

Fasting

Part One

I know it is time to introduce one of the most powerful and possibly most misunderstood keys to the power of God ... FASTING!

I have said it many times in the past and will continue to say it in the future, the flesh is a very powerful foe. When the term "flesh" is used in the Word of God, most of the time it is used in the same light I am using it in this letter. That is, flesh being defined as carnal desires or that particular side to a person's nature that wants to give in to the temptations of the devil as Romans 6:12 says: *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof."*

In order to understand why fasting is so powerful, you must also understand why the flesh is so powerful as many have found to be the case - much to their dismay. Because, in order to understand the answer, it helps to understand the problem that the answer is solving.

So let's begin. As Word of Faith people, we probably understand as much as any believers have ever understood about the position our spirit has been declared in Christ Jesus, thanks to great teachers such as E. W. Kenyon.

Truths like, "I am the righteousness of God in Christ", "I am seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus", "I am complete in Him".

But what we have failed to understand is the position our flesh or our bodies have been declared. You see, the redemption plan that God is working in our lives will eventually result in our total restoration and is being executed in two parts.

Number one, upon receiving Jesus our human spirit was born again. We received everlasting life and were seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus with respect to our rights and authority.

Number two is the redemption of our bodies. One of these days, you and I are going to hear the sound of a trumpet and, when we do, these bodies of ours will be changed from corruptible to incorruptible, as the Word says, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye.

I Corinthians 15:51-53: *"Behold, I spew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this incorruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality ... "*

So, in phase two our bodies are going to be restored. But, the problem is, you and I are still wearing a body that was given to us by the first man Adam. So, while we are waiting on our new resurrected bodies, there is a positional truth that has been conferred upon our old ones or the ones we are wearing now.

A positional truth that, when you and I enforce it, breaks the hold that our flesh has over our lives and over our spirits and, as I said, if you and I are going to understand why fasting is such a powerful tool, then we must understand the purpose that fasting serves as far as our flesh is concerned.

Let's look at Romans 8:10: *"And if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin: but the spirit is life because of righteousness."*

Now notice the position your spirit has been declared! It says life because of righteousness or right standing. It did not say alive. People in hell are alive! It said LIFE meaning my spirit has entered into the God-kind of ZOE and is forever seated in heavenly places with the Christ Jesus kind of life!

BUT ... in the same verse notice that the position your body has been declared is dead because of sin.

In order to break Satan's hold over your flesh positionally, God has declared it dead until you receive your new resurrected body at the sound of the trump or the resurrection.

The more you take the weapons of God and execute these two positions your flesh and spirit have been declared in redemption the more powerful and full of faith you are going to be.

Of course, praying in the Holy Ghost builds you up in the spirit man, executing and enforcing the position of life that your spirit has received and been declared.

But what does fasting do? Fasting reinforces the position that your flesh has been declared which is dead. It actually breaks the hold the devil has over your faith by helping to put to death those things he uses to control our lives with such as fears and torments, not to mention the temptations of sin.

Just to help you understand this, if a man were to fast six months on nothing but water, his flesh would never bother him again. It couldn't because his body would be dead and his spirit would be in heaven!

Of course, we are not going to be as drastic as this. Yet when a man fasts for just three days at a time, it has the same kind of effect. It executes the death of the flesh a step at a time in small portions until the hold over our spirit is broken and our faith just automatically begins to come up higher.

You see, fasting deals with the worst kind of unbelief ... the subtle kind that keeps a person from doing more for God because it puts a ceiling on their life and they do not know how to break away from it.

Remember what Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 17:19 when they asked Him why they could not cast the devil out of the lunatic boy?

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, BECAUSE OF YOUR UNBELIEF ..."

You see, the unbelief that Jesus was talking about here was not the malicious Pharisee kind of unbelief that causes one religion to fight another.

It was the kind of unbelief that was keeping them from doing more for the Kingdom of God, that subtle kind that a person does not even know he has until he tries to do something more for God and falls short. Why else would the disciples have asked Jesus why they could not cast that devil out if they had already known the answers or the reasons why after they had failed to exorcise him?

But, thank God, Jesus would not give the reason for not being able to cast the devil out without going on and telling you and I what we can do about that particular kind of unbelief and this is why the 21st verse says : *"Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by PRAYER and FASTING."*

So, if unbelief was the primary cause for that devil not coming out, then fasting has nothing to do with God. But fasting has everything to do with that subtle kind of unbelief that was keeping the devil from coming out of that boy.

Fasting has a way of dealing with the real problem and that is a person's inability to see victories in certain areas of their lives because of unbelief imposed on them by the flesh. It has a way of putting to death those things that act as barriers and keep us from receiving from God.

Have you ever seen someone up against a situation that seemed hopeless and, although they seemed to be believing God with everything in them, things just continued to get worse until finally they looked at you with tear-filled eyes and said, "I just can't understand it. I don't know why I cannot receive ... "

Fasting has a way of putting to death things like the feelings of helplessness and despair that can encompass a person who is forced to stand by and watch as a loved one dies from a disease or who is forced to watch all his capital go down the drain as business gets worse and worse, feelings that can replace the most noble efforts of faith in trying to change things.

Many times a person in this condition will not say anything, but way down on the inside they are wondering "WHY, GOD? I really thought I was believing You for this situation and I lost out, it did not happen."

You see, what I am talking about here is the same thing that Jesus was talking about ... the kind of unbelief that is so subtle that, until we are challenged, many times we do not even know we have it. And, because we do not know that we have it, we are amazed and even dumbfounded when we apply all the formulas of faith and still cannot get anything to happen.

Like when a person keeps standing on and confessing the Word, yet nothing seems to change so we just say, "Keep on standing" because we really do not know what to do or what to say.

What the devil tries to do is program us with fear, worry, torment, and unbelief, using the flesh as a tool and, when I say flesh, I mean the part of us that can be tempted to sin and give up.

What happens is the flesh and the devil wear and wear on us until psychologically a program begins to control our actions until we plan our lives as though God is not really involved. Subconsciously this program will act as barrier against faith and literally exalt itself against the knowledge of God.

Then when a crisis comes or someone preaches an exceptional message on faith, we become all inspired and try to pit ourselves against the problem or try to do more for God only to find that a short burst of inspiration is not enough to contend with years and years of negative programming.

Well, thank God, once again this is where fasting comes in.

In my own life I knew that fasting worked, I just did not know how or why it worked. At first I thought it was the personal sacrifice that pleased God and I wanted to please Him so much that I would fast on Thanksgiving because it meant I was giving up more.

Even though I did not fully understand why, it was marvelous to experience victories and to watch the power of God suddenly turn a supposedly impossible situation into victory.

When you fast, you literally cut the flesh off at the source or fountain of its supply ... for food is the most basic appetite of the flesh. And, when a person cuts the flesh off at the source, then something marvelous takes place. The other appetites of the flesh begin to lose their hold on your life and on your faith and things just simply begin to happen.

This is especially true in those situations that seem to have you stalemated and, for all of you that are in the ministry and have been a long time without an increase in the anointing for preaching and ministering to the sick, then fasting is a very, very powerful tool.

It is always my pleasure to serve you from the Master's table. It is always my prayer and desire that these teachings will bless you as much as you bless me.

Fasting

Part Two

Because of years and years of fastings, I have come to know how my body will respond under almost any given situation. I have watched my body go from fat to thin then back to fat again. Although my fasting was for spiritual reasons, I do not mind telling you I enjoyed the weight loss and being thin again just like when I was in my twenties.

There was just one problem, I did not stay that way very long. After breaking the fast my body would blossom again and pretty soon I would be right back up there where I was before, usually with a couple of extra pounds to boot!

So, here I was carrying around forty extra pounds I had fasted away time after time after time. Even though I would say to myself, "I am not going to gain this weight back again!" I WOULD end up gaining it back. I found myself in the same situation thousands of other people have found themselves in ... OVERWEIGHT and seemingly unable to do anything about it.

BUT NOW ... I am happy to report some thirty-five pounds have melted away since I have come to understand the wisdom involved with weight loss. And, the longer I serve God the more convinced I have become there is no problem a person cannot solve or overcome if they will just seek God.

You see fasting has tremendous benefits when it comes to the spiritual growth of a person. I covered this to some degree in our last teaching. But when it comes to permanent weight loss, fasting is no more the answer to a person's weight problem than chronic dieting (as many of us have found out after years and years of dieting and frustration).

I have counseled with enough people and heard enough people speaking out of their hearts to know the reason most people are so seriously affected with a weight problem is because of the most basic need of human nature ... to be loved and accepted not only by others but by themselves also.

So ... before we go any further maybe I can help clear a few things up.

Contrary to what has been said by some preachers from time to time like, "You are not going to hear from God until you get some of that weight off!", please let me assure you, whether or not you are overweight has nothing to do with God's love for you or whether or not you hear from Him.

Sometimes when we condemn ourselves it is our own feelings of unworthiness we are mistaking for what we believe to be God's attitude towards us.

But, whether it be healing or deliverance from overweight or habitual things like tobacco or drugs, Jesus did not come to condemn you or to be part of the problem – He came to be the answer!

So, you and I are going to look at two areas in our walk with God that have to do with our health. One is the effect of fasting on the human body.

And two ... throughout the years overweight has seemed to be such a desperate problem for so many people that I want to give you the things the Holy Spirit has quickened to my heart that have finally resulted in my victory. You see, I know that God's love is reaching out to those who are caught up into this problem but it took spiritual discernment to finally recognize the truth when it came along. (Thank God for praying in tongues!)

So, if overweight is one of the things the devil is holding over you, I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR YOU!

But, first of all, let's take a look at how fasting affects your physical body as far as your heart is concerned and then on to what will finally result in permanent weight loss which in reality has very little to do with fasting or dieting.

So, let's begin by taking a look at Isaiah 58:8: *"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward."*

You see, the whole fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is talking about the fast that God has chosen ... and notice how that in the eighth verse it says: **"AND THINE HEALTH SHALL SPRING FORTH SPEEDILY"**

This is not just talking about the kind of healing that works in a person's body as a result of God's supernatural power. It is also talking about the kind of healing that springs forth in a person's body as a result of a cleansing that takes place in our body's system such as your digestive tract and your blood supply as a result of fasting.

You see, on our modern day diet of refined foods, red meats, breads, and dairy products, our system becomes loaded down with cholesterol and mucus. An overabundance of cholesterol, a sticky substance circulating through a person's blood stream, will keep sticking itself to the walls of our blood vessels until it literally closes off the major heart arteries. This can result in many kinds of diseases, not to mention strokes, heart attacks, and by-pass operations. When a person fasts, the cholesterol begins to dissolve and is then burned as energy.

Then there is mucus, a sticky gluey substance that keeps building up in a person's colon, hardening itself on the colon walls until it hinders the whole body's ability to eliminate waste and to absorb nutrients.

For instance, the lymphatic system is part of the process that your body uses to carry away waste from the cells of your body and eliminates this waste through the colon. But if the colon is lined with hardened mucus, the lymphatic system cannot eliminate properly and causes the waste to back up and stagnate in the body's system resulting in growths in the lymph glands and cancer.

So you can understand what Isaiah meant when he said your health can spring forth speedily ... because when your body begins to cleanse itself through fasting, many diseases will dissipate during the cleansing process, not only growths and goiters but things like skin diseases also.

But ... BEFORE YOU embark on a life of fastings ... please write to me for a book on how to fast properly. I do not want you to jump into this until you first receive your physician's approval and until you understand the basics of fasting and your body's reaction to abstinence from food.

Now, back to weight loss, even though fasting has all these tremendous benefits spiritually and physically and will definitely result in weight loss ... whether a person loses weight from fasting or dieting, the bottom line is keeping the weight off.

So now let's talk about permanent weight loss and why dieting is so ineffective as an overall answer to weight control.

You see ... your brain has a weight regulating mechanism called a HYPOTHALAMUS and to help you understand this mechanism, it operates just like a thermostat, a FAT thermostat, and, wherever your fat thermostat is set, then this is how heavy you will be.

Have you ever seen someone who is real skinny and eats like a horse and you wonder, how can they do that and not gain weight? Or those people who seemingly gain weight eating only one thousand calories a day?

So we say, this one has a fast metabolism and this one has a slow metabolism. But have you ever wondered what it is that makes one fast and the other slow?

It is your fat thermostat! Your overall weight is determined more by where your hypothalamus has set your metabolism than by the amount of food that you are eating.

So let's take a look at the real problem.

When a person becomes dissatisfied with themselves, it is easy to fall prey to fad diets that promise quick results. But the problem is, your body interprets these low calorie diets as starvation and immediately kicks your whole system into a survival mode.

Because your body thinks it is starving to death, in order to preserve your life, your fat thermostat will begin to slow your metabolism down to protect the reserves of fat stored in your body because fat is stored up as energy.

So then we have a problem ... even though both carbohydrates and proteins can be changed to fat and stored, fat cannot be changed to any other product, it can only be removed by burning it as energy in our muscles.

Not only does our metabolism slow down to protect our reserves of fat but because fat can only be burned by the muscles, our body further protects its supply of stored up energy (fat) by reducing our muscle mass.

Even though a person may lose fifteen to twenty pounds immediately on most quick loss diets, as much as ten pounds of that weight loss will be lean muscle tissue and fluids.

Our body then becomes our worst enemy. Here we are trying to lose fat and our body is doing everything it can to preserve it including shedding lean muscle tissue to reduce our muscle so that they burn less energy which is fat!

At the same time our body is trying to convert every little thing we eat to fat for storage, our muscle mass is being reduced to keep from burning what little food we are consuming.

To top off all of this, because our body thinks that it is into starvation, it further protects its fat reserves by sending out a signal to cut back on our energy so that we will burn less fat. This is why most people that diet all the time are tired and seem to have no energy.

Then the answer to weight control is to reverse this process and to get your fat thermostat to turn your weight down not up by speeding up your metabolism.

In order to do that you must follow these three simple rules:

FIRST, NEVER LET YOURSELF GO HUNGRY: (Unless of course you are fasting, then you can resume these principles.) The reason is that your body interprets this as starvation and, after a certain amount of time, will begin to turn your metabolism down to protect its stores of fat.

SECOND, YOU MUST EAT THE KIND OF DIET THAT GIVES YOUR BODY THE THINGS IT NEEDS. I have found the ideal diet to be about forty percent grains such as brown rice, whole wheat, whole wheat breads, and a few different varieties of beans; about thirty percent vegetables of all kinds such as salads, peas, green beans, etc.; about twenty percent fruits of all kinds; and finally about ten percent lean meats such as fish, chicken, or turkey which is usually used for flavoring our other dishes.

Finally, as much as possible stay away from refined sugars and the fats which are found to be so abundant in the red meats. You see, refined sugars which are so abundant in many of our foods and drinks triggers your fat thermostat to turn your set point higher and causes you to gain weight.

The reason is refined sugar and white flour absorb very quickly into the blood stream and elevate the blood sugar. So in order for your body to burn this blood sugar as energy it has to produce a hormone called insulin.

However, when your diet is overbalanced with refined white flour and sugars, eventually the cells of your body build up a resistance to insulin and your body has to keep producing more and more to overcome the resistance. The balance between the blood sugar and insulin gets so far off that, in order for your body to maintain the correct balance, it must convert the excess sugar that cannot be burned as energy to fat and store it in your fat cells.

You should also stay away from drinks with sugar in them and drink at least six or seven glasses of water a day.

THIRD, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF ALL – EXERCISE! Before you get excited and say, "OH, NO!", the kind of exercise I am talking about is not the strenuous kind that pushes your body to its limit. In fact, when you exercise too hard, your body interprets this as a burst of energy and will burn the sugar that is in your blood instead of triggering the mechanism that releases fat from your fat cells to be burned for energy.

The secret to exercise is not the amount of calories you are burning but what the exercise is doing to your metabolism or the set point of your fat thermostat.

You see ... you would have to walk ten miles just to burn one pound of fat if all exercise did was burn fat. But, thank God, the right kind of exercise literally increases your metabolism because your body sends out a signal that says, "Hey, we need to start sacrificing the stored up energy which is fat because this person is expending a systematic, rhythmic amount of energy every day."

And, because your body is not going hungry or being starved any more, it begins to turn your metabolism up to remodel your body into the kind of lean body that can be supplied with a constant source of slow-burning energy which is fat ... your hypothalamus literally remodels your body to make it more efficient for your new life style which is exercise!

Now notice I said the right kind of exercise? I am talking about the kind that uses your main muscle mass such as slow jogging, fast walking, swimming, mini-trampoline, or perhaps cross-country ski machines.

The key to changing your metabolism is by starting out with about twenty minutes a day and working up to one hour at least every other day. This must be a continuous rhythmic pace keeping your heart rate at about 25 beats per ten seconds if you are thirty years old; 22 beats per ten seconds if you are forty years old; 21 beats per ten seconds if you are fifty years old; 20 beats per ten seconds if you are sixty years old; and 18 beats per ten seconds if you are seventy years old.

Going faster does not change your metabolism, nor does going slower. You must stay within that range. To determine your heart rate, exercise for about ten minutes and take your pulse. This will let you know the pace you are going.

This kind of exercise produces fat burning enzymes and endorphines which is a morphine kind of chemical which fights depression.

So do not get discouraged. At first your weight loss may seem to be slow because your muscle mass will increase but it is your muscles that burn fat. Keep going – **YOU WILL BECOME A NEW PERSON.**

My weight has been under control for almost a year. I had to give up the luxury of excuses and am I glad that I did. I have developed a very rhythmic low impact running in place so that when I am in a motel room during a crusade I can exercise at least every other day. I have come to enjoy this form of exercise and have turned it into prayer time.