

# THE GOD FAST

God responds to the way – not the fact – that we fast.

## KEY POINTS

- ❖ Fasting is the spiritual discipline of withholding food from our physical body for a period of time in order to draw closer to God with our soul and spirit.
- ❖ Over time, many have come to see fasting as the quickest and surest way to answered prayers. People say, “I’m fasting for my husband to get saved.” Or, “I’m fasting for a new job.” Or, “I’m fasting to find God’s will for my life.”
- ❖ The word of God gives many examples of and reasons for people fasting:
  - As a sign of national mourning (e.g. 2 Samuel 1:12, the death of Saul);
  - For healing (e.g. 2 Sam. 12:16, David praying for his son);
  - For deliverance and protection (e.g. 2 Chronicles 20: 1-4, Jehoshaphat against the Moabites and Amonites; Esther 4:16, Esther and her people against Haman’s plot);
  - As a sign of penitence (e.g. Leviticus 23:26-28, the Day of Atonement for the sins of nation; Jonah 3:5-10, the people of Nineveh; fasting is ‘humbling and afflicting the soul’ – see Psalm 35:13, Isaiah 58:5);
  - For power over demonic forces (e.g. Mark 9:29);
  - As a regular spiritual discipline (e.g. Mark 2:18, Pharisees and the disciples of John fasted; Luke 18:12, the Pharisee who ‘fasted twice a week’ vs. the publican);
  - As one of the ways in which we “minister” to God (e.g. Acts 13:2-3)
- ❖ When we fast (whatever the reason), we are quickly forced to acknowledge our physical frailty, and our basic, undeniable need for God. He is the only One who can provide the basic essentials for the sustenance of our life – soul, body and spirit.
- ❖ Fasting helps us remember this and gratefully say, “Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits” (Ps. 68:19 KJV).
- ❖ Fasting is a personal experience. No one can put my body under subjection but me. And the same is true for you.
- ❖ In the book of the prophet Isaiah we learn how to fast and how not to fast if we truly want God to act on our behalf.
- ❖ In chapter 58, Isaiah first covers activities and attitudes that make our fasts *unacceptable* to God: **DO NOT**, he says:
  - practice false humility, just “for show” (v. 3,5)
  - serve your own selfish interests (v. 3)
  - exploit your employees (v. 3)
  - engage in quarrels and strife (v. 4)
  - wickedly strike out at others (v. 4)
  - falsely appear penitent and contrite and holy (v. 5)
- ❖ Here, we see that *the way we live* affects the success of our fasting.

## KEY SCRIPTURES:

Isaiah 58:1-12; Leviticus 23:27-32;  
Jeremiah 14:1-15:4; Mark 9:29; Acts 13:2-3

- ❖ And what is the result of unacceptable fasting? As Isaiah tells us in verse 4, God will neither hear nor respond to our prayers. (See Jeremiah 14:1 – 15:4 (\*14:7-9) for another example of God rejecting fasting and prayer due to blatant and consistent sin.)
- ❖ So, then, what are the actions and attitudes for an acceptable fast, and what are the results? Chapter 58 continues...**DO:**
  - “Loose the chains of injustice” (v. 6, NIV)
  - release people from oppression (v. 6)
  - feed the hungry, bring the homeless poor to your home and clothe the naked (v. 7)
  - do good to your own relatives (v. 7)
- ❖ Jesus purchased salvation at Calvary and gives it freely, not based on our good works.
- ❖ Yet He is very clearly concerned about human interactions and pays close attention to our heart condition, our attitudes and our actions.
- ❖ So much so that He reiterates the list of “Do’s” and “Don’ts” in verses 9 and 10:
  - Remove the yoke
  - Don’t point fingers of blame at others
  - Don’t speak evil of anyone
  - Care for and feed the hungry
  - Care for afflicted souls
- ❖ The results of acceptable fasting are great, as listed in verses 8 to 10:
  - you receive healing
  - your righteousness will be seen
  - the glory of the Lord will protect you
  - you will call and the Lord will answer; “He will say, ‘Here I am.’”
  - your life will be filled with light
  - the Lord will guide you
  - He will give you water in the midst of drought
  - He will give you physical strength
  - you will rebuild things that were broken down
  - your life will be like a beautiful garden and refreshing streams of water

## DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Go through the lists of “do’s”, “don’ts” and rewards in Isaiah 58. Discuss how each might apply to us in our day and culture (reference N.T. instructions for authentic Christian living).
2. How does Matthew 5:15 relate to Isaiah 58?
3. Discuss how other spiritual disciplines support true fasting.

## PRAYER TIME

Lord, please help my attitudes and interactions to reflect true devotion to You. In Jesus’ name.

# WEEK OF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2020

## NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms)    💡 (New idea)    ☁️ (Think about)

! (Do this)    ❤️ (Speaks to my heart)    ↔️ (Must share)

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## PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

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Go deeper with your Life Group family.  
 CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD  
 Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: What activity/hobby can engage your attention so much that you forget to eat/choose to put off eating?

## "WE PRAY" FS FACEBOOK GROUP

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/wepayatfaithsanctuary/>

**PRAYER FOCUS: Personal spiritual growth**



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### October

Friday 2: Faith Family Prayer (Facebook and YouTube)  
Sunday 11: Virtual "Our Jerusalem" Prayer Walk (Zoom)

#### TO SUBMIT A BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

Obtain approval from Head of Department and send to [announcements@faithsanctuary.com](mailto:announcements@faithsanctuary.com) by Wednesday @ 4:00 p.m. (If projection is desired send to [media@faithsanctuary.com](mailto:media@faithsanctuary.com).)

#### To register for in-person Sunday services;

Go to [www.faithsanctuary.com](http://www.faithsanctuary.com) > click the "Eventbrite" link in the top menu and follow prompts

#### FAITH SANCTUARY DONATIONS

To donate online, please go to [www.faithsanctuary.com/give](http://www.faithsanctuary.com/give)  
For email transfers, please use [donate@faithsanctuary.com](mailto:donate@faithsanctuary.com)

#### FREEDOM SESSION – FALL 2020

**\*An exciting journey of self-discovery and healing\***

Start Date: Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Medium: Zoom Meetings

Contacts: Sis. Melva Meredith-Lewis, Sis. Kaye Anderson,  
Bro. Bob Banton and Bro. Wayne Ellis

#### **FAITH SANCTUARY ON-LINE SERVICES:**

Bible Study – 10:15 a.m.

Morning service – 11:00 a.m.)

- Go to [www.faithsanctuary.com](http://www.faithsanctuary.com) >click "livestream" link (or type in [www.faithsanctuary.com/live](http://www.faithsanctuary.com/live))
- Go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) >search for "Faith Sanctuary"
- Sign in to Facebook >search for "Faith Sanctuary"
- Call 1-844-268-4848 for toll-free telephone access

**In-depth Bible Study: Monday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. (Facebook and Zoom)**

## FAITH FOUNDATIONS

### **GOD**

We believe there is only one God: the eternal, holy, loving, all-knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent Spirit, creator of all (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus 19:2; 1 John 4:8; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 23:24; John 4:24; Isaiah 44:24; Colossians 1:16).

### **GOD'S WORD**

We believe the Holy Scriptures—The Bible—is God's true and complete Word to humanity, verified most notably through fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 46:9-10; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17).

### **GOD'S CREATION**

We believe all people were created in the image of God for His pleasure, to be His children, His church and His bride, living in eternal love and fellowship with Him (Revelation 4:1; Genesis 1:27; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7).

### **HUMANITY'S FALL**

We acknowledge that we have all sinned and failed to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives, through willful disobedience to the word of God and our own conscience. All sinful acts lead to separation and alienation from God's pure, holy presence, eventually resulting in both physical and spiritual death (Romans 3:23, 6:23a).

### **THE GOSPEL**

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, fully divine and fully human (1 Timothy 3:16). He came to Earth and suffered death by crucifixion, willingly substituting Himself for us in receiving God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 53:5). But God raised Him from death (Acts 5:30), and He now offers eternal life to all who will believe in Him (John 3:14-17, 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:4-9). Faith is sparked within us when we hear the gospel, the "good news" that Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead for our benefit (Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

### **OUR FAITH RESPONSE**

Hearing the gospel is intended to lead us to repentance, a divinely inspired change of heart that causes us to turn away from our sins and turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). Faith and repentance lead us to obey the scriptural command to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of our sins and to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit gives us the power to live a righteous, godly life, joyfully sharing the good news of our new life in Christ with others (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

### **CHRIST'S RETURN**

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ will soon return to Earth to receive His people to Himself and establish His righteous, eternal kingdom (John 14:3; Matthew 25:34).

SEPTEMBER 27, 2020

  
**Faith**  
SANCTUARY  
Know Jesus, Love Jesus, Share Jesus

*2020 ~the year of vision~ 2020*

**Pastor: Rev. Granville E. McKenzie**

*"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."  
John 4:23 NKJV*

### **SUNDAY SERVICES**

Worship: 8:00 a.m. • 11:00 a.m. • 6:30 p.m.  
Sunday School/Bible Study: 9:45 a.m.

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