

{ Day 171 }

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. —Acts 14:23

Jesus knew that His disciples' hearts had become accustomed to His physical presence as He gazed into their eyes and communicated His affection, beauty, and stunning wisdom to them every day. He knew that once He had died and ascended, fasting would help them recover some of the wonderful reality that they had experienced with Him in His physical presence with them. Christ knew that once He was gone, the disciples' desire, longing, and lovesickness for Him would cause them to mourn to be close to Him as in the days that He walked with them. That hunger to recover that same sense of closeness to Him would prove to be a key to their intimacy, power, anointing, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Only Jesus could have thought of the unique paradigm to respond to spiritual lovesickness. Jesus combined the two seemingly divergent ideas into one.

{ PRAYER STARTER }

Jesus, I cannot imagine the emptiness Your disciples felt when You left them to return to heaven. But that emptiness drew them into a new experience of fellowship with Your precious Holy Spirit. Let that experience be mine, Lord, and reveal Yourself through Your Spirit to my longing heart.

**No other religion in the world has ever linked
fasting to lovesickness.**