

How Fasting Creates Spiritual Hunger

“Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him a good route for us, our little ones, and all our substance” (Ezra 8:21).

Have you ever thought, *I want to have more of a hunger for God*? Some years ago, I was in prayer one morning when I sensed the need for more spiritual hunger. I asked God to impart this hunger within me. As I reordered my prayers in my journal, I waited for His response.

As quickly as I could write, He answered me. He showed me that I was the one responsible for my diminished hunger level. He told me that if I wasn't hungry, it was because I was already fulfilled with the cares, pleasures and distractions of this world. He told me that if I wanted to hunger spiritually in the midst of the abundance of things, I would need to fast. He revealed that I would need to fast the things that would distract, comfort or distress me.

God was calling me to fast the things that pulled me from His presence. So for a period of time I abstained from TV, magazines, telephone calls that were not business-related and desserts. These were my distractions—yours may be quite different! During this time of fasting, I rearranged my schedule to accommodate more prayer and Bible reading.

I did this for about a month, and when the month was over, I discovered that I had lost my appetite for some of the things I had laid aside. I also sensed an increase in discernment. I had previously been desensitized by the abundance of noise, voices and other distractions. Now it was easier to hear God's voice. The natural noise level around me had not varied; it

was the noise level in my mind that had been reduced.

This time of year is often very full. Many of us spend this season finalizing projects at work, attending holiday parties, and traveling to spend time with those we love. But even now I encourage you to take stock of your hunger to God. Are you growing in desire for the things of heaven? Or has your hunger gone stagnant or even diminished? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a strategy regarding the things you can remove for a time so that His voice will be amplified in your life.

When you consecrate a season for hearing from and communing with God, your soul will be refreshed! May both your fullness and your fasting be infused with the strength that comes from delighting in God.

Adapted from The True Measure of a Woman: Discover Your Intrinsic Value and See Yourself as God Does (Charisma House, 2007) by Lisa Bevere.