

Agape House of Worship
Wednesday Bible Study

Study Series: Fasting: The Key that Opens Doors
Part 2: Fasting: The Key to a Powerful Life

Wednesday, January 15, 2025
Teacher: Pastor Jide Lawore

Introduction:

In Part 1 of this series, we looked at how fasting opens door into a deeper walk with God. Today in Part 2, we will look at how fasting open doors for us in life. Fasting when combines with prayer is one of the most powerful spiritual arsenals that God has given us on earth. True fasting adds earnestness to your prayer and brings humility and alignment with God. It breaks the power of flesh and demons. It kills unbelief and brings answers to prayer when nothing else works. The great evangelist Leonard Ravenhill said that prayer is not preparation for the battle – prayer IS the battle. And of all the things we can do to enhance the power and focus of prayer, fasting is doubtless the most potent.

***James 5:16-18** “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. 17 Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! 18 Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops. (NLT)*

***Ezra 8:23** “So we fasted and earnestly prayed that our God would take care of us, and he heard our prayer.” (NLT)*

The Role of Prayer in the Believer’s Life

Let me say this before we go further, you can be a true Christian and even go a certain distance in God and experience many things without fasting much. However, I dare say that the highest, richest and most powerful blessings always go to those who, together with other disciplines, practice the art of fasting and prayer. Many of the most significant Biblical characters were all men of fasting and prayer.

- Jesus, the Son of God, was a man of fasting and prayer (Matthew 4:2).
- Apostle Paul labored “in fasting often”. (2 Corinthians 11:27 NKJV).
- Moses fasted 40 days on two occasions. Exodus 34:28-35, Deu 9:18
- Elijah fasted 40 days. 1 Kings 19:8
- The early church fasted before starting any major work. Acts 13:1-3, Acts 14:23
- The greatest spiritual leaders of the 20th century who are making an impact are all men of fasting of prayer.

If done right, fasting counts a lot with God. In these last days I believe God is counting on us as Christians to move in His power and that will involve biblical fasting and prayer.

The Power of Fasting and Prayer

1. Fasting helps to subdue the flesh:

Question: What is the bible definition of “the flesh”?

The bible is pretty clear that for believers, our greatest impediment to a truly enriching spiritual life is the flesh. “The flesh” (also called the natural man or old sin nature) is our sinful nature that gives us the susceptibility to a life of sin and fulfilling our desires instead of that of God. (Romans 7:14-24). It is the result of the original sin (Genesis 2:17). When we fast, we weaken the flesh by starving it of its desires and lust, thereby allowing our spirit to win the battle.

***Galatians 5:17** – “For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.”*

***Matthew 26:41** - “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

2. Fasting promotes spiritual sensitivity needed to see open doors:

Fasting does not earn us more of God, but it does make us more sensitive to the Holy Spirit. The new level of intimacy in God leads us to a new level of maturity in the Spirit. When we detox the spirit and become consumed with desire and praise for God, we become sensitive to His voice. Fasting is a way of sowing to please the Spirit which leads to a life of walking in the Spirit.

Galatians 6:8 - Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Galatians 5:16 - "So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Sensitivity to God, leads to a better ability to hear God, discern His will and to work in the wisdom of God.

3. Fasting is the key to releasing God's power in your life:

Jesus did not begin His earthly ministry until after 40 days of fasting and prayer. He also commanded His disciples to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" before they were to launch out to start fulfilling the great commission. Many people believe this includes fasting and prayer.

Luke 4:14 - Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. (NIV)

Luke 24:49 - "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." (NKJV)

Acts 13:2-3 - While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (NIV)

Question: What do all these verses have in common?

4. Fasting leads to victory in spiritual warfare:

Matthew 17:21 - "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (NKJV)

It is clear that as believers we are in warfare. Satan, the enemy of our soul is constantly waging war against us (1 Peter 5:8). The bible also clearly says "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3 ESV). Hence, fasting is very critical to deliverance and spiritual warfare. When we fast, we are not forcing God to do something, but are resisting supernatural strongholds and powers who are trying to invade our God-given territories (Psalm 115:16, Mark 3:27). That is why Jesus says: "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting".

Conclusion

In Matthew 17:21, Jesus shared a spiritual truth: there are some kinds of issues (addictions, rejections and even demons) that can only be overcome by prayer and fasting. When you fast, you partner with God to bring His power to bare. He desires to have a divine partnership with you in the area of prayer and fasting for your family, your life and His purpose for you. There are times when God requires us to take private, physical action to receive a spiritual blessing. There's a connection between private, physical sacrifice and what God releases spiritually in the Bible. Hence, I want to encourage you to take on the spiritual discipline of fasting.