

The Ultimate Weapon Fasting

by B.H. Clendennen

Fasting is the ultimate weapon to achieve God's eternal purpose and display Christ through a human vessel.

Duration: 28:13

Scripture: Ephesians 4:22

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Fasting Prayer"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of fasting as the ultimate weapon in spiritual warfare, highlighting how fasting helps to overcome the self-life and align with God's will. It explores the power of fasting to curb fleshly appetites, renew the spiritual man, and break the dominance of the carnal nature, allowing Christ to shine through believers. The sermon underscores the need for regular fasting and prayer to experience revival, deepen spiritual hunger, and maintain a close relationship with God.

Transcript

Now to lesson number 14 in our series restoring the message of Pentecost. Now throughout these message we have seen that the purpose of the ages with God is to secure a vessel through which he can display a son. This is not easy, there's a warfare and in our lesson 14 we deal with fasting the ultimate weapon.

Lesson 14, fasting the ultimate weapon. Reading in Mark chapter 9 verses 23 through 29 and Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out with tears, saying, Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried and rent him sore, came out of him, and he was as one dead inasmuch as many said he is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, lifted him up, and he arose.

And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and by fasting. Fasting is the key to achieving God's eternal purpose. That which stands in the way of the will of God being fulfilled in us is the self-life, the old man.

Ephesians 4.22, that you put off concerning the form of conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts. Now, fasting is the key to overcoming that life. In 2 Chronicles 7.14, we read, If my people, which are called by my name, will humble themselves, that is, humble self.

Jesus said, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself. That is, deny self. Now, a way to humble, to deny self, is to fast.

I humble my soul with fasting. Psalms 35 and 13. What is fasting? First of all, fasting is doing without food.

But it is more than that. It deals with every aspect of self. Since every appetite of the human is fed by food, when you take food away from a person, the person is weakened, for the appetites of the flesh then are curbed.

Food fuels and feeds the appetites of the flesh. Some of the appetites of the flesh are not natural. God did not make man with an appetite for alcohol or drugs.

Man has cultivated these appetites. There are also legitimate appetites and desires which, when kept within bounds, are lawful. But there's no appetite of this flesh that if it is not kept under subjection, will not get out of bounds and become unlawful.

Eating can become a sin. You can be overcharged with surfeiting and not be ready for the coming of the Lord. Luke 21, 34 says, Take heed to yourself, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, so that they come upon you unaware.

Every appetite must be kept in bounds of moderation or it becomes a dominating, driving force of the life. When this happens, the fleshly appetite becomes Lord and Christ is denied. Fasting is a means that God has given us for the curbing of these appetites.

Now, fasting begins with doing without food. Everything that has life, whether plant, animal, human or spiritual, demands food to keep it alive. And since everything that has life demands food, when you take food away from it, it begins to die.

Take food away from the carnal man, he begins to weaken, to die. And if at the same time you're reading the Word of God and praying, the spiritual man, that is the inner man of the heart, is strengthened. Fasting puts down the old man.

Prayer lifts up the new. Now, food is the most powerful desire of the flesh, so the appetite must be curbed. But there's more than to fasting than to the physical.

We must fast our minds. And perhaps the mind is more of a threat to our spiritual life than our physical appetite. What we feed the mind will ultimately determine our actions.

If we feed our minds on things which arouse the fleshly appetites, we become incapable of dealing with spiritual things. When we get on to pray, those things will dominate our mind. When we try to think upon God, thoughts of Him are crowded out by the trash that we fed our mind.

There are things that are not evil, but are of this world's system, and they perish with the using, which all are to perish with the using after the commandments of men and doctrines of men. They do not help us in becoming better saints. No man ever received a revelation of God while being entertained by the world.

We are to be in the world, but not of it. How then can we fast our mind? By, for a period of time, we need to unplug that television, turn that radio off, leave that newspaper rolled up. But for that same period, give ourselves to the Word of God in prayer.

This is fasting. A Christian who is sincere and hears her quest for God should give at least one month a year to fasting in prayer. Now, no one, no one, without a specific Word from God should attempt to go 30 days without food.

I suggest that a person should fast for a day or two or three days, then eat lightly for a day. But it is possible, whatever you do, no matter what your age or physical condition, to fast your mind for 30 days. We in America have destroyed our, our physical taste buds.

We go into the finest restaurants. The waitress gives us a menu with selection from French cuisine to Mexican food. What do we do? We turn up our nose and wonder if there isn't something else to eat.

Our taste buds are so bland that we have to put enough salt on our food to give us high blood pressure. We take the finest steaks in the world and pour ketchup on it. Nothing tastes like it should.

The loss of the ability to taste, though, can be regained with a five-day total fast. Push that plate back. Drink nothing but water for five days.

And at the end of those five days, those taste buds will have come alive to the point that a cold biscuit tastes like a fine cake. What is true for the physical is doubly true for the spiritual. Church is full of people who have no desire for spiritual things.

They have filled themselves with the things of the world and have killed their spiritual appetite. Their spiritual taste buds have been destroyed. If those people would cut off all worldly entertainments, read nothing but the Word of God for 30 days, at the end of that time, you would have an insatiable desire for the things of the Spirit.

The spiritual man would come alive. So fasting is not only doing without food, it is denying the total self. We must stand up to self and its demands.

Self is the body of Satan. When we give place to self, we give place to the devil. God has commanded you and I, heal not our members as instruments of unrighteousness.

Read it in Romans 6, 13. Heal not your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. David commanded his soul, that is his self, to praise the Lord.

Psalms 146 and 1. Listen to it. Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Oh my soul. I talked with a young man years ago who was an associate pastor of a church. Now the Dallas Cowboys were playing that year in the Super Bowl and the young pastor said to me, when that Super Bowl comes on, I'm going to be in a motel shut in so that I will not be disturbed by my children or anything else as I watch that game.

During the meeting, I spoke on the subject of fasting. The young man questioned me. He said, I have a hard time doing without food.

Well, I said, fasting is doing without food. But let me tell you, son, what would really constitute a fast for you. I've listened to you talk about the Super Bowl, how much it means to you.

Now if you would tell yourself that you're not going to watch the Super Bowl, instead of watching the Super Bowl, you're going to take your Bible, go into your bedroom, stay on your knees until the game is over. Let self know that this is the way it's going to be and you will have won a victory over self that is many times more powerful than merely doing without food. He did what I told him and later said to me, I've never been so blessed of God in my life as when I denied self the Super Bowl.

Fasting is doing without food, but it is also denying the total self, putting self down, refusing to let it have expression. Now if we will do that, the spiritual appetite will increase 100 fold. If you really want a revival, this is the way.

Set aside 30 days. Don't read a newspaper or watch a television. Turn the radio off.

Spend all the time that you'd ordinarily spend on those things in the Word of God and in prayer. Your appetite for the spiritual will be reborn. That is revival.

Why should I fast? It's important for us to know that God will have nothing to do with the carnal nature. No flesh shall glory in his presence. 1 Corinthians 1.29, listen, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

That's the Word of God. The only person God will deal with is the new creature. Too often that new man is smothered by the flesh and unless the veil of the flesh is broken, the new man cannot express himself.

We read in Mark 9.29, and he said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting. Now the disciples are trying to cast out a devil. They've been successful before.

Their testimony was even devils are subject unto us. Now this one wasn't subject to them. Now Jesus cast that devil out and when they were alone, they asked him this question, why could not we cast him out? Jesus said, because of your unbelief.

Unbelief is a product of the natural carnal man. So when Jesus said to them, because of your unbelief, he really said to them, you are trying to cast that devil out in the power of your own self. Much of that takes place in the church today.

We have learned how to be religious without God. We say the right words, but the devil don't come out. I can tell you it is the will of God for the people who come to us for deliverance be set free.

He doesn't want us to send them away like they came. We are to be God's instrument of deliverance. Now to be that, we must live in the place where it can happen.

Why couldn't we cast the devil out? Because you were trying to do it in yourself. Jesus gave them the answer to it all though. This kind cometh forth by nothing but by prayer and by fasting.

Now when a person fasts, self is put out. When that same person prays, the new man is lifted up. When that spiritual man says to the devil come out, the devil will come out.

Now the carnal man hates God, but he loves to play with the spiritual. When the carnal man gets involved in the religious act, it always brings a curse. When the carnal man uses religious phrases, it never works.

But when the man of the spirit, anointed by God, speaks to devils, they will go. When the spiritual man says to the sick, be healed, they will be healed. And the way to live in the spiritual realm is by fasting and praying.

Why should I fast? One reason is to put down the old man, to weaken the carnal nature and give the advantage to the spiritual man. For if while we're fasting, we're praying and reading the word of God, the new man is gaining the place of ascendancy. And that is the will of God.

When that happens, when that happens, God will be there to deliver. Now when we put down the self life, the life of Christ within us will break forth. Jesus said, I am the light of the world, John 9, 5. But he also said in Matthew 5, 14, you are the light of the world.

You don't light a candle and put it under a bushel. Neither can we keep Christ smothered in the flesh. Flesh is broken through fasting, through denial, even though Jesus can live within us.

Yet it is possible that people never see anybody but us. But if through fasting and walking with God, I break this vessel of flesh, Christ can be seen. The alabaster box has to be broken for its sweet fragrance can flow out and fill the room.

Likewise, that carnal nature must be broken before Christ can shine forth through us. Do we want people to see Christ in our lives? If so, we cannot treat the flesh kindly. The psychiatrists have made a soft couch for self to lie down on.

God never intended that. God's will is to break the flesh through prayer and fasting. We need to lay hold to this truth.

God is not looking for an occasional faster. He looks for those who will live a fasted life. We need to set aside days to set aside ourselves on a regular basis.

Self has to die every day. Jesus will not manifest himself where the flesh is allowed to perform. Great and exceeding promises are held out to those who will, through fasting prayer, break the yoke of the carnal.

Listen to it. Then shall thy light break forth as a morning, and thy health spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee. The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.

Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, make thy bones fat.

Thou shalt be like a well-watered garden, and a spring of water whose waters fail not. Why fast? Because you can have a revival when everyone else is dead. This is not a thing of environment.

It is in us, as rivers of living water. And if you and I, through fasting, will remove the restrictions of the river, though everything around us speaks of death, you can have revival. In the midst of spiritual drought, a time when a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, if self is crucified, you can shout on.

If we walk in the Spirit, God will guide us continually. When shall I fast is a great question. As shepherds of God's flock, it is the responsibility of the pastor to call it fast when the flock is endangered, when he sees something coming against the sheep, when a wrong turn is about to be made, the shepherd must rise to the occasion.

Just as David protected the flock from the lion and the bear, the pastor at all times must be watchful over the flock of God. Worse things than bears are coming to steal, kill, and destroy the flock. There's a spirit of the world that would turn the flock away from God.

But when a shepherd sees this, he must take steps to stop the flow of worldliness. It is time to call a fast. A crisis demands it.

Throughout the Old Testament, when trouble came, the leaders called a fast. And when the man of God calls a fast, it is the same as if God had called. To refuse is to rebel against God.

Why should I fast? Well, the Lord told his wife to separate themselves for a time of prayer and fasting. Listen to it, 1 Corinthians 7 and 5. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer. And come together again that Satan tempt you not for your unconscience.

But you may say, how do I know when it's time for me and my wife to separate ourselves? There is a built, there is built in to every believer a spiritual thermometer that if we will take time to read, will tell every one of us when to fast. Personally, then came to him the disciples of John saying, why do we and the Pharisees fast often? But thy disciples do not fast. And Jesus said unto them, can the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

Matthew 9, 14 and 50. Then we have this in Hebrews 13 and 5, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. According to this, the Christian would never have to fast.

He said they would fast only when he is no longer with them. But here he says, I will never leave thee. True, he'll never leave us.

He does not believe in divorce. The problem is we leave him. We allow some little something to come between.

It is the little foxes that eat up the vine. We have aught against the brother. Instead of going to the brother, we let it fester and grow.

Soon your first love has been blunted. The excitement is not there as it once was. At one time, you would weep as you sang the songs of Zion.

Your heart would be stirred as a message went forth. You would leave the church with tears undried on your cheeks. But all that has changed.

You can sit dry-eyed and unmoved through the worship and preaching. The church doesn't mean to you what it used to mean. Something is happening.

Something has come between you and God. You no longer go to the prayer meeting or read the Word of God. You are dead or you're dying.

Self has usurped the place of God. It's saying to you, it is time to separate yourself for a time of fasting. The great evangelist Charles Finney knew the value of fasting.

His testimony was when I preach and men are not moved by what I say, I know I am merely speaking of what I know. It is time to come aside to fast and pray. Mr. Finney said he would then separate himself for from three to five days.

Always he said, when I did this, there was a new anointing. Now death to the Christian is reverting back to time. Overcoming is the growth of the new man displacing that old carnal nature.

Death is the growth of that old man displacing the new. The Christian must maintain a constant vigil against the inroads of the world. It is like the proverbial frog that was placed in the pan of water and the water was heated so slowly that the poor frog didn't know what was happening until it was too late.

God says, how shall we escape if we neglect? Hebrews 2 and 3. Before I was born again, I never went to church. There's plenty of churches to go to, but I never went. The reason I did not go is because I had no desire to go to church.

I never read the Bible. Why? I didn't want to read the Bible. I didn't pray.

Why? I didn't want to pray. If there ever comes a time in this preacher's spiritual life that I don't want to go to church, that I don't want to pray, that I do not want to read the Bible, I am dead or dying. It's time to call a fast to restore the message of Pentecost, to display Christ through a human vessel.

God must have a vessel purged of self. Fasting is the principal weapon for the purging. The message of Pentecost is God the Father, through God the Holy Ghost, displaying God's Son through a human vessel called the church.

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