

WEEK 3 — Fasting and Self-Denial

Day #2

We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours.

~ John Calvin

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Philippians 2:5-11*

Write: Write down the word, phrase or verse(s) that spoke to you.

Reflect:

- How do Jesus' actions demonstrate and teach us about self-denial?
- How did God respond to Jesus' actions?
- How will you apply this scripture to your own life?
- How does your life live demonstrate self-denial?
- What will you give up or let go of for Jesus?

Pray:

Talk with God about what you heard and all the things you reflected upon. Ask God to lead you in whatever ways God might be calling you to respond. Confess areas of self-love and self-righteousness.
Trust God.

NOTES

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Day #3

“Fasting is a way to put ourselves into a situation of moderate deprivation and discomfort in order to practice for a period of time being sustained directly and joyfully by God and his words.”

~ Bill Gualtiere

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Isaiah 58*

Write: Write down the word, phrase or verse(s) that spoke to you.

Reflect:

- How does this passage of scripture describe fasting?
- How did God respond to the fasting?
- What are the results of fasting as described in *Isaiah 58*?
- How will you apply this scripture to your own life? What will you do to be known as a “repairer” or “rebuilder” of broken walls and a “restorer” of homes? (v.12)
- What kind of fast is God asking of you?

Pray:

Talk with God about what you heard and all the things you reflected upon. Ask God to lead you in whatever ways he might be calling you to respond. Ask God to give you grace and strength that enables you to live out his call upon your life.
Trust God.

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Day #4

“Natural devotion may be enough to attract us to Jesus, to make us feel His irresistible charm, but it will never make us disciples. Natural devotion will deny Jesus, always falling short of what it means to truly follow Him.”

~ Oswald Chambers

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Matthew 16:24-28*

Write: Write down the word, phrase or verse(s) that spoke to you.

Reflect:

- How does Jesus describe his followers?
- What is the most challenging part about what Jesus said?
- What will you do with what you have read and heard?

Pray:

Talk with God about what you heard and all the things you reflected upon. Confess areas of weakness. Ask God to give you grace and strength that enables you to live out his call upon your life. Ask God to show you how you can take up your cross and follow him today.
Trust God.

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Day #5

More than any other single discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting, these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately.

~ Richard Foster

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Romans 6:15-18; Galatians 5:16-26*

Write: Write down the word, phrase or verse(s) that spoke to you.

Reflect:

- How do these scriptures challenge you?
- How do I apply these scriptures to my daily life?
- Are there sins to confess?
- What will you give up, let go of, confess before Jesus?
- How do these scriptures inspire you? What promises are made?

Pray:

Talk with God about what you heard and all the things you reflected upon. Make a list of your areas of personal struggle. Confess these areas of sin and weakness to God. Ask God to show you how you can take up your cross and follow him today.
Trust God.

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Day #6

If you are discouraged it is a sign of pride because it shows you trust in your own power. Your self-sufficiency, your selfishness and your intellectual pride will inhibit His coming to live in your heart because God cannot fill what is already full. It is as simple as that.

~ Mother Teresa

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Matthew 26:36-46*

Reflect:

- How did Jesus' actions demonstrate and teach us about self-denial?
- What did you learn from the disciples' actions?
- How will you apply this scripture to your own life?
- How will you give up your will for God's will?

Pray:

Ask God to show you how to continue to take up your cross daily, follow him, and be transformed into his image. Confess areas of pride, self-sufficiency and selfishness.
Trust God.

Write

Spend a few more minutes with God by writing down what you experienced and heard throughout this week in God's presence.

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Day #1

If our fasting is not unto God, we have failed. Physical benefits, success in prayer, the ending with power, spiritual insights—these must never replace God as the center of our fasting.

~ Richard Foster

Silence

Prayer: *Lord, give me grace in my weakness. Show me how to follow you. I am listening.*

Read: *Matthew 4:1-11*

Write: Write down the word, phrase or verse(s) that spoke to you.

Reflect:

- What do Jesus' actions teach you about fasting?
- What do Jesus' actions teach you about self-denial?
- How will you apply this to your own life?
- What will you give up or let go of for Jesus?

Pray:

Talk with God about what you heard and all the things you reflected upon. Ask God to lead you in whatever ways God might be calling you to respond.
Trust God.

NOTES