

## Vision

### Lesson 2 “Fasting for Direction”

I. Introduction - We are studying **Vision** as we go through 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting because as we fast and pray we will hear God more clearly. This is a wonderful time to ask for clarity for His plans and purposes for this year and get a godly vision.

#### A. Review

1. **Proverbs 29:18 KJV** *Where there is no vision, the people perish....*
2. **Proverbs 29:18 MSG** *If people can't see what God is doing they stumble all over themselves. But when they attend to what he reveals they are most blessed.*
3. If we want to walk in blessing, we need vision, which is **the capacity to see from God's perspective.**
4. Last week we talked about how our perceptions can be altered by prayer. Many of us want God to change our circumstances when we pray, but often He uses prayer to change us. This changes our options.
  - a. After Jesus came off the mount of transfiguration, he healed a boy the disciples could not. They could not because of unbelief as they saw themselves and the situation after the flesh instead of the spirit.
  - b. Jesus told them this kind of unbelief comes out by prayer and fasting. Jesus didn't have to fast and pray to heal the boy because Jesus fasted and prayed into a lifestyle of faith. He lived there, just didn't visit.

II. Fasting for Direction - Today, I want to continue talking about fasting and how fasting helps us get more sensitive to the Holy Spirit. **This helps us hear His voice and receive direction.**

A. **Matthew 17:19-21** Jesus gave authority to these disciples in **Matthew 10** and the church in **Matthew 28:18**. We do not fast to get more authority or for God to turn up the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives (that's legalism).

1. We also don't fast because there are some demons so strong faith in the name of Jesus won't get them out. If faith in the name of Jesus won't get them out we are crazy if we think our fasting will help.
2. Why do we fast? To deal with unbelief.
  - a. Everyone born again person has a spirit and flesh. The spirit is willing (to believe), but flesh is weak. Our flesh is weak, but loud. For many of us it is at volume 10, while the spirit in us is quiet - volume 1).
  - b. When we fast and pray we turn the volume of our flesh down and turn the volume of the spirit up. This gets us more sensitive to the Holy Spirit. (Our flesh can initially seem to get worse. This is why we pray and draw on the spirit. As we do, we gain victory and our flesh shuts up.).

**4. SOME OF US WON'T FAST OR FAST ANYTHING HARD BECAUSE OUR FLESH IS SO LOUD. AN EASY FAST WE DON'T NEED GOD'S HELP WITH IS A WASTE OF TIME. FASTING IS NOT ABOUT SELF, IT IS ABOUT JESUS! IT'S ABOUT GETTING HIS HEART!**

5. **Mark 9:29, Mark 9:33-37** This incident happened right after the disciples failed to heal the epileptic boy. On the road they disputed who is the greatest. What's that? Flesh. Why couldn't they couldn't they heal the boy? Flesh.

- a. Jesus then talks to them about being like a little child (children are dependent). We must be dependent on the spirit, not self promoting.
- b. These men needed to fast and get some junk out so they could be more sensitive to the spirit.

B. The Fast That Pleases God (And Provides Direction) **Isaiah 58:1-12 NLT**

1. **Verse 3** God doesn't notice this fast because they fast for wrong motives (to serve themselves). If we want God's direction it can't be about pleasing ourself.
2. **Verse 4** Sounds like the disciples on the road.
3. **Verse 5** Heart's not in it. Not really seeking Him. Going through the motions.
4. **Verse 6** God's kind of fasting leads to a heart to serve others (free the wrongly imprisoned, stop oppressing workers, let those who are bound go free.
5. **Verse 7** Share with and serve others. **Not about us!**
6. **Verse 8** When God's people get a right heart (one dominated by the spirit, not the flesh), then salvation and healing come and **godliness leads us forward (right heart - one that serves God and others. Not about self).**
7. **Verse 11-12** When we fast in a way that pleases God we receive our reward **Matthew 6:18**. For this message the focus is direction (could be healing, provision). God will guide us! He will use us to build/rebuild things.
  - a. What does a builder need before he builds? A plan/vision. How do we get God's vision for 2025? Fasting and prayer with a right heart and for a right heart where its all about Jesus (not our comfort or convenience).
  - b. **Psalm 37:4** *delight* 'ânag, to be soft or pliable, *tender (sensitive)*.
    - i. I'm sure I'll use this verse in upcoming weeks to teach us about how God leads us through godly desire (he'll put his desires in your heart), but first and foremost we must be tender to Him.
    - ii. If not our motives our off and we can't trust what's in our heart.

III. Conclusion - God has visions of greatness for all of us, but if we pursue greatness instead of God will miss greatness. Ex: Abraham. Jesus always wanted the disciples to be great, but He redefined greatness as serving not self promotion. Fasting helps us deal with our flesh so we can be put Jesus first and be sensitive for God's vision for our lives in the year to come.

A. Response

B. Pray Closing Prayer