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU WISDOM INSIGHT ABOUT WHAT'S COMING AND WHAT YOU SHOULD DO!

DAY 21

Let Heaven Come

ONE OF JESUS' FUNDAMENTAL TEACHINGS ON PRAYER IS FOUND IN MATTHEW 6:10, WHERE JESUS TEACHES US TO PRAY:

"YOUR KINGDOM COME.
YOUR WILL BE DONE
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

THIS PRAYER ALONG WITH VERSES 9-13 (OFTEN CALLED THE LORD'S PRAYER) IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BECOME A CENTRAL PART OF WORSHIP IN THE EARLY CHURCH, BEING PRAYED CONTINUALLY IN MEETINGS.

EARLY BELIEVERS UNDERSTOOD THIS PRAYER AS AN EXPRESSION OF DEEP LONGING FOR THE FULL AND FINAL ESTABLISHMENT OF GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH THE RETURN OF CHRIST, AND WE GET A STUNNING GLIMPSE OF THE ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PRAYER IN REVELATION 11 AND 21.

BUT THIS PRAYER IS ALSO MORE THAN A COMING FUTURE PROMISE. THE EARLY CHURCH ALSO KNEW IT AS A REMINDER OF THEIR ROLE AS AGENTS OF GOD'S WILL ON EARTH.

WHEN WE PRAY "ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN" WE ARE INVITING GOD'S PRESENCE TO INVADGE THE HERE AND NOW, AND TO FLOOD THE VERY MOMENT WE ARE STANDING IN, WITH HIS POWER, HOPE, TRUTH, HEALING, JOY, RESCUE, PROVISION, AND EVERYTHING HE IS... THIS HOPE AND EXPECTATIONS IS AT THE HEART OF ALL OF OUR PRAYER LIFE.

SO MAY WE ALWAYS PRAY, UNTIL THE DAY OF HIS RETURN, JUST AS JESUS TAUGHT US:

LET HEAVEN COME...

IT'S TIME TO PRAY:

- **REFLECTION:** AS WE CLOSE THIS TIME OF FASTING, HOW HAS YOUR PRAYER LIFE BEEN IMPACTED? WHAT PRAYERS DID GOD ANSWER? WHAT PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER WILL YOU CONTINUE TO PRACTICE IN YOUR PRAYER LIFE?
- **APPLICATION:** AS YOU MOVE FORWARD IN YOUR PRAYER LIFE, WILL YOU COMMIT TO PUTTING HIS KINGDOM AT THE HEART OF YOUR DAILY PRAYERS?

Appendix A

METHODS FOR FASTING

AS YOU CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL FOR PRAYER WITH FASTING, THERE ARE MULTIPLE METHODS FOR FASTING. HERE ARE SOME POSSIBLE OPTIONS:

ONE MEAL EACH DAY

THE FAST IS NOT ABOUT ONLY GIVING UP FOOD, BUT ALSO INCLUDES PRAYING DURING MEALTIME. JESUS SAID, "COULD YOU NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?" (MATTHEW 26:40). IT TAKES ABOUT AN HOUR TO PREPARE A MEAL OR TRAVEL TO A RESTAURANT OR GET READY TO EAT. SO THIS TIME IS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO PRAY. THOSE WHO WORK IN HOT EXHAUSTING JOBS CANNOT FAST COMPLETELY BECAUSE THEY NEED THEIR STRENGTH AND STAMINA FOR PHYSICAL EXERTION. HOWEVER, THEY CAN SACRIFICE ONE MEAL A DAY FOR THE LORD.

TWO MEALS EACH DAY

SOME PEOPLE CAN PRAY FOR TWO HOURS EACH DAY, SACRIFICING TWO MEALS TO THE LORD.

EAT ONLY VEGGIES

THE DANIEL FAST INVOLVES GIVING UP MEATS, DESSERTS AND SNACKS, EATING ONLY THE FOOD THAT DANIEL MOST LIKELY ATE. WHILE THE FAST DOESN'T GIVE EXTRA TIME TO PRAY, IT IS A COMMITMENT OF THE HEART THAT WHEN JOINED WITH PRAYER, MOVES THE HEART OF GOD.

GIVE UP TELEVISION

SECULAR PEOPLE MIGHT LAUGH AT "FASTING TELEVISION" OR "SACRIFICING TELEVISION" BUT IT IS A COMMITMENT TO GOD TO PLACE LOYALTY TO CHRIST FIRST ABOVE ALL ELSE. THIS IS A SPIRITUAL CHOICE IN RESPONSE TO CHRIST, WHO PROMISES, "SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU" (MATTHEW 6:33).

GIVE UP SPORTS

GIVING UP BOWLING LEAGUE, GOLFING, FISHING, JOGGING OR OTHER ACTIVITY FOR A SEASON (SUCH AS 40 DAYS) TO PRAY DURING THAT TIME IS A CHOICE. IT PLACES SPIRITUAL EXERCISE ABOVE PHYSICAL EXERCISE. "BODILY EXERCISE PROFITS LITTLE, BUT GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE FOR ALL THINGS" (1 TIMOTHY 4:8).

GIVE UP PLEASURE READING

BEYOND WHAT YOU MUST READ FOR YOUR WORK OR PREPARING FOR TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD, PLEASURE READING COULD BE TURNED INTO PRAYER TIME. YOU COULD CONSIDER LAYING ASIDE READING THE DAILY NEWSPAPER TOO.

RESTRICT MOBILE PHONE USAGE

WHILE SOME OF THESE COMMUNICATION DEVICES ARE NECESSARY, THEY ARE SERIOUS TIME ROBBERS THAT COULD BE PLACED ASIDE FOR PRAYING. SOME PEOPLE RESTRICT THEIR MUSIC GENRE TO CHRISTIAN MUSIC ONLY.

SOCIAL MEDIA

THESE ACTIVITIES CAN CONSUME HUGE CHUNKS OF TIME. PART OF A FAST COULD BE TO CEASE SOCIAL MEDIA AND USE THE TIME FOR PRAYER AND INTERCESSION.

NOTE: THERE ALSO MAY BE OTHER THINGS THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS TO MIND THAT YOU COULD PLACE ASIDE FOR A SEASON WHILE YOU FOCUS ON MORE PRAYER.

BY P. DOUGLAS SMALL

Appendix B

GUIDELINES FOR THE DANIEL FAST

THE DANIEL FOOD FAST IS FOR THE BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT. WHILE SOME MAY WANT TO CONSIDER ALTERNATE METHODS FOR EXPRESSING SELF-DISCIPLINE FOR SPIRITUAL PURPOSES, THE FOLLOWING WILL ASSIST THOSE WANTING TO PARTICIPATE IN A DANIEL FOOD FAST.

THE BIBLE TEACHES US THAT WE ARE A SPIRIT, WE HAVE A SOUL AND WE LIVE IN A BODY. THE DANIEL FOOD FAST AFFECTS ALL THREE PARTS OF US AS WE ENTER INTO A PERIOD OF TIME FOR FOCUSED PRAYER AND FASTING.

THE BODY

CERTAINLY OUR BODIES ARE AFFECTED AS OUR DIET IS CHANGED, FOR SOME IN VERY DRAMATIC WAYS, DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST. MANY MEN AND WOMEN EXPERIENCE DETOXING FROM CAFFEINE, CHEMICALS AND SUGAR. THE SYMPTOMS ARE MOST OFTEN HEADACHES, LEG CRAMPS, FATIGUE AND MALAISE. MOST PEOPLE LOSE WEIGHT DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST. AND MANY REPORT HEALINGS FROM DIABETES, ALLERGIES, ARTHRITIS AND CANCER.

THE SOUL

FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO AS "THE FLESH" IN THE BIBLE, THE SOUL IS ALSO GREATLY IMPACTED DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST. THE SOUL IS THE SEAT OF OUR EMOTIONS, INTELLECT, PERSONALITY AND WILL. IT IS IN THE "SOULISH REALM" WHERE WE EXPERIENCE CRAVINGS, FRUSTRATION, ANGER ... AND EVEN HAPPINESS. DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST, YOUR SOUL MAY VERY WELL REBEL AGAINST THE DRAMATIC CHANGE IN YOUR DIET. EXPERIENCING AND WINNING THIS BATTLE OVER THE FLESH IS OFTEN ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL LESSONS OF THE DANIEL FOOD FAST.

THE SPIRIT

OUR SPIRIT IS THAT BORN-AGAIN PART OF US THAT SURRENDERS TO GOD AND THEN ABIDES WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON. OUR SPIRIT IS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN WE YIELD TO HIM. DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST, WE WANT TO PUT OUR SPIRIT IN CHARGE OF THE OTHER TWO PARTS OF US. WHEN OUR FLESH IS ACTING OUT WITH A CRAVING, WE TAKE CONTROL OF IT WITH OUR SPIRIT (JUST AS A PARENT TAKES CONTROL OF A REBELLIOUS CHILD).

WHAT IF YOU HAVE HEALTH ISSUES?

FASTING SHOULD NEVER BRING HARM TO THE BODY. AND IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS, BE SURE TO CONSULT YOUR HEALTH PROFESSIONAL BEFORE GOING ON THE DANIEL FOOD FAST OR MAKING ANY MAJOR DIETARY CHANGE. THE DANIEL FOOD FAST IS A VERY HEALTHY WAY TO EAT! SO HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WILL SUPPORT THIS EATING PLAN BUT MIGHT SUGGEST A FEW MODIFICATIONS IF YOU HAVE HEALTH ISSUES THAT NEED SPECIAL ATTENTION. FOR EXAMPLE, PREGNANT AND NURSING MOTHERS MIGHT GET INSTRUCTIONS TO ADD FISH, CHICKEN AND CHEESE INTO THE DANIEL FOOD FAST BUT OTHERWISE STAY THE COURSE. DIABETICS MAY NEED TO ADD MORE CARBOHYDRATES OR INCLUDE CHICKEN AND FISH. ALSO, THOSE WHO ARE ESPECIALLY ACTIVE EITHER THROUGH SPORTS, BODYBUILDING OR VOCATION MAY NEED TO SLIGHTLY ALTER THE EATING PLAN.

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR ... AND BY THE WAY, BEING ADDICTED TO SNICKERS AND COKE DON'T COUNT AS A SPECIAL NEED!.

BY P. DOUGLAS SMALL

Appendix B CONTINUED...

GUIDELINES FOR THE DANIEL FAST

WHAT IS THE DANIEL FOOD FAST?

THE DANIEL FOOD FAST IS A BIBLICALLY BASED PARTIAL FAST. IT IS A METHOD OF FASTING THAT MEN, WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE USING AS THEY ENTER INTO THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER AND FASTING.

THERE ARE TWO ANCHORING SCRIPTURES FOR THE DANIEL FOOD FAST. IN DANIEL 1, THE PROPHET ATE ONLY VEGETABLES (THAT WOULD HAVE INCLUDED FRUITS) AND DRANK ONLY WATER. SO FROM THESE SCRIPTURES WE GET TWO OF THE GUIDELINES FOR THE FAST:

- 1. ONLY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**
- 2. ONLY WATER FOR A BEVERAGE**

THEN IN DANIEL 10, WE READ THAT THE PROPHET ATE NO MEAT NOR ANY PRECIOUS BREADS OR FOODS AND HE DRANK NO WINE FOR 21 DAYS. OF COURSE, THE VAST MAJORITY OF BAPTISTS ARE TOTAL ABSTAINERS FROM ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. SO FROM THIS SCRIPTURE, WE GET A THIRD GUIDELINE:

3. NO SWEETENERS AND NO BREADS

ANOTHER IMPORTANT GUIDELINE IS DRAWN FROM JEWISH FASTING PRINCIPLES, WHERE NO LEAVEN IS USED DURING THE FAST. THAT'S WHY YEAST, BAKING POWDER AND THE LIKE ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE DANIEL FOOD FAST.

FINALLY, WITH ALL THE ABOVE PUZZLE PIECES, WE CONCLUDE THAT NO ARTIFICIAL OR PROCESSED FOODS NOR ANY CHEMICALS ARE ALLOWED ON THE DANIEL FOOD FAST. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE EATING PLAN ON THE DANIEL FOOD FAST, I OFTEN SAY IT IS A "VEGAN DIET WITH EVEN MORE RESTRICTIONS."

BE SURE TO READ THE INGREDIENTS ON LABELS OF PREPARED FOODS TO MAKE SURE THEY ONLY INCLUDE DANIEL FOOD FAST FRIENDLY INGREDIENTS.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF

DURING YOUR DANIEL FOOD FAST YOU WILL HAVE MANY TIMES WHEN YOU MIGHT WANT TO "STRETCH THE RULES" A LITTLE BIT. FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN THOUGH THE GUIDELINES SAY WE ARE TO DRINK ONLY WATER... YOU CONCLUDE THAT HERBAL TEAS ARE VEGETABLES AND WATER IS WATER AND THEREFORE YOU WILL GO AHEAD AND DRINK HERBAL TEAS DURING THE DANIEL FOOD FAST.

BUT I ENCOURAGE YOU TO LEARN A POWERFUL SPIRITUAL LESSON BY ASKING YOURSELF (EXAMINING YOUR HEART) THE QUESTION, "WHY DO YOU WANT THE HERBAL TEAS?" MY GUESS IS THAT THE ANSWER WILL BE, "WELL, I JUST WANT THEM. I CAN'T DRINK ONLY WATER. I HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING ELSE. THE DANIEL FOOD FAST TEACHES US TO DENY OUR "SELVES" AND INSTEAD PUT OUR SPIRIT IN CONTROL OVER OUR FLESH. AS YOU PLAN YOUR MEALS AND EAT YOUR FOOD, KEEP IN MIND THAT THE DEFINITION OF A FAST IS TO DENY FOOD FOR A SPIRITUAL PURPOSE.