



**UNTO THE LORD - 7 DAY FAST
DAY 5
July 27th, 2023**

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Fasting is about experiencing more of God. When we deprive our physical bodies of food, our spiritual senses are heightened and we become more sensitive to God and the things of God. We experience Jesus on a deeper level. Fasting brings us into a deeper revelation of His power, love, affections and emotions - the heart of God. Fasting is a time of intimacy with the Lord, a time to set our hearts, our minds and our affections on our heavenly Bridegroom.

The Holy Spirit is preparing the Bride of Christ for the coming days of glory and opposition. By living a fasted lifestyle, we cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He leads us into the same intimacy and power seen in the New Testament church. Our desire is to position our hearts to encounter Jesus as our Bridegroom. Fasting is the road that leads us into that encounter and revelation.

Jesus described the Kingdom of God as a wedding, and the Father as the One arranging a glorious marriage for His Son (Matthew 22:2). This is the highest revelation of the Kingdom of God. It is the revelation of Jesus as our Bridegroom, and of us as His cherished Bride.

Jesus as our Bridegroom has a burning desire and fiery affections toward us. Jesus told the Pharisees the day would come when the Bridegroom would be taken away, and then the disciples would fast out of longing for Him (Matthew 9:15). The Bride of Christ is meant to long for His return, His Second Coming, and fasting is one way to express this longing - making Jesus our focus, fixing our eyes and our hearts upon Him.

Revelation 22:17

And the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!"

And let him who hears say, "Come!"

And let him who thirsts come.

Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

We hunger and thirst for Jesus.

The Bridegroom message is a call to active intimacy with God. God has invited us to experience the deep things of His heart. He has opened Himself up for us to understand and feel His emotions, desires and affections.

Let's talk about the depth of the love of Jesus and His emotions.

Jesus is filled with tender mercy. He is gentle with us in our weakness as we are maturing. David proclaimed in Psalm 18:35 that God's gentleness made him great.

Jesus has a heart filled with gladness, a happy heart. God anointed Jesus with the oil of gladness more than any of His companions (Hebrews 1:9).

Jesus' emotions are filled with fiery affections for us. Jesus feels about us the same way the Father feels about Him.

John 15:19 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love." The depth of the Father's love is unfathomable, and we share in the very same love.

Jesus the Bridegroom is zealous. The God of affection is an all-consuming fire. With fierce zeal, He consumes all that hinders love in us, everything that gets in the way. He will not have only a portion of our hearts. He wants the entirety of our hearts and He will continue to jealously pursue every aspect of our lives until we are fully His.

Jesus' emotions for us and His commitment to us as a lovesick God are at the core of the Bridegroom message. He is a Bridegroom whose heart burns in holy love for His Bride. He desires intimacy with human beings. We are His eternal companions. Jesus shares with us that which the Father has given Him. He shares with us His heart.

Living according to the reality of Jesus being our heavenly Bridegroom and viewing ourselves as His cherished Bride is the only way we can prepare for the

Lord's return. The Lord has a plan to awaken the people of God. He will unveil Himself to them as a Bridegroom through prayer and fasting.

Jesus invites us to know Him as our Bridegroom and to experience the rewards of prayer and fasting. God beckons us to come near Him. Oh, that we would respond to this invitation wholeheartedly.

I want to encourage you to develop a lifestyle of fasting, to fast at least one day a week, or better yet, two days a week. For those who are a part of Victory, Tuesdays and Saturdays are good fasting days because of Prayer on Tuesday night and Service on Saturday night. The Bride of Christ is meant to long for His return, His Second Coming, and fasting is one way we express this longing. So, let's develop a lifestyle of fasting.

I will end with Psalm 27:4 from The Passion Translation:

Here's the one thing I crave from God,

The one thing I seek above all else:

I want the privilege of living with Him every moment in His house, Finding the sweet loveliness of His face;

Filled with awe, delighting in His glory and grace.

I want to live my life so close to Him

That He takes pleasure in my every prayer.

Take this opportunity during our Unto the Lord Fast to draw closer to our Heavenly Bridegroom.

He is the desire of our hearts...