

Transformed by Fasting: One Pastor's 40 Day Fasting Journey

by Shane Idleman

Fasting and prayer are essential for spiritual awakenings and physical health, and can lead to benefits such as weight loss, lower blood pressure, and improved joint health.

Duration: 17:15

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Joel 1:14, Matthew 6:16

Topics: "Fasting", "Spiritual Awakening"

Description

Shane Idleman shares his transformative 40-day fasting journey, emphasizing the urgent need for spiritual awakening in America, which he describes as suffering from 'stage four spiritual cancer.' He argues that fasting and prayer are essential remedies for the spiritual decline affecting all areas of life, and that desperate times call for desperate measures. Idleman encourages believers to prepare their hearts for God's intervention, highlighting the physical and spiritual benefits of fasting. He reflects on the importance of humility and seeking God, asserting that true healing requires a return to prayer and fasting. Ultimately, he calls for a corporate fast to ignite revival and restore hope in a broken nation.

Transcript

My name is Shane Eidelman, and I recently set out on a long fasting journey, and so people are asking, why am I doing this? What is the point of fasting? And the reason is quite simple. America has stage four spiritual cancer. We are dying spiritually.

It has metastasized into our schools, into our governments. Pretty much every area of life is affected by this spiritual decline. And we see throughout scripture that often the only remedy, the only cure for what is happening to our nation is to call a fast, and to pray, to pray and fast and seek God.

And desperate times call for desperate measures, and there's only one solution to what's going on. There's only one remedy to fix this. There's only one cure to really repair the damage that has been done, and that is seeking God for another spiritual awakening.

Oh God, would you rend the heavens and come down and visit your people again? Would you not give us a measure of revival in our bondage? God has to bring a spiritual awakening or there is no hope. I think we can all agree on that. And so fasting and prayer has often been the catalyst period of seeking God like

never before.

Now people, critics might say, well, you can't force God to do anything. You can't force a spiritual awakening. No, you can't.

But you can prepare the soil of your heart. And just like I can't make corn grow on the stalk, I can prepare the soil. I can plant the seeds.

And then God brings the rain. And so he rewards those who diligently seek him. He looks for those who are crying out to him.

And if my people would just call out and humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways. And there's something about fasting that stars the flesh. It stars the bodily appetites.

And you just say, Lord, I want to be filled with your spirit. And so what you're doing is you're exchanging one appetite for another appetite. And I think it was Gordon Cove, a missionary who said, you have not sought God with all your heart until you have went into a protracted season of prayer and fasting.

And God just put on my heart actually, to be honest with you, a few years ago. And I've just been ignoring it, ignoring it. I mean, who wants to fast? But when you realize what's at stake, especially we're in here, California, with assembly bills that are trying to be passed, we see what's going on in Washington and the school districts.

If not now, when? If not us, who? And so I believe pastors are called to lead that charge. And so the only cure for us right now is for the lukewarm church to get back into a position of seeking God and fasting. And so I decided, you know what? I'm going to call a corporate fast.

And that's why I don't believe this falls under Matthew 6, where you shouldn't tell anybody about your fast. Ninety percent of the time, I don't tell anyone about my fast. But there comes a time, like in Joel, you'll sound the alarm, call out and meet in God's house and call a sacred assembly, call a fast.

And Jesus himself, why did Jesus fast for 40 days? Have you ever thought about that? Nothing else to do. Let me just go hang out in the wilderness for 40 days and not eat. No, I believe it was a buffeting of the flesh and he came out in the fullness of the spirit.

And so the Christian church, whenever it gets off, we've got to correct that in this area of prayer and fasting. Now, we don't want to get crazy and extreme, but see, our problem isn't too much fasting right now. Our problem is too much consumption.

And you can look even 50, 60 years ago, how we've even grown physically in the area of obesity and type 2 diabetes and heart-related illnesses and cancer. A lot of this is diet-related. We are dying spiritually, but ironically, we're also dying physically.

The top diseases are diet-related, lifestyle choices. Could it be that prayer and fasting could begin to heal both those areas? Because as most of us know, the physical affects the spiritual. So how I feel physically is going to affect how I feel spiritually.

Now, I know some people are bedridden and just there's nothing really they can do. They're at a difficult season right now. But for most of us, if I'm overweight and I don't want to go minister to people, I don't want to go to the hospital homes.

I don't want to get involved in ministry. It's hard for me to preach. I'm tired.

I'm not effective as a pastor. And same with you. The physical, how we take care of our body, this incredible gift that God has given us to be productive really affects the spiritual.

When I'm fasting and not consuming food or drink or anything, I feel that just the fullness of the Spirit and worship is sweet. The Word of God comes alive. There has to come a point of desperation.

God, we are so desperate that we are going to exchange this appetite for food. We're going to crucify the flesh. We're going to starve the flesh.

And out of this desperation, God, we're praying that you would come down. Oh, God, would you rend the heavens, come down and visit your people. But again, it doesn't bend God's arm.

It bends my knee. And he doesn't love me more, but boy, I sure love him more. Another criticism people often say is, you know, that's the Old Testament or that's legalism.

That doesn't happen today anymore. We don't really need to do that. Well, you have a hard time proving that in Scripture.

And Leonard Ravenhill actually said, what people don't like in the Bible, they call legalism. And that's exactly what happens here. It's not legalistic.

It's not works-based. It's a heart broken for the condition of our country. It's a heart broken for the condition of families and marriages.

It's a heart broken to watch Sacramento here in California out of control, calling good evil and evil good. And the innocent voices in abortion have no voice. And it's a cry of desperation.

And God says, I hear that cry. I hear that cry of my child. And I want to answer.

I want to answer that cry. And spiritual awakenings in the 1700s with Hal Harris and Griffin Jones, Daniel Rollins, Duncan Campbell in the 1940s, 50s, and New Hebrides, Evan Roberts and Welsh, 1904, 1905. Spiritual awakenings here in America, always prayer and fasting.

I believe it was Jeremiah Lampert who started that prayer meeting in New York with like three or four guys. And it turned into thousands upon thousands meeting. I feel the spiritual ramifications, fasting will help to ease that, fix that.

But also the physical ramifications. What's happening physically in our nation, this is the most obese we've ever been. And I'm saying that as someone who's struggled with my weight, when I started this fast, I was right around 230 pounds.

I could tell just my energy, my blood pressure's high, blurry vision, hard time sleeping. And I could tell it was starting to weigh on me and I should know better. I have a background in health and fitness.

And so that's another reason why I decided to do this. So it's interesting. This fasting, prayer and fasting can get us to a spot of brokenness spiritually, and it can get us to a spot of physical health.

The physical that is affected when we begin to fast and the body begins to repair itself, autophagy takes place, things that happen in the mind, the body gets fixed, Alzheimer's, type two diabetes, for example,

health-related, diet-related, the food we consume. But I begin to see the parallels. Could this area of prayer and fasting, a lifestyle of prayer and fasting, not only help and begin to cure some of the spiritual cancer, but it could begin to cure some of the physical ailments that are going on.

We've got the highest rate of obesity among children. Look at footage from the 1950s in New York, even people walking around the street, you didn't see anybody obese. And now it's an epidemic.

The health care system cannot support it financially, so we don't see a lot of physicians giving them the solution or giving them a pill rather than the solution. The solution is to make some radical changes and to take care of this incredible gift that God has given you and me. So I think it's just an incredible time for people to come together, calling a corporate fast.

Now by the time you watch this, that section of what we're doing will be over. This is my journey through that fasting experience. However, you can use this as motivation to begin your own fasting journey.

And I believe it honors God when we starve the flesh for a season and we begin to seek Him like never before. Feast on fasting. Feast on fasting.

Did you know fasting doesn't kill us? Overconsumption does. We were designed to fast. You were actually created to fast.

How do we know? Because how the body is designed stores the energy if we take too much. And then when we need that energy for thousands of years, they had to walk. They wouldn't eat for a day or two.

And the body was designed to switch the energy sources. So what fasting does, let's say your body needs energy three, four days into it, like I talked about the ketogenic diet. Where does it get it from? It'll break down your diseased tissue.

Some cancer cells are removed during fasting because the body says, ah, I'm going to consume this. It's something that is not good for the body. And it goes and begins to consume things.

All right. So now I want to give you a little bit of my background, just so you know where I'm coming from. I was born here in Southern California.

The prodigal son story is my story. I left the church. I kind of just walked away from God around 14, 15 years old, fell at the wrong crowd.

You know, the same story. So in my twenties, I started working for 24 hour fitness as a corporate executive. You know, I heard something a while back.

I don't remember who said it. You're going to pay now, or you're going to pay later, but you're going to pay. So I'm paying right now to enjoy later.

And I was supervising personal training and nutrition and a lot of their accelerated results programs and different things. And I just saw so many people repairing the damage that was been done to their bodies through health and nutrition and exercise. Back then fasting was a no, no, you know, five, six meals a day, every two and a half hours, keep the metabolic rate up, blah, blah, blah.

We've changed since then. We've learned a lot and we've grown in this area. And so I've always had a desire for health and fitness, but I began to follow everything, but God making good money in my twenties

custom home.

It really, it really cost me a lot though. It hurt a lot of important areas in my life. And God used a lot of significant events to break me and to humble me.

And in short, the prodigal son came home around age 29, completely surrendered my life to the Lord. God began to just move in my heart to write books. The funny thing is I didn't, I didn't bear to graduate high school with the 1.8. I had dyslexia, learning disability and can't spell well.

And so my mom really helped me write those first few books and editing and editing. And that's where the books came from. And you'll be able to actually download the books free at Westside Christian Fellowship on fasting to get more information.

I go into a lot more detail in those books. But from that then came the church. I want to talk about health and fitness more, but I stopped for a few years because people said, you know, that's not important.

We don't need to talk about that. Don't you know that the physical isn't that important? And look at the scripture here, you know, bodily exercise profits a little, but spiritual exercise. And I began to realize it was coming from people who were all overweight, out of shape, didn't want to exercise.

They want to hear it. There's a conviction. Number one.

Number two is God wants us to take care of our body. Why would we take care of it? Take care of your finances, take care of your marriage, take care of this, but don't take care of this gift that God has given us. Especially when we know how to take care of it.

We know the right food, see, we know the right supplements to take. And we know that God honors good stewardship of our body. So that's a little bit about me, my background, why I have a background, health and fitness.

I love studying through the National Academy of Sports Medicine back then, and even learning about epigenetics, learning about autophagy, how cells work and cellular division and fasting and stem cells, all those things that are, that are very important in this area of fasting and physical health. And so I'm going on a fasting journey. I'm really seeking God on when to end it, but I'm about three weeks into it right now.

And mainly just water, not just drinking water, but I will have maybe a little bit of juice. If I've got to preach three times, like I did on Easter, we had services every night of the week. If I have to have a little bit of nutrition to get through those difficult moments, I will do that.

But for the most part, it's just water only. But my experience today, three weeks in, it's been, I would say one of the hardest things I've done in a long time. Consistently for three weeks, probably felt like quitting a lot, giving up, but the power of the made up mind, I think is really important.

Like, why am I doing this? You have the why, you got to hang onto that why. 6.30 at night, I'm tired and, and just wanting to give up. And I'm still kind of tired.

And that's what ketosis does. There's ups and downs. Felt great this morning.

And so after about three or four days, I began to lose appetite. So now I can cook food for the kids, be around food. It doesn't really bother me at all after four days.

Granted, I can eat. It looks good, but that has really left clearheaded a lot more with my thinking, writing articles, the sermons. If you go back and look from like April 10th on YouTube, April 10th through probably May, a lot of those sermons were preached while fasting.

I feel clarity and more direction, more precision, just letting the body heal itself. There's a lot of soreness because the body retraces and it begins to heal old injuries. And eyesight is not that great right now.

It's actually worse than it was, but that has to do with the body retracing and fixing itself. And so overall three weeks in, I would say I haven't been walking on clouds. It's been difficult, 22 pounds of weight loss or so far.

That's been nice. Blood pressure is back down to normal. The joints feel a lot better.

So there's a lot of physical benefits, but there's also a lot of spiritual benefits. And we have to remember this about the spiritual. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

We have to get into our mind, delayed gratification. It's not about immediate results, microwave Christianity, fast food on every corner. In God's economy, he rewards those who diligently seek him.

There's perseverance. There's diligence. Actually, Lord, I don't feel it.

I don't even want to continue, but I'm going to trust in you. I'm going to have faith and I'm going to keep moving forward. And so we're expecting big things.

I don't know what that looks like. Could be answer prayers, could be full alters. Many people coming to know the Lord, family members coming to know the Lord, our own children, getting a deeper walk with the Lord.

I just know that's what faith is. Faith is evidence of things not seen. And we're trusting God.

If I have a spiritual high every day and this feels great, this is easy. I'm seeing tons of fruit. It's not as difficult.

Really, this is where the rubber meets the road. So three weeks in 21 days, mainly just water only is very difficult, but very, very rewarding, both physically and spiritually. 45 days ago, 230 pounds.

That one, I was at about 193, so 37 pounds, and wanted to show you just what fasting did. And it was difficult. It was tough.

Oh, don't clap because it was a nightmare in one hand. It was a blessing and a nightmare, but God sustained me. God got me through it.

Now, the reason I don't recommend necessarily what I did is because God has been working in my heart for five years. I'll see it in the Bible, 40 days. I'm like, you've got to be crazy.

That devil is a liar. Jesus, I'm not doing that. You've got to be kidding me.

And then so much confirmation, I can't even get into all the details, but you're reading books and scripture confirming. God's just putting in my heart. You know, God put something in my heart, and so I prepared myself for it.

The power of the made up mind is really, really the big deal. What's it going to take to draw us back to the heart of God? One word, desperation. Business as usual is not going to cut it.

Without another spiritual awakening, there is no hope. But believe it or not, I am hopeful. How can I be hopeful amid such darkness and depravity? Because God is sovereign and controls the affairs of men.

He often revives his people at very dark moments in history. But for true healing to take place, we must return to the fountain of living water and drink deeply. If we diagnose the disease of pride and repent via prayer and fasting, God's healing touch can revive, renew, and restore our barren wasteland.

We must be desperate for more of God, desperate for his presence. He is our only hope.

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