

## Seek Pt 2. Worship, Clarity & Breakthrough

Today we kick off the 21 day time of intentional fasting & prayer in our 4 week Seek Series.

Last Week Matt shared about biblical fasting that

FASTING always went hand in hand with Prayer.

We talked about different types of Fasts...

Liquid Fasts

Daniel Fast

Comfort Fast

AND HOW PRAYER makes these fasts a FAST & not just starvation. :)

In Matthew 6 Jesus is speaking to the people & he says..

When you give..... give like this...

When you pray..... pray like this....

When you FAST... fast like this.....

See the Hebrews had certain disciplines or habits BUILT into their lives and faith walk.

So Jesus was instructing them about something he already expected them to be doing.

As we read through the New Testament time and time again Jesus and the apostles reaffirm these disciplines as patterns for spiritual growth.

Not as rote tradition, but avenues and spaces for INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD and REVELATION OF TRUTH and PARTNERSHIP with God and His work in our lives and the World around us.

As I go back and look at these 3 practices

Giving  
Prayer  
Fasting

One theme resounds in my mind....

Giving is an act of worship.....

At the end of each service here we continue our worship by receiving tithes and offerings. This is an act of worship and faith and obedience as we show outwardly our inward dependence for the limitless God to be the true source of provision in our needs.

Prayer is also an act of worship....

As I bring myself, my life, my needs before the Lord in prayer I am outwardly expressing my inward belief and faith that He hears my prayers & He will move on my behalf because His Word promises to do so. I remind myself that my God is bigger than my problems - I worship his power to move on my behalf.

Fasting is an act of worship.....

As I surrender parts of my everyday in exchange for more time with him I am literally outwardly expressing my inward dependence on Him....

Jesus said that He is the bread of life.

Jesus said that to do the will of the Father is His food.

Fasting is an outward expression that God matters more than those other things to me....

More than food....

More than comfort...

More than people...

More than entertainment...

Fasting reveals to Him & reminds my flesh that I desire Him more than any other thing.

See none of these things should be done out of compulsion - or obligation.

Prayer Giving & Fasting are disciplines yes. Meaning they are utilitarian - but they are powerful in our lives when they are done from a place of worship rather than obligation.

God desires that we give Him our best cause thats what we want to DO.

He gave His best for us because it's what HE WANTED to do!

We want to bless God with our WORSHIP.

ITS A FREE WILL OFFERING.

We will all probably start our fast in different places...

- I'm along for the ride. Not sure what I'm doing but sure - let's give it a try.

Open minded but no real expectations - God will meet you there.

- I hate this. I love my pop. But I want to love God more, so I'm gonna give up my pop.

Just the thought of it is kicking our flesh's butt. It's met with immediate resistance - but we are determined to grow closer to God. He will meet you there. Desires will start to transform. Freedom will start to shake you loose.

- I CANT WAIT!

You've experienced the breakthrough that comes from this time of seeking God and you are sold out.

You start early.

You fast longer.

You fill journals with thoughts, revelations, prayers.

You don't just take spoonfuls of God you are dumping the whole bowl down your throat and asking for more.

Well, good news for you! God is gonna meet you there.

Remember He is a respecter of Faith. So wherever your faith level is at - He's gonna show up for you!

The thing I want you to remember when it gets hard and you're tempted to break your fast - remember you're in the middle of an act of worship - and nothing is really more desirable than Him.

Like Matt said last week - Fasting isn't a magic formula & fasting w/o prayer is dieting at best!

We can count calories & go without anytime we want. Right?

Our fasting must be accompanied by replacement.

We must not just go without - we must make an exchange -

No food for prayer.

No screens for time in the Word.

No radio for time in Worship.

We must engage our spirit man in this absence of food or comfort to reap the benefits of a fast.

Fasting from a place of worship releases

1. Uncommon clarity

NOISE vs DIALING INTO THE VOICE & PRESENCE OF GOD

Like an old fashioned radio.....

2. Uncommon power

Matt 17:19

**19** Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, “Why could we not drive it out?” **20** He answered, “Because of your little faith [your lack of trust and confidence in the power of God]; for I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you, [c]if you have [living] faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and [if it is God’s will] it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. **21** [d][But this kind of demon does not go out except by prayer and fasting.]”

Daniel 10

**10** Then behold, a hand touched me and set me unsteadily on my [d]hands and knees. **11** So he said to me, “O Daniel, you highly regarded *and* greatly beloved man, understand the words that I am about to say to you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And while he was saying this word to me, I stood up trembling. **12** Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. **13** But the [e]prince of the kingdom of Persia was standing in opposition to me for twenty-one days. Then, behold, Michael, one of the chief [of the celestial] princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. **14** Now I have come to make you understand.....

Just like Jesus told the disciples that this particular demon would only come out with fasting and prayer so did this angel Gabriel reveal that Daniel’s persistence in fasting & prayer is what kept the Angel in this spiritual battle for so long on His behalf for Daniels request of understanding.

Fasting strengthens your Spirit man as well as partners with God and ministering or warring angels in the spiritual realm to push an answer to prayer through to THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN.

So what about this prayer piece?

Jesus said - this type of demon only comes out by fasting AND PRAYER...

I find most people who struggle to have a consistent prayer life struggle for a few reasons...

1- they didn't grow up with a family or parent disciplined in prayer - so there's no habit built for it in their lives.

2- they don't know how or what to pray.....

3- they don't enjoy praying as they understand it.

Well....

It takes 21 days to form a new habit - so guess what that's gonna be - PRAYING! :)

Through this Seek Series you'll learn how to pray and you'll become acquainted with different prayer patterns -

Prayer patterns are biblical models of prayer that gives us the nuts and bolts to personalize the habit of prayer...

As prayer becomes more personal we start to enjoy it more and more!

That is how prayer becomes irresistible and these disciplines become a joy!

A pathway to intimacy and closeness with God.....

Story of African village..... Prayer closets and beaten path or overgrown path....

Practical Steps to Prayer:

1. Set a Time...

If you're praying during the meals your fasting - then on lunch break head out to your car.... at dinner off to your room to seek God with the fan on so you don't smell dinner :)

If you don't set an appointment to pray - like treat it like a calendared activity - anything else will push it aside.

Ps 55:16-17

But I will call on God,  
and the Lord will rescue me.  
Morning, noon, and night  
I cry out in my distress,  
and the Lord hears my voice.

2. Set a place...

In Mark the Bible says Jesus went early before the sun rose to a solitary place to pray...

In Luke 11 it says he went to a certain place to pray and in

Luke 22 it says

AS WAS HIS CUSTOM - He went up to the Mount of Olives and when He came to a certain place & prayed...

In Matt 6 Jesus says to us - BUT YOU - when you pray go into your room & prayer to your Father in a secret place....

When you set a specific place to pray you receive a specific grace to pray....

It can be your car....

Bedroom....

A spot in the LR....

For me its at the kitchen island or here in this sanctuary.....

3. Have a plan...

If you fail to have a plan on how to pray, your plan to pray will fail.

There are many different ways to pray - the important thing is you find a pattern or patterns that fit you and your personality and stick with it!

That's why we've provided these pray first booklets for you...