

Principles of Prayer

Lesson 3 “The Purpose of Prayer and Fasting - Part 2”

I. Introduction - We are in a series call “Principles of Prayer” because we are in the middle of 21 days of prayer and fasting.

A. Review

1. Jesus said my house will be called a house of prayer - **Mark 11:17**.

Throughout the series I’m teaching about different aspects about prayer we need to understand to have a successful prayer life.

a. Week 1 - We talked about the purpose of prayer and fasting - Quiet our flesh so we can be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

b. Week 2 - The main purpose of prayer is communing with God. It’s not about making requests, though that’s not wrong. It’s simply about being a friend of God. Out of that He shows us things and we do stuff, but the point is friendship.

2. Tonight we are going to talk about prayer fasting again. Tonight we will look at another purpose of prayer and fasting, which is to establish ourself in truth.

II. The Purpose of Prayer and Fasting - Part 2

A. My story of going through some time back off going through a very challenging personal situation and standing on the word and basically feeling like God let me down.

1. This created a lot of frustration in me and made it harder for me to control my emotions than it had been in years.

2. After going through months of nothing getting better and growing more frustrated and a bit hopeless about the situation, I decided to take some time to fast and pray and seek the Lord.

3. Here’s what I wanted to happen: I wanted God to either change all of my circumstances so everything was immediately better or if He didn’t do that I wanted God to zap me with a lightning bolt from heaven so the discouragement left and got back to normal. In other words, I didn’t want to do any work to change.

4. Here’s what did happen. After doing some work in my office and listening to some teaching, I took some time to worship and pray. As I did, I heard the Lord say, **“Your problem isn’t your problem.”** I said, “What’s my problem then?” He said, “You’ve assumed a false identity.

5. All of a sudden I saw everything so clearly. For months I had wanted my circumstances to change and when they didn’t, I began to lose sight of who I was in Christ (sub-consciously) and in my heart I began to twist the nature of God. I

stopped really seeing Him is good. I would sing the songs and preach the messages, but I stopped really believing it. **This word changed all of that in a minute.**

6. Prayer and fasting will cause us to stop believing lies and begin to heal emotional hurts from difficult circumstances.

B. The Temptation of Jesus

1. **Luke 3:21-22** In these verses, Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and God spoke a clear word over Jesus establishing His identity as the beloved Son of God

2. **Luke 4:1-14**

- a. Why did God lead Jesus in the wilderness to fast and pray for 40 days? To test the word God spoke over Him so Jesus would know the word was true. Words spoken without adversity don't cause us to get rooted.
- b. **Verse 3** What was the temptation? Jesus's identity. Satan was trying to get Jesus to do something to prove who He was (same as me with my emotions - I wanted my emotions to line up so I believed who I was - felt like something was broken with me).
- c. **Verses 9-11** What was the temptation? Jesus's identity. Same as my situation and my emotions.
- d. **Verses 5-7** What was the temptation? Jesus's identity. This one is implied, but ultimately Jesus's inheritance was all the kingdoms of the earth. God wanted Jesus to believe without seeing, Satan was offering Him a shortcut.
- e. Each time Jesus responded with the word of God, which He was and this defeated Satan's attack. Knowing our identity will defeat Satan's attack.
- f. **Matthew 27:39-44** - the first three temptations were from the beginning of Jesus's ministry. This was the end of His ministry. How did Satan try to attack Jesus? To get Him to question His identity while Jesus was in an extremely weakened and emotional state. The thing that kept Jesus on the cross was knowing who He was, when His emotions were screaming, "Come off, this won't work or "What's going to happen to me?"

III. Corporate Prayer Time

A. Pray over the group to establish in identity

B. Have everyone break into groups and pray over each other (Focus on identity, then other stuff).

C. Offering Verse: **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**