

## Fasting for Purpose

Recently I was driving behind someone whose license plate read, "It is all about Me!". The most radical day in our lives happens when we stand in agreement with the Bible, that in truth, it is all about Jesus. (Luke 9:23). Religious or not, as long as our concept of a good life is centered around my comfort, my preferences, my stuff we are tethered to the corpse of our old unregenerate nature (Eph. 2:1-3/ Eph. 4:22-24).

So how do we change? How do I discard the old self and put on the 'new creation' (II Cor. 5:17) that is heir to all the promises, purposes and power of God that has been given to me through the work of Jesus Christ?

We begin by humbling ourselves, which is coming under God's authority in order to be disciplined and instructed by His Holy Spirit (I Pet. 5:5,6/ John 16:13). King David wrote, I have humbled myself by fasting (Ps. 35:13). Fasting is setting aside a particular area of my comfort and preferences to focus in on Jesus and what He is doing. Jesus didn't say "If" you fast, but "When you fast..." (Matt.6:16-18). It is also the breaking of any habit or addiction, no matter how seemingly benign, so that nothing has control in my life but the Master (I Cor. 6:12). Fasting is almost always an affliction to my comfort and my desire for control but it is absolutely necessary (Ps. 119:67/ I Pet. 4:1,2) if I am ever to grow up into Christ and experience the freedom Jesus won for me on the Cross! (Gal. 5:1/ I John 4:16,17)

Fasting is never about making a bargain with God, "If I do this, then you need to do this for me." It is about removing distraction so that I can hear more clearly the voice of God's Spirit (John 10:4,27/ John 8:47) as He leads me into the will of our heavenly Father (Rom. 8:26,27). Whenever our Lord calls you to Fast, it is because He wants to overcome a barrier in your life that will help you take the next important step in your life with Christ. He will never ask us to do this alone but gives His Spirit to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). If we refuse to follow when He calls us to this discipline, our journey with Him stalls and we end up like the Hebrews in the time of Moses wandering aimlessly in a spiritual desert. We will continue to flounder there until we rediscover our 'first love' (Matt22:36-38/ Rev. 2:4) again and that following Him, even in discipline, brings greater joy than any comfort the World has to offer.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him." Psalm 34:8  
In His love, Pastor Jerry