



How to get clarity for a new year.



²¹You can make many plans, but the Lord's purpose will prevail. Proverbs 19:21 (NLT)

⁹We make our own plans, but the LORD decides where we will go. Proverbs 16:9 (CEV)

- God has a plan and a destination for your life this year.
- We want God's desires for us to be greater than our plans.

Fasting definition is:

- Voluntarily abstaining from food and/or something for a period of time.
- Shifting our appetite from here to Him.
- Prayer is always a part of fasting.
- The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God.

A fast is not something we offer to God, but the discipline of offering ourselves to God.

- Fasting is an expression of our heart's longing for a greater intimacy with God.
- Fasting involves humility and repentance.
- Fasting doesn't just change what we eat, it changes how we treat people.

⁶ "No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people.⁷ Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. Isaiah 58:6-7 (NLT)

Types of Fasts:

Complete Fast - Liquids only.

Selective Fast - Removing certain elements from your diet.

Partial Fast - Abstaining from eating types of food in the morning and afternoon.

Soul Fast - Some will stop using social media or watching television...

When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. "Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him." Matthew 17:14-16 (NIV)

¹⁷ "You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." ¹⁸ Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment. Matthew 17:17-18 (NIV)

Jesus identifies two problems:

- Unbelieving: Not connected to God.

- Perverse: Too connected to the world.

...for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession...1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)

Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:19-21 (NIV)

- Prayer connects us to God.
- Fasting disconnects us from the world.

Do not be conformed to this world.. Romans 12:2 (ESV)

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. 1 John 2:15 (NLT)

- Fasting disconnects us from our desires.

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:27 (NLT)

Clarity happens when:

- We stop acting like the world.

(Read Isaiah 58)

- Our heart has undivided loyalty.

- We live for one audience.

Practical Steps:

- Set an objective.
- Decide the kind of fast you will do.
- Expect results.



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- Have you fasted before? What kind of fast did you do? (See "Types of Fasts")
- How is fasting a discipline of "offering ourselves" to God?
- The problem Jesus identifies in Matt. 17:17 is a connection problem. Do you see that connection problem in your own life? Do you find that you are: 1) Not connected enough to God? 2) Too connected to the world? 3) Some of both?
- How does fasting disconnect us from the world? What does being disconnected from the world mean to you?
- How does fasting disconnect us from our desires? What does that mean to you?
- As we set an objective for our fast, discuss the five bullet points and what each of these mean to you personally?
- What type of fast have you decided to do? Are you in need of encouragement?

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OTHER NOTES:

WELCOME

Our Series:



How to get clarity for a new year.



Today's Talk..

How Fasting gives clarity.

Get connected! Try out a Connection Group.



Information available in the courtyard.



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Doing life together