

INTRODUCTION

- * We have been studying Paul's second epistle to the church of Corinth for the past two months. With our spring week of Prayer and Fasting coming up a week from now, I would like to present a little teaching on the subject of fasting. This is not a commonly taught on topic in the greater church anymore. Yet, it is discipline that is assumed to be in the life of those who seek YHWH.
- * At first, I considered this teaching to be a break from our teaching in 2 Corinthians, but as I meditated upon it I realized that actually this teaching on fasting will be just an amplification of the next portion of our study – 2 Corinthians 10:1-7 – and our consideration of spiritual warfare. For one of our primary spiritual weapons, as we will see, is indeed the discipline of fasting.
- * What is "Fasting"? Fasting, in its proper form, is when you abstain from food and/or drink for a period of time. That concept has been extrapolated to other realms as well (especially during the season of "Lent".) Fasting was seen to be an "affliction of the soul." Hence, as we consider this discipline of fasting for the next two weeks, we want to remember that this temporal affliction of our physical body is for a great spiritual purpose.
- * Today, we are going to consider the call to us, as New Testament believers, to fast. As well, we shall consider some of the reasons to fast. Next week, Lord willing, we will consider "The Proper Fast."

INSTRUCTION ... The Importance of the Call to Fast Is Evident in ...**I. THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHRIST**

A. His Ex _____ (cf. Matthew 4:1-11; Exodus 24:18; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9-19; 1 Kings 19:3-8ff)

1. THE P _____

2. THE P _____

B. His Ex _____ (cf. Matthew 6:16-18)

C. His Ex _____ (cf. Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:33-35; Esther 4:3)

1. THERE IS REJOICING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE BRIDEGROOM

2. THERE IS SORROW AT THE ABSENCE OF THE BRIDEGROOM

D. His Ex _____ (cf. Matthew 17:14-21; Mark 9:29; Esther 4:16)

1. THE T _____ OF FASTING

2. THE P _____ OF FASTING (Esther 4:16; 2 Chronicles 20:1-24)

II. THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH

A. The E _____ **of Antioch** (cf. Acts 13:1-3)

1. S _____ THE C _____ OF GOD (v. 2; Ezra 8:21-23)

2. C _____ THE S _____ OF GOD (v. 3)

B. The C _____ **of Asia Minor** (cf. Acts 14:23)

INTROSPECTION

- * How would you describe your devotion to God? How would God describe it?
- * Are there issues in your life in which you earnestly desire to see God's intervention?
- * What are you willing to do, or give up, in order to grow in your devotion, or to see God's intervention?
- * Is there a need to change the way you think ... and therefore act?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

It may be helpful to re-read the passage before the discussion.

- * Read 1 Samuel 7:1-11. What do we learn from this event in the life of Samuel and the house of Israel?
- * Read 2 Samuel 12:15-23. What do we learn from the fasting of David?