

# Ducks in a Row

ESTABLISHING RIGHT PRIORITIES



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

We 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.
- Shifts our appetite from **here** to **Him**.
- **Prayer** is always a part of fasting.
- The goal of fasting is to draw **closer** 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 should change how we **treat people**.  
...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. 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)  
....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)  
"You unbelieving and perverse generation," ... "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." 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**.

Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and **refusing to let the world corrupt you**. James 1:27 (NLT)

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

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 **realigns** 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**.
- Our heart has undivided **loyalty**.
- We live for **one audience**.

#### Action Steps:

- Decide what kind of **fast** you will do.
- Set an **objective**.
- Believe God for **specific** needs.
- Expect **results**.



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

#### Questions that can be used in 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? What were the results that you experienced?
- How is fasting a discipline of "offering ourselves" to God?
- What is the goal of fasting and how does fasting help us in this objective?
- The problem Jesus identifies in Matthew 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 realign our desires? What does that mean to you?
- What type of fast have you decided to do? Are you in need of encouragement?
- Are you believing God for something specific?

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Today's Talk..



Fasting

Sunday, January 1st, 2023

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