

## Fasting Encouragement Day 2 - Pastor Josh

Hello my friends, I want to greet you today with the beginning of 2 Peter 1, the passage we're going to be looking at today. ***May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*** I'm praying that the joy and life of the Holy Spirit would overflow from your innermost being today, refreshing you and all those who come in contact with you today.

Today I would like to give a bit of an overview of one of the passages we're chewing on during the fast, 2 Peter 1:3-10. I'll be looking at this verse in the English Standard Version (ESV), so if you can, join me and read it from there now.

Over the next few weeks we're going to be talking about fruitfulness, virtues, the power of the Holy Spirit WITHIN us and expressed THROUGH us. I want to set the stage for us to navigate this conversation from the starting point of the finished work of Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:30 (KJV) says ***"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— 31 that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."*** Did you catch that? "...who became FOR us...". Everything that Jesus is, everything He invites us to be, is found in his complete and perfect humanity, which has been deposited in you as a gift by the Holy Spirit. Christ in us truly is the hope of Glory. This is the reality we trust in by faith, and this is the truth we partner with through obedience.

Think of it this way. Faith and obedience are two stages of the fruit making process. Faith is the seed (finished work), and obedience is the fruit (reproduced in us). The seed of Christ is planted in every believer and has the capacity to grow into His fullness. But when a garden is overrun with weeds (don't ask me how I know), a seed is unable to grow to its full capacity. This is often an image of us. The enemy would love for us to believe that we're just not patient, or we don't have it in us to love "that" person, that we're lacking capacity altogether. But this isn't the truth. The capacity and potential to bear every fruit dwells in you because ***"3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence"***. So, our prayer is not to acquire something we don't already have, but to **grow** in that which is already planted within us. It's not a matter of IF we have patience, it's a matter of what is restricting the growth of patience in us.

The next step requires attentiveness to the condition of our garden, it requires effort and partnership with the Holy Spirit to uproot whatever in us is restricting the growth of His fruit. The weeds for me are usually selfishness, pride, unforgiveness, or just believing the lie that I don't have the fruit I need in that moment. The great news is that the Holy Spirit is patient with us, and He's constantly setting us up to put into practice the fruit He's providing. This is what I believe Peter is getting at when he says "make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue...knowledge..." etc. Don't for one minute think that you lack something, for Christ has supplied it all! He has supplied it

not simply for you to possess, but for you to walk in! To be a participant of the divine nature means to ACT in alignment with the nature of Christ.

So, submit to the work and the leadership of the Holy Spirit today. Ask the Spirit to show you the immeasurable gift of Christ in you. Ask what might be restricting the growth of certain fruit of the Spirit in your life and fearlessly uproot it. Then look for every opportunity to participate in and act on Christ's divine nature in you!