

Jentezen Franklin: How to Fast for Your Profound Breakthrough

Very early on in my ministry I discovered the power and the need for fasting. I learned this as a teenager when I participated in my very first fast. Little did I know then that this powerful act would have such a profound effect on the ministry God had for me and on the lives I have come in contact with, and that includes my own family. Since we began the 21-day fast at our church over 15 years ago, we have seen miracle after miracle and breakthrough after breakthrough and not just during that 21 days, but over the rest of the year, as well.

Fasting for Your Breakthrough

When you need God's wisdom for any kind of breakthrough, fast. Matthew 6:33 says to "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you." Seek Him first, and He'll add blessings continually. Some of the greatest financial breakthroughs in the history of our church have come during a fast. In fact, we received our first one million dollar offering from a member when we were on a fast. Time and time again, God has moved in incredible ways on the church's finances and our personal finances during seasons of prayer and fasting.

God's desire is to bless you so you can be a blessing. He also loves to come to your rescue when there is true confession, repentance and a sincere desire to do what is right. I have seen more couples overcome financial ruin or major financial setbacks in seasons of fasting and praying than at any other time.

If you seek a closer walk with God, consider fasting. If you

are in desperate need of a breakthrough, fast. If you desire an access and an intimacy with God like you have never known, fast. The list of biblical characters who fasted reads like a list of MVPs of Scripture. Moses the lawgiver, David the king, Elijah the prophet, Esther the queen, Daniel the adviser to kings, Anna the prophetess, Paul the apostle and Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God—all of these and more fasted, and some more than once.

Throughout Scripture, fasting refers to abstaining from food, and sometimes food and drink, for spiritual purposes. But fasting is more than just going without food; it involves spiritual intensity and intercession. Fasting should always be accompanied with prayer, worship, and Bible study. We believe that there is strength and encouragement when we fast in community.

A Pure Heart is All That is Required

Fasting should never be motivated by thinking that fasting will move God to do what we want Him to do and on our terms. He is not a God of “our terms.” We could never manipulate God. The purpose of our fasting is to move us closer to God and to seek his will in our lives.

One of the greatest spiritual benefits of fasting is becoming more aware of our own inadequacies and God’s adequacy; becoming more aware of our own failings and his self-sufficiency. The purpose of all disciplines, including fasting, is to change us so that we may become more Christ-like. Fasting helps us to listen to what God wants us to be and do and opens doors we could never open without the anointing that fasting brings.

“‘Yet even now,’ declares the Lord, ‘Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning.’”—Joel 2:12

Set Apart for a Season

Biblical fasting is setting yourself apart from the normal routines of daily life by abstaining from food for a specific period of time for a spiritual purpose—the purpose of communication, revelation, and a deeper relationship with the Lord. It is a discipline that has the power to release the anointing, favor, and blessing of God in the life of a Christian.

In Matthew 6, Jesus talks about three duties of every Christian: giving, praying, and fasting. Notice in the scripture reference below he doesn't use the word "if." He uses the word "when" just like He does in the other parts of Matthew chapter 6 when He talks about praying and giving. These are three disciplines Jesus teaches about early on in His ministry. They weren't just introduced as a choice or an option here in chapter 6—they were assumptions of life in the faith.

"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces so they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you will not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."—Matthew 6:16-18

Fasting is more about gaining a closer relationship with the Lord and pressing in for that breakthrough you need and less about what you're giving up, which is food.

It is God's will to bless His people and He loves nothing more than helping you do what you cannot do without Him. His desire is for you to recognize your total dependency on Him for your everything. But more than all that, His desire is for you to recognize just how deep and how devoted His love is for you and when you set yourself apart from your normal routine just to spend more focused time with Him—it moves His heart, and His hand.

There's More

God wants to bring increase to your life. Fasting helps release the increase. When people in the Bible fasted, it not only brought deliverance from crisis and solutions to unsolvable problems, it also released financial resources and increase into the hands of God's people. God is your source for your joy, your finances, your business, your healing, your talents and your gifts. He is the source for increase in all areas of your life. Fasting helps release that increase from the spiritual and into the physical world. He takes your extraordinary sacrifice and attention and releases supernatural revelation, intervention, and clarity. (Daniel 2: 21-22)

Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life.

Fasting and prayer can also work on a much grander scale.

According to Scripture, personal experience and observation,

I am convinced that when God's people fast with the proper biblical motive—seeking God's face not His hand—with a broken, repentant and contrite spirit,

“God will hear from heaven and heal our lives, our churches, our communities, our nation and world. Fasting and prayer can bring about revival—a change in the direction of our nation, the nations of earth and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.” – Bill Bright

A broken and contrite heart is incredibly attractive to a God who wants to be your your food. God empowered and equipped Nehemiah to rebuild the city in a ridiculously short period of time with an enemy just a football field away taunting and threatening him every step of the way. You may not be rebuilding city walls, but God has put a dream in your heart.

Fast and pray for His revelation and direction to accomplish the task that you are faced with, then watch and see how God bridges the gap between your sacrifice and efforts and His power and provision. {eoa}

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