

My name is Sarah Boonstra. I'm a wife and a mom of three. I consider myself a professional volunteer, investing time in the rising generations. The most important thing to know about me is that years ago God walloped me over the head with the message to read my Bible every day and that has forever changed my relationship to Him. That practice has also impacted on every other relationship in my life. I live in Colorado but am connected to the River CRC through my brother Scott, who has been kind enough to believe that I have good things to share.

Fasting

Friday, February 20

Prayer to begin:

Lord, we invite you into this space, turning our attention towards you. God, we confess that we frequently miss what you are doing. We do not want to miss the gifts that you have for us. Would you give us eyes to see? Please speak to us as we turn our hearts towards you.

*Read Exodus 34:10-27 and Matthew 4:1-11*

We've learned about the value of intentional time with God, thirsting to learn His character, causing us to respond in humility and worship. The final piece of the puzzle of fasting is listening to God's instruction.

God knew the Israelites. He knew all the ways they'd been shaped by life in Egypt. He knew they were easily distracted and He knew they were forgetful. That's why He gave Moses such specific instructions to pass on to the Israelites. He knew they'd be tempted by the people of the new promised land. So, God gave them instructions on celebrations to help them remember who He was and who they were to Him.

God also knows us intimately. He created us and knows more about us than we know ourselves. He knows we're a forgetful people. Which is why God gave us Lent. He gave us an opportunity for a reset each year. To help us to remember who He is to us and what He's done for us.

When Jesus was tempted in the desert, Satan tried to seduce him with three things:

1. To step ahead of God and satisfy his hunger immediately
2. Testing God's love and promises to Him
3. Gaining power and honor without the cross

In each situation Jesus *knew*, head and the heart *knew*, that Satan was wrong. Jesus withstood the temptations because he was relying on God. God knows these same three temptations face us every day and He provided the fasting of Lent to help us remember what is true.

That is the invitation of Lent: to let go of the ways we rely on things outside of God, to remind ourselves, again and again, that God has already met our needs and will continue to meet our needs until the very end.

Lent is long and can be difficult because God reminds us that when we hunger, we will be filled when we hunger for God. He also knows that we will not be formed in His image if we rush ahead.

Through fasting, God invites us to put our trust in Him fully. Not testing Him at every turn. Fasting is a regular choice we can make to rely on God.

Finally, by not filling our every desire through the season of Lent, God is inviting us to humble ourselves in the same way that Jesus humbled himself on the cross. God alone deserves the glory and the power, and anything we receive should be laid down in worship to Him.

As you finish your observance of Lent, with fasting as a practice, I pray that you carve out intentional time to be with God, to learn His character. I pray that your response is humility and worship. Finally, I pray that as you spend time in His presence, He reveals His instructions to you so that you may know God meets your every need.