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# ***“FASTING”***

## ***Study 9***

***Christian Foundation Studies  
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# FASTING

**Fasting is an often misunderstood** and neglected subject within the Christian community. While many religious cultures use fasting as part of their ritual, for the Christian, fasting is primarily a tool which can be used to aid us in our Christian walk. It is not to become a ritual. In this study we will look into the principles of fasting from a practical viewpoint, the benefits of fasting, both spiritual and physical, and the proper usage of this practice within the framework of the Christian faith-walk.

**Let us be clear from the beginning** that fasting in itself will not give us victory over sin and the powers of darkness. It is, however, a scriptural directive, and if done correctly will bless the Believer. Fasting, as directed by the Holy Spirit, can help Christians become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading. This is the absolute foundation of the practice of fasting, as, of course, Christians have a proper focus and pray accordingly. Indeed many "spiritualists" fast so as to become more sensitive to evil spirits. So the principle works across the spirit realm for good and for evil.

Furthermore, let us state that nowhere in the New Testament did Jesus institute any kind of fast. In other words, fasting was not established as a command or ordinance, unlike tithing, communion and water baptism. The Apostle Paul fasted, but never told the Church specifically to fast.

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**So what is the moral of the story?** It is this: in all things, including fasting, we are to be led by the Spirit. At the very least we are to ask God before we fast if it is right for us to do so. This will prevent the Christian using fasting as a means of trying to gain favour with God or trying to "manipulate" Him into acting on their behalf. If employed for these purposes, fasting becomes a religious work which counts for nothing.

Also, it is not fasting that gives us faith. Rather faith comes as the digested Word of God, with the help of God's grace, is assimilated into our very being. Therefore "*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*" (Romans 10:17). This is a "*hearing*" that extends and goes beyond the mind. In fact it is a hearing that not only takes what is heard down to the heart of man, but actually makes a home in man's heart for that which has been heard. Only by God's amazing grace can this take place - as man seeks God's Word and will for his life, then, with the help of the Holy Spirit, finds and embraces not only God's Word but His will for his life as well.

Once again, let us state that the primary benefit of fasting, provided we are properly focused concerning spiritual things and are directed by the Holy Spirit, is that it can make us more sensitive to the Lord and His voice.

## FASTING IN SCRIPTURE

*Background Reading: 2 Chronicles 20:1-19*

**We find the practice of fasting** to be quite common throughout the scriptures. Notice from 2 Chronicles 20:1-3 that one of Jehoshaphat's first actions when confronted with a life and death crisis was to seek the Lord and proclaim a fast throughout the land of Judah. He and the people of Israel responded to the threat of foreign invasion in this manner. Fasting was one tool which the people employed to humble themselves before the Lord and seek His face in a time of national emergency. This was their response - they fasted and came together in unity to seek the Lord, Jehoshaphat confessing their total dependence on Him. Victory was gained in the midst of impending disaster when the Lord gave them direction (2 Chronicles 20:14-17) and they acted upon it in faith (2 Chronicles 20:18-30). Their willingness to fast functioned as part of the process by which the defeat of their enemies was secured.

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**Moses on Mt. Sinai** fasted forty days and nights, obviously under the Lord's direction, receiving from the Lord the ten commandments chiselled on two stone tablets (Exodus 34:28).

**Daniel fasted and prayed** (Daniel 9:2-3), humbling himself before the Lord after discovering in the Book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 29:10) that the Jewish exile in Babylon was to last seventy years - and this time was almost up. He sought the Lord earnestly, confessing the sins of the nation of Israel, and calling upon the Lord, in His mercy, to forgive the people and restore them to their homeland. Once again, fasting served as a tool by which Daniel could bring his heartfelt prayers before the Lord, and see his prayers answered.

**Ezra sought the Lord in prayer and fasting** for a safe journey for the returning exiles - who carried priceless Temple offerings through hundreds of miles of harsh country infested with savage tribes and robbers (Ezra 8:21-23). What a journey! Through fasting and prayer, they gained victory in the spiritual realm and saw it manifested in the physical.

**Nehemiah also fasted and prayed** so that God would grant him favour in his desire to see the restoration of God's people to their homeland - in prosperity, not affliction and poverty (Nehemiah 1:1-10). He would undertake this work personally, and complete it under dangerous and treacherous conditions (Nehemiah 2:17-18; Nehemiah 6:15-16). He too was sincere in his desire to serve God, and fasted accordingly.

Instances of fasting can be seen where people needed direction (Judges 20:26-27), when they desired to express repentance (1 Samuel 7:6; Leviticus 23:27; Jonah 3:5-10), in times of intercession (2 Samuel 12:16; Esther 4:16) and also national disaster (1 Samuel 31:13). We can see by these examples that fasting is portrayed throughout the Word as a

sacrificial form of prayer warfare - which helps bring results that may be available in no other way.

We see warnings in the Old Testament in regard to fasting with a wrong attitude (Zechariah 7:5-7), and while involved in sin (Isaiah 58:1-7). Such fasting is useless, for unless accompanied by righteous living and a right attitude, all the fasting in the world will accomplish nothing.

**In the New Testament** we see Jesus speaking to His Disciples about fasting (Matthew 6:16). His Words, “*Moreover when you fast . . .*,” indicate that even though He was not setting a law in place (e.g. no set time, no “when” to fast, etc.), He regarded fasting, as led by the Holy Spirit, as a normal aspect of the disciplined life, not an activity of fanatics. Nevertheless, it was an activity to be undertaken with a right attitude, whether done corporately or individually. It was not to be a religious exercise or an attention-seeking manoeuvre (Matthew 6:16-18).

Furthermore, we also find the early Church fasting in order to gain direction (Acts 13:2). Once they had heard the voice of the Spirit in regard to Paul and Barnabus, they again fasted and prayed before laying hands on them to release them into ministry (Acts 13:3).

**Obviously fasting** is still part of the Christian walk today, and is linked with prayer for the purpose of seeking direction, gaining spiritual awareness, and narrowing one’s focus. Of course all of this will only be achieved with the help of God’s grace at work in us. Nevertheless, these are some of the benefits which can be gained from employing the tool of fasting in combination with prayer and meditation on the Word of God.

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## SPIRITUAL BENEFITS OF FASTING

**Before beginning this section**, it is important to recognize the fact that proper fasting (which is Holy Spirit approved or directed) changes not God but man - for the Lord is unchanging, the same yesterday, today and forevermore (Hebrews 13:8). Thus we fast to effect change in ourselves, be it in terms of increasing spiritual awareness, or being helped to focus properly concerning spiritual matters. Again God will not be changed through our fasting, but we can possibly better position ourselves in regard to clearer spiritual focus and hence more effective prayer.

**One of the purposes of fasting** is to deny the body its sustenance so that the voice of our spirit (which has been fed on God’s Word) can override the voice of our flesh, including our logical thinking. Fasting can help in the stirring up of our faith in response to God’s direction on certain matters so that we can respond to this direction. If our spirit has been fed on the Word of God and is empowered by the Divine Nature, it can rule our life instead of the flesh’s dictates which range from the emotional to the intellectual. Thus

sometimes fasting can help bring us to a position where we are better able to hear the voice of truth via the Holy Spirit, and this can benefit us immensely.

Fasting can function as a means by which the voice of our physical flesh is denied expression, which can then help in obtaining a better spiritual focus based on what we have fed ourselves on, i.e. God's Word.

**During fasting** we exercise our wills against the demands of the (physical) flesh and this can help strengthen our wills, just as exercising our bodies with weights can strengthen our bodies. Just as muscles do not grow or maintain their strength unless they have something to resist, it can be the same with people's wills. These need to be strengthened so that they can be exercised in regard to positive goals. With a stronger will one can seek God more earnestly and not allow distractions to sidetrack or hinder one from doing so. Thus fasting can be a useful tool in helping strengthen our wills, provided it is done within the guidelines of wisdom. However fasting only strengthens our wills to say "Yes" to God - it does not give us power to carry out what we will to do. Our will is the trigger as we yield to the Holy Spirit. The power to do God's will only comes through the energies and graces of the Divine Nature.

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**Our fleshly desires nearly always oppose** the desires of our regenerated spirit, and so will oppose the direction given in the Word of God. Our fleshly desires usually revolve around self-rule - what we want, what we feel like doing, what will please us and benefit us, or so we think!

**GALATIANS 5:17** For the flesh (its desires) lusts (lust) against the Spirit (His desires, His will), and the Spirit (and the regenerated spirit) against the flesh: and these are contrary (opposing) the one to the other: so that you cannot do the things that you would (in your own strength - only by the Holy Spirit can the flesh be subdued.)

Through denying the body the pleasure of the food it desires, it is somehow possible, when we properly focus ourselves, mentally and spiritually, to be better able to "tune in" to what the Spirit is saying to us. We are possibly then also better able to stir up the faith within our hearts to use in accordance with the direction the Spirit gives.

As Christians, we need to retrain ourselves so that we do not respond to the desires of the flesh (mind). This is why we need to renew our minds continually with the Word of God. Through this, by God's grace, our old ways of thinking can be replaced with God's way of thinking - for the Lord says in scripture that His thoughts are not our thoughts, and His ways are not our ways.



**ISAIAH 55:8** “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.

**ISAIAH 55:9** “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

**Fasting is one tool** which, when prompted by the Holy Spirit, can help discipline us, without the distraction of the dictates of the physical flesh and its desire for food, to become less self-conscious and more God-conscious. By not listening to or obeying the body’s emotional pleas for food, we deny these particular physical cravings and can then discipline ourselves to concentrate on what God’s Spirit desires. Even though it is not essential, nevertheless fasting is one thing which can help train us in this area, so that our mind is then better able to focus on relevant spiritual issues.

Of course, this will be in direct proportion to the amount of digested Word of God in our hearts. Only if we have been fed on the spiritual diet of God’s Word can we begin to have our senses exercised to discern between good direction from God and evil direction from the enemy or even the flesh (mind) of man (Hebrews 5:14).

Nevertheless, the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (James 5:16). And if it takes fasting for that person to receive direction from God concerning how to pray, so that their faith can be stirred up and properly applied, then so be it.

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***“ . . . Fasting only strengthens our wills to say “Yes” to God - it does not give us power to carry out what we will to do . . . The power to do God’s will only comes through the energies and graces of the Divine Nature . . . ”***

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**Jesus alluded to the power of prayer when combined with fasting** when this particular instance of deliverance took place:

**MARK 9:25** When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, “You dumb and deaf spirit, I charge you, come out of him, and enter no more into him.”

**MARK 9:28** And when He was come into the house, His Disciples asked Him privately, “Why could not we cast him (the demon) out?”

**MARK 9:29** And He said unto them, “This kind can come forth by nothing, but by **prayer and fasting.**”

Thus He told the Disciples that the particular kind of demon could not be released by them but through “*prayer and fasting.*” Yes, Jesus at this point had not been glorified and had not yet sent the Comforter to empower Believers with the Divine Nature or the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Nevertheless, for Jesus to mention fasting and prayer together, fasting must be of assistance in helping us to focus properly in relation to faith and the wisdom of God so that God’s power may be released concerning some areas of

deliverance. Again, let us remember in all things to be led by the Spirit or at least to get His approval. With this approach, we will keep religious and fleshy works at bay.

Fasting can help us to ignore the flesh's (physical) dictates and any other relevant distractions. Then in prayer, with proper focus, and perhaps after being led to study certain truths, the Believer may come to the Lord less distracted and therefore better able to hear or discern the voice of God for direction etc. At this time the Believer's worship may also deepen in intensity. All this becomes a possibility as Believers fast and focus with proper spiritual intent.

**In the world** we are taught to judge all things by our senses and our emotions. However our senses and emotions can often be misleading and guide us along wrong pathways. For this reason, we should always seek to be led by the Word of God (Proverbs 3:5-6). Where more specific direction is required, fasting may, at times, help bring us into a position where we are able to discern the voice of the Lord more clearly. As a result, we can become more spiritually aware of situations which exist both around us and apart from us. Such heightened spiritual perception is one of the possible fruits of fasting, but this will only become apparent if our hearts are focused on God, His Word and the finished work of the Cross. Holy Spirit led fasting can help deepen our focus when it is combined with meditation on God's Word.

**Immediately after His baptism by John**, Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, where He spent forty days fasting (Luke 4:1-2). This was not to increase the severity of the testing Jesus endured, but rather to assist Him in dealing with it. The lengthy fast would have helped Him gain increased (or heightened) spiritual awareness of what was confronting Him, helping Him as He denied His carnal distractions (physical cravings for food) so that He was better able to strengthen His own will and also discern the wiles of the enemy. Remember that the temptations were real - otherwise the test would not have been genuine! When by His will Jesus said "Yes" to the Spirit and therefore "No" to the devil, the Divine Nature within then gave Him a holy desire and a power to do that which He willed to do, i.e. to reject the tempter's urgings.

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***“. . .Such heightened spiritual perception is one of the possible fruits of fasting, but this will only become apparent if our hearts are focused on God, His Word and the finished work of the Cross. . .”***

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**As we have said, when we fast properly**, it can help us cut out distractions and enable us to better focus on the Lord and His will in our lives. Therefore fasting, if needed, can be a useful tool to help us tune our spiritual ears more closely to the exact frequency of God's Spirit. As we purpose to, we can will not to listen to our emotions and flesh (mind). As a result, our channel can become less cluttered, giving us, potentially, a better chance to hear the voice of the Lord and to understand God's will for our lives. We can then rely on the Divine Nature within us to give us the desire and power to do God's will (All of this can

happen, of course, when we combine fasting with proper meditation on God's Word. Fasting without a proper focus will be of no use).

Again this is not a result of the operation of willpower. Man's will is merely the trigger that sets in motion a chain of events that can be negative or positive. However the power of the Holy Spirit will not work on our behalf unless we are pointed in the right direction, that being the way of truth.

**If led by the Holy Spirit to fast**, in order to hear the voice of the Lord and understand His will for our lives, we need to place ourselves in the best possible position by:

1. Fasting willingly, not grudgingly.
2. Repenting if we have sinned.
3. Being humble.
4. Believing for the Lord to help give us clarity of focus as we meditate on His Word.

Also note that generally, what we are able to receive directly from the Spirit will be in direct proportion to our knowledge of God's Word (the amount of His Word we have digested) and our Christian maturity.

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***“ . . . Fasting, if needed, can be a useful tool to help us tune our spiritual ears more closely to the exact frequency of God's Spirit. . . ”***

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**Many people have the view** that fasting can give us faith, but this is not so - for we know that hearing and studying God's Word are the only ways to gain knowledge, and therefore faith.

**ROMANS 10:17** So then faith comes by hearing (the message of God), and hearing by (the preaching and sharing of) **the Word of God.**

However, fasting can sometimes help us activate or stir up the dormant faith we already have in our hearts through helping us clear our cluttered minds. Dormant or stored faith can be released as we fast and focus properly.

Also if you are struggling to gain victory in an area of your life after having done all the obvious things, then perhaps fasting could help.

**Remember, the aim of fasting is not to change God** but to help bring us to a position where we can:

1. Become more open to God's leading.
2. Exercise the faith which has already been deposited in our hearts.
3. Experience a weakening of the operation of the physical flesh in our lives.

4. Be helped to gain spiritual awareness or perception, even gaining, or experiencing, greater intimacy with God.

**Fasting according to God's Word**, and when prompted by the Holy Spirit, is one of the disciplines of the Christian life. By denying self in the physical, we can be strengthened through clarity of mind and then be in a better position to say "Yes" (the trigger) to the will of God. The only way to properly fast according to the Word of God is to go through the Cross, focusing on the finished work of Christ - us in Him in His death and Resurrection - then progress on to the promises of His Word that rely on Christ's finished work. By denying self (our flesh) in the power of God, self (our spirit man) can be strengthened so as to be able to flow in the will of God. We will then be in a better position to help others, for it is only from a position of spiritual strength that we will be able to do so.

### **Some Guidelines For Fasting**

*Background Reading: Matthew 6:16-18*

**Here are some guidelines** which one should consider in order to receive the full benefits fasting provides.

1. Enter into Holy Spirit approved fasting with purpose, willingness and faith in the things which you have been taught.
2. By faith determine your reasons for fasting and list them on paper (these should not be only for temporal gain, but should be for soul enrichment through relationship and revealed truth etc.).
3. During fasting, give as much time as possible to Bible reading, study and prayer - in short, meditation on the Word. Fasting should always be accompanied by prayer, for it should always be undertaken as an activity which is based on relationship - us in Christ and we in Him, flowing with Him in the energies of the Divine Nature. Otherwise fasting becomes a religious work, of no spiritual or eternal value.
4. During fasting, find a place where you can speak out positive scriptures and praise God aloud for what He has done and is about to do. This will help begin the process whereby we focus properly.
5. Repent of any sin for:

**PSALM 66:18 If I regard iniquity (sin) in my heart, the Lord will not hear me**

6. Do not wait for an emergency to compel you to fast. Rather, be open to the leading of the Spirit in regard to fasting. This can help bring you into a position where you can face an emergency or test in the power of the Spirit. Remember Jesus fasted then was tested.

7. Fasting initially may cause some unpleasant physical symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, physical discomfort, etc. Do not let these symptoms deter you for they will disappear once your body is cleansed of its toxins.
8. During fasting, it is wise to abstain from strong stimulants such as tea and coffee (herbal teas are, however, quite satisfactory). Water is a good substitute as it is an efficient cleansing agent which rids the body of toxins.

**Note:** If you are used to drinking a minimum of 4 to 5 cups of tea or coffee a day, you will need to prepare your body for fasting by gradually diminishing this amount. Otherwise to suddenly abstain from these stimulants will normally cause withdrawal symptoms such as headaches.

9. If you are on medication or at this point suffer from some form of sickness, it would be wise to obtain medical advice before entering into any fast that extends beyond two or three meals. Some in this category may fast by not eating certain foods but still eating other foods required by their medical condition. In all these areas use commonsense, see your doctor and tailor the fast to fit your situation.
10. If you are fasting for the first time, begin by going without one or two meals. Then graduate to fasting for longer periods such as a day or two.
11. Guard against constipation by having meals, before and after fasting, which contain fresh fruit or fruit juices, dried figs, prunes, apricots, oatmeal, bran, etc.
12. Break your fast of 2 or more days gradually. Begin with meals that are light and easy to digest, for your stomach will shrink with any fast over two days. The longer you have fasted, the more care you will need to take in breaking your fast.
13. Do not turn fasting into a regimented religious act, but again, let the Spirit lead you in regard to when to fast and how long to fast. Fasting, done according to the will of God, then becomes a work of righteousness, not a work of the flesh. We should take care to fast in union with the Holy Spirit, not apart from Him.
14. Fasting can also be a tool which can help us get to know God in a more personal and intimate way.

**Especially during the first twenty-four hours**, out of habit you will feel like eating, for hunger is partly a matter of habit. So at the beginning of a fast, you will most likely experience hunger at your normal meal times - but this sensation will usually pass. Sometimes you can fool the stomach by drinking a glass of water instead of eating.

**Remember: When entering into a fast** in relation to spiritual matters, prepare yourself by purposing the period you want to fast and the reasons for doing so. Do not fast aimlessly, or you will not gain any real spiritual benefit.

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*“. . .Fasting, done according to the will of God, then becomes a work of righteousness, not a work of the flesh. . .”*

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### **Physical Benefits Of Fasting**

1. Controlled fasting will help the body purge itself of toxic substances. Fasting can cleanse the system if your intake consists of water only.
2. Some people who are accustomed to fasting regularly report that after they have fasted, their energy level is far greater. Some also sleep better and wake up refreshed rather than feeling tired at the beginning of the day.
3. Also with fasting, some people feel calmer and less anxious concerning life's pressures. Some have reported that fasting for 3 to 5 days can lead to increased energy and calmness, and greater attention to the work at hand. As a result, such people are able to manage stress in a much more positive way.
4. Some people feel better within themselves because they lose weight (excess weight) and have a new sense of mastery and self-confidence.
5. When many Believers fast, clarity of the mind can come about at a natural level. This can help Believers become alert at a spiritual level also, as they focus properly in relation to the need.

**On a physical level, in order to gain the full benefits of fasting,** one should also have a well balanced diet and an exercise program. As with any diet or regular exercise, however, commonsense must also prevail when one is fasting. Therefore, it is up to each person to decide in their own mind on a course of positive action and to adhere consistently to it.

### **Some Warnings Concerning Fasting**

1. **Do not let fasting become a ritual** for then the spiritual purpose of the fast will be lost.
2. **Always remember that God does not give us merit points for fasting.** Neither does fasting develop faith. Fasting is merely an instrument which we can use to help us gain a heightened alertness at a natural level, and so be better able to take advantage of prayer, study etc.
3. **Be honest in your fast,** otherwise, a fast is a farce. You can try to fool yourself but you cannot fool God.

4. **Fasting is not for those who are sick** or weakened through illness. People with medical conditions should seek their doctor's advice before fasting.
5. **Do not boast about your fasting.** Do not speak about your fasting so as to attract the attention and even the praises of men. Rather, try to fast privately - let it be between you and God (unless a corporate fast has been proclaimed). Jesus Himself gave us these instructions:

**MATTHEW 6:16** Moreover when you fast (*no set time*), be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward (*so much in the religious realm falls into this category; it is done for "show" whether it be fasting or giving, etc.; the Lord will never reward such*). (E.S.B.)

**MATTHEW 6:17** But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face (*the "anointing" and the "washing" were actually symbols of joy; this was the opposite of the sad countenance* : E.S.B.);

**MATTHEW 6:18** That you appear not unto men to fast (you will not be making a show for others to see), but unto your Father Who is in secret (only He will know): and your Father, Who sees in secret, shall reward (bless) you openly.

6. **Research has shown** that after fasting, the body's metabolism can drop to as much as 22% below the normal rate. So be careful of your food intake after a fast in order to avoid gaining weight.

**Fasting will not change God's righteous standards** or give us extra favour with God. In other words, if you have not repented of sin, even though you may fast for forty days, your fasting in itself can never secure God's forgiveness. Only Calvary's Blood and repentance will bring about forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

Second Samuel Ch.12 speaks of David committing adultery, and from this action, a child was born. God said that part of the judgement issued in relation to this sin was that the child would die. Even though David fasted seven days, the child still died.

**If a thing is wrong**, all the fasting in the world will not make it right or be of any value. We see this clearly in Isaiah 58:3-10 where God's people were fasting but receiving no benefit from it at all because of their sin. The Pharisees were similarly guilty of fasting as a religious exercise while their hearts were far from God. So fasting, as we have said, can only be effective as an accompaniment to righteous living - it cannot be of any value if practised in the absence of faith and love.

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***“. . .Fasting will not change God's righteous standards or give us extra favour with God. . .”***

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**Forty days of fasting** will not replace the study you should have done, the truth you should then have embraced or the prayers you should have prayed. Fasting in itself will not replace the need for us to daily take up our cross, and focus on the message of Calvary. Fasting in itself will not give us power. Only believing and trusting in the finished work of

the Cross, and then yielding to the Holy Spirit, will provide us with an inroad to heaven whereby our prayers can be heard and answered, as we believe and trust in God's grace.

Therefore when we fast, let it be with a right attitude - one of seeking God with a humble heart. As we have said, let us also fast in fellowship and communion with the Holy Spirit, conducting our fast in conjunction with Him, not apart from Him. Otherwise we will be engaging in a religious exercise, and not enjoying intimacy in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

### **The Purpose Of The Fast Concerning Yourself**

**When entering into a fast**, believe that the purpose of the fast that the Holy Spirit has given will be accomplished by the time the fast is finished. Prepare yourself for this by first obtaining God's direction in regard to the fast.

Fasting can give us a physical platform from which we can better focus, first from the mind. Then in the time spent in the fast, we can allow the Holy Spirit to commune with us, showing us His will for our lives and also possibly where we are going wrong. So fasting is a tool which can help us separate ourselves a little from the physical world, and spend some quality time focused on the Lord and His will - if we approach fasting properly! Of course this can also happen without fasting, but sometimes the Spirit will lead some to fast for a purpose.

If fasting is required as part of an intercessory activity, involving two or more Christians, the Spirit-directed general purpose of the fast will obviously be known from the outset. However the specific way to address the issue or problem in focus will usually be revealed through the gifts of the Spirit at the end of the period of fasting, when joint prayer is undertaken. Once this prayer takes place, and those involved pray in faith and as directed by the Holy Spirit, the purpose of the fast will have been achieved.

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***“. . . fasting is a tool which can help us separate ourselves a little from the physical world, and spend some quality time focused on the Lord and His will. . .”***

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### **A Personal Testimony Concerning Fasting**

**Some people who practise fasting** experience a heightened state of consciousness following a three or more day fast. Their minds become extremely sharp and their thoughts exceptionally clear. Derek Prince, a well known Minister and Teacher, obviously very familiar with fasting, was quoted concerning a 40 day fast:



*“In my personal life, fasting has been for specific purposes and for a long duration. After three days, there are no hunger pains or desire for food. From twelve to fourteen days later, there seems to be a sense of complete cleanliness and mental clarity. After twenty-one days, there seems to be an outpouring of spiritual power and creativity that is indescribable, but that continues until the fast is ended. It seems especially after the third week that one is no longer even remotely interested in the trivial physical world around. One’s mind is filled exclusively with profound spiritual ideas and truths.*

*One of the most profound things is that the mind will concentrate for hours on the same subject without once wavering or being distracted. There is no question that there is awesome power in fasting. If the fast is controlled by the Holy Spirit and Jesus is foremost, then it is a beautiful and powerful experience. However, if it is not, be warned because non-Spirit-controlled fasting can open the mind and body to the control of evil spirits. Note the conditions and places surrounding Mohammed, Gandhi, various gurus, and others. Long fasts are inherently spiritual; but if you take one, make sure that you are completely committed to Jesus (and led to undertake the fast). Otherwise, it is the most dangerous thing you could attempt.”<sup>1</sup>*

(underlines and bracketed phrase added)

**Note:** It is unusual for people to be led into long fasts, but principles can be gleaned from Derek Prince’s observations.

## Summary

We have learned through this study that fasting, when prompted by the Holy Spirit, is one of the disciplines of the Christian life and that it has many benefits, both spiritual and physical. Fasting is one of the tools (and that is all it is, remember it has no power or promise in itself) which can, with God’s grace, help us:

- deepen our fellowship with God as we focus our faith correctly.
- gain a greater understanding of God’s truths as we meditate on them.
- sharpen our spiritual perception throughout this time, as we combine our fast with prayer, study and meditation.
- stir up, direct and release our faith more effectively after we remove the clutter of the mind, the world and the flesh, and then apply God’s Word to our lives.

**In developing ourselves in these areas**, we can become much more effective instruments in God’s service. Again, we need to remember that fasting helps change us, not God, for only through us exercising faith according to His will and Word, will God be moved. Fasting is purely a tool which, when utilized in accordance with God’s leading, can help us in our walk with Him, whereby we can develop spiritual maturity, thus being more able to be used of God to help others. So let us be balanced in our Christian walk and make full use of all the Lord has given us - according to the leading of the Spirit.

Again, all of this can happen without fasting, but as we have said, we should be open to the Spirit prompting us to fast if He deems it necessary. Amen.

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*“ . . . Again, we need to remember that fasting helps change us, not God. . . ”*

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Having spoken of being taught, according to worldly thinking, to judge all things by our senses and emotions, we will now digress and cover the area of emotions from a scriptural standpoint. We need to remember that fasting, when needed, is one way of bypassing the clamour of our emotions through enabling us to better focus on the spiritual realities of God and His will in our lives. We feel that this subject needs to be addressed at this stage in the Bible College syllabus. The truths taught in this section will help give you proper focus and understanding in your approach to fasting and your Christian walk in general.

### **EMOTIONS – DO THEY DEFINE WHO WE ARE ?**

**Society, infested with human psychology,** has taught man to own his emotional thoughts because our emotions, it is said, reflect and even define, who we are.

Many are bewildered, hurting or a little confused, having not quite worked out their reason for living. Our modern society has a mechanism in place that deals with those we have just mentioned. The answer is to send the hurting and confused to a therapist, psychologist or counsellor, etc., so that they can help such people make sense of their scattered negative emotions. Like a painter, the professional will try to piece together from the palette of emotions they are presented with, a picture of the real person, the “real you.”

However if one bothers to look at the Book of Life, to seek the opinion of the Creator, a different picture emerges. If you turn to Isaiah 55:8 and 9, you can see what the Creator says about these counsellors and even our own thoughts in the absence of the saving, energizing Light of truth in our minds and hearts.

**ISAIAH 55:8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.**

The distinction, as revealed by the next verse, is great indeed!

**ISAIAH 55:9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”**

**All the wrongs of this world** are a direct result of the Fall which introduced sin into the world and the power thereof. This would include such mental problems as confusion, for man remains in a confused state in regard to righteousness and his place in the world until God enters his life in a relational sense. Only through Christ and the power of the Spirit can this take place.

**Man deals with sin and its consequences** in a totally different way than he should. Sin and its consequences should not be dealt with at an intellectual level or an emotional level, but rather at a spiritual level. In this the Blood of Jesus Christ must be applied to man’s sin in order that forgiveness from the One Who matters will come. Many also need

to forgive others in order to be released from hurt and bondage. Some people who harbour sins of resentment and unforgiveness need God's power to help them forgive so they can be liberated from the effects of the past. To find himself, however, and get right with himself and his fellowman, a man must first get right with his Creator. It is his vertical relationship that must first be restored before he can properly deal with his horizontal relationships.

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***“. . . To find himself, however, and get right with himself and his fellowman, a man must first get right with his Creator. . . ”***

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Even as Christians, with our vertical relationship intact at a legal positional level, because of ignorance or doubt and unbelief, and through listening to our emotions, we often prevent heaven's power (that the Cross has afforded us) from coming to our rescue. Allowing our emotions to rule us will cause us to operate in the flesh, at best, and certainly prevent the Spirit from doing His wonderful work of leading and empowering (Romans 8:1).

Many people connect their emotions to, or even equate the full range of their emotions with, their real self. If that were true, why then when we Christians leave this physical world will nothing negative follow us, including any negative emotions? This is clear from the following description found in the Word:

**REVELATION 21:3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, “Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. (This speaks about the time of the regenerated earth, when God the Father comes to dwell on the earth. These two verses also describe conditions in heaven.)

**REVELATION 21:4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (*actually says in the Greek, “every teardrop,” and refers to tears of sorrow*); and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain (*addresses sin and all its results*): for the former things are passed away (*refers to the entire effect of the Fall*). (E.S.B.)

**Certainly we are emotional beings** and are meant to be this way, otherwise we could never love or have passion. So the question is not as a person whether we should have an emotional response regarding certain issues and people. The question is whether we allow negative emotions to rule the day and to govern our behaviour. For instance, if we have a bad day full of negative emotions, we should not own these emotions, or define ourselves in terms of fear, anger or grief etc. We should not connect them to our real self. And we should know that in time they will dissipate. Sure they are connected to us - but that temporary part of us will one day dissolve and disappear. For example, in heaven we will never experience negative fear. Therefore the particular aspect of our human thinking that causes negative emotions, and indeed the emotions themselves, do not depict the real person!

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***“ . . .Allowing our emotions to rule us will cause us to operate in the flesh, at best, and certainly prevent the Spirit from doing His wonderful work of leading and empowering. . .”***

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On the other hand, we can never think that we have immunity in regard to actions that we undertake based on an emotional state that has dictated to us how to respond - and we have succumbed to these emotions. We are always responsible for our actions. For example, in a fit of anger or rage, a Christian may attack someone verbally. Obviously they will have invited this emotion into their daily life at that time, having meditated on particular thoughts and then accepted them. The result is accepted thinking that has produced anger in that person's life - and they will live with the consequences of it. While this unrighteous anger is not a part of the Christian's real self, and will not go to heaven with them, they are still responsible for the wrong they have done through allowing the emotion to dictate their response.

**Even the physical realm** can cause an impact on our emotional stability. Doctors have found that when some people take certain physical substances, let's say certain drugs, they lose the ability to resist their heightened irrational emotions, and they act on them. This is to have a low threshold of control over one's impulses, which creates many problems with resultant irresponsible and even criminal behaviour. Diet has even been known to affect some people's emotional stability, depending on their genetic flaws and predispositions. Indeed all the external and internal factors that relate to physical life in our physical body can cause an impact on our thinking and therefore our emotional responses.

When we look more closely at this subject it thus becomes obvious that while we are on this earth, our emotions are not true indicators of our true self.

**Man was never designed** to be where he is today - expelled from the Garden, and living on a cursed planet in a cursed body (for it will die). We still need to be separated from the effects of the curse, effects that man faces every day - but only death will bring that promise to complete fulfillment. However God has not left us without hope or power. We can deal with the issues and complexities of life if we would but trust in His Word and so lean not on our understanding, but rather on God's reasoning and wisdom. As we have seen, the Word exhorts us to:

**PROVERBS 3:5** Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding (your own ideas, thoughts, opinions, plans, etc.).

**PROVERBS 3:6** In all your ways acknowledge Him (seek His face), and He shall direct your paths.

**PROVERBS 3:7** Be not wise in your own eyes (and therefore self-sufficient): fear (reverence so as to obey) the Lord, and depart from evil.

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*“ . . .When we look more closely at this subject it thus becomes obvious that while we are on this earth, our emotions are not true indicators of our true self. . . ”*

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### **Emotional Stability**

Let's get back to our original statement that emotions do not define who we are. If emotions do not define who we are, then what does?

**Emotions can be a response** to what you believe. And if your belief is faulty and dark, then your emotions will be faulty and dark. Therefore we can conclude that emotional stability is based on proper beliefs, and proper belief is holy, empowered belief. One can have holy faith and negative emotion. But to hold this faith, one will not accept and thus own such negative and destructive emotions.

Therefore it is not emotions but what you believe in completely and therefore trust in completely that will determine the real you - who you are and to what or to whom you are connected.

**Faith at a holy level** will transform and so change a person, and develop them into the person they were always meant to be. Indeed the potential of every human is to be Christlike - without the loss of one's own individual personality.

**Therefore to release our true and proper personality** is not about changing our personality but rather our character. When a person's character is evil and corrupt, then their personality is affected. When a person's character is more Christlike, then by God's power the potential they always had to develop into the person they were meant to be can be realized.

It is important when discussing these issues to distinguish between character and personality. Character relates to moral excellence, so that a person of poor character lacks the moral fibre and righteous principles needed to live a productive, responsible life where a concern for others is clearly apparent. The word "character" can also be used to describe the complexity of mental and ethical traits which make up an individual, or else the essential nature of a person. The word "personality" relates more to an individual's temperament, or their personal and social traits, in other words, how they present to others. The concept of personality is not related to morality but more to the way in which an individual interacts socially.

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*“ . . .Therefore to release our true and proper personality is not about changing our personality but rather our character. . . ”*

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**A person's character development** can be very minimal, but they will still have a distinct personality, i.e. unique individual traits. However if their character changes to

become more Christlike, their personality will also change to become more realized, which is to become more what they were created by God to be like.

Character revolves around morality - which is defined by God. Personality is the expression of one's own individual personal traits.

Character can be developed and changed by God's power at work within us, engendering Christlikeness. God's power will then also help release a person's proper personality, i.e. their realized self.

**Psychologists deal with emotions** which are not part of the real person. They think that man can be changed and his problems solved by addressing those aspects which are not related to his essential makeup. This, of course, constitutes a bandaid approach to any "psychological" problem. Man is not just a conglomeration of emotions but a spiritual being with a soul whose needs must be dealt with spiritually. This means that what needs to be worked on is character - and this is a spiritual issue, for character relates to God and morality. Therefore the first thing needing to be addressed is not feelings but sin. This involves us acknowledging sin as sin, and identifying with Christ on the Cross so that our sin may be dealt with. The answer for the spiritual issue of character is repentance, the Blood of Christ and forgiveness. Then must come the teaching from God's Word about His will and His principles.

**Personal development is not about changing our personality** but rather about stripping away the layers of bandages that we have allowed life and our own thinking to entomb us in. This happens one bandage, one bondage, at a time - if we allow God to strip them away. This process will gradually expose the real, realized you.

**Dark emotions** are something man was never meant to partake of. But in the Garden, man did. Through the Cross, Christ has brought us back to the Garden to walk with God in the cool of the evening. In this we are able to return to good, holy, proper emotions. But only when we seek, find and embrace the Master will the truth of any matter that matters be revealed, and the power needed to walk in this truth be supplied.

Fallen man, even if located in a perfect environment (without evil and darkness), would sin and fail, for God says that man's heart is evil and that he is a sinner from birth (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 64:6). So the environment is not the answer for man's plight. Rather it is his heart that must, by the Holy Spirit, be regenerated and changed. Only by the Blood of the Cross, applied to man's sin, can this happen. (And don't think even then that a Christian has immunity from sin for it lurks in the darkness, waiting to pounce on the unsuspecting and the careless) (1 Peter 5:8).

**In the beginning, Adam, as man's federal head**, was placed, with a perfect heart, into a perfect environment. Even given these "laboratory" conditions, Adam, because he did not truly trust and rely on God, still managed to sin. In reality this means that it would not have mattered who God placed in the Garden - they would have failed. If the finest man God could have created failed, so would have we! The answer for Adam is the same answer that exists for every person today - that is a relationship with God at both a positional and an experiential level. We must, as Christians, continually rely on the Holy Spirit for direction and the power to live in God's will. Only in Christ can man gain both (Philippians 2:13).

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***“. . . Man is not just a conglomeration of emotions but a spiritual being with a soul whose needs must be dealt with spiritually. . .”***

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**Let's return to the Garden.** Shortly after Adam sinned, God came in the cool of the day and called out, “Where are you Adam?” What was Adam's response? On hearing God's voice, Adam hid because he felt naked and afraid. Prior to this day, Adam had had no such feelings or response. Experiencing fear and shame had been completely foreign to Adam, but his sin had connected him to spiritual darkness. He had decided alone, apart from God's influence, to act. By this means the sin nature flooded his life and he entered into spiritual darkness (Romans Ch.6). His emotional responses after this would never be the same. He would never again experience the stable, positive, spiritually-enriched emotions that he had had before the Fall.

Positive or negative emotions are, for us today, a result of our connection with our environment, internal and external, and the legacy of the Fall. Even the world for us as Christians is not perfect. While sin was defeated at the Cross, the sin nature that has been dethroned seeks to roar back into life when the lusts of the flesh are yielded to - for the sin nature roars back into action to bring forth that which the lusts of the flesh desire.

Also, encompassing us all around is the sin of the world, with sinners tempting us to backslide into the dark pit from whence we came. All this seeks to impact on us and our emotions, day after day. But God has given us the only way of escape and this is through Christ Jesus, and allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us to overcome. In other words, only by His grace are we saved, and only by His grace at work in our hearts and minds can we walk in “*newness of life*” (Romans 6:4).

There are people passing from this life daily, and most, sad to say, are going to hell. Many die in sickness and pain. There are wars all over the globe, along with murders, rapes and every unspeakable horror. Yes the world is an evil place, but to this same place the Saviour came - to release us from our bondages, and in fact to save us from our sin. He came to reconnect us to heaven and the Father's love and grace.

**Emotional stability now as Christians** can be restored to us - as we become rooted and grounded in God's Word and God's will. From this foundation, the empowerment needed to live the Christian life will come - as the Divine Nature energizes the human nature of man. But for this to happen, men must seek, find and embrace the things of God - the truths of the Kingdom. The Christian cannot simply be passive, waiting for these things to fall upon him. Rather he must be active in seeking that which God has already given to him through the Cross. Emotional stability will come from a life that is lived in this way, as the Christian seeks God and His will, and lays aside the lusts and desires of the flesh and self. Indeed the Word admonishes us to seek God and His will, but also gives us the reassurance that the power and grace to both seek and then act is readily available to us:

**PHILIPPIANS 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with **fear and trembling** (this means to progress towards spiritual maturity, which is Christlikeness).

**PHILIPPIANS 2:13** For it is God Who works in you (through the energies and graces of the Divine Nature) **both to will and to do of His good pleasure** (God's will).

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***“. . .Positive or negative emotions are, for us today, a result of our connection with our environment, internal and external, and the legacy of the Fall. . .”***

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### **Dealing With The Demands Of Emotions**

**Even as Christians**, on any given day, we can and do have many emotions bidding for our attention. Some of these emotions will be positive, and even constructive, while others will be negative and, as a result, destructive and debilitating. If a Christian has emotional stability, this means he will be leaning on God's way of dealing with whatever issues arise, whatever life throws up at him, no matter how he feels emotionally (Proverbs 3:5, 6; Psalm 25:5). Remember that emotions ebb and flow, being based on that to which we are indirectly or directly connected. Examples of this are the corrupt world in which we live, our mind (conscious and sub-conscious), the power of darkness and the power of Light. This being the case, and whether it be logical or not, quite often willpower is not enough to change our focus (our thinking) from that which our emotions are based on to something more positive. Try as we might, the focus (our thinking about a situation, person or circumstance) and hence the emotion associated with that focus will keep cropping up. Once again, the grace and power of God is needed to help us break the cycle of destructive thinking and negative emotions.

As we have said, as Christians we will have certain thoughts and emotions that may arise which try to grab our attention and time and if entertained, could really defocus us. But for the Christian who is emotionally stable, these emotions, no matter how "real" in the experience of this Christian, will not change their belief in God and His Word. They will not change their absolute trust in God. In other words, a Christian can have, seemingly, at the same time, two conflicting emotions. In this case, the stable Christian is ruled by the Divine Nature of which he is a partaker, and this causes an emotional response to many things in one's life that may be contrary to other emotions that one may have.

It is not whether or not you have emotional thoughts, positive and negative, for you will have both. It is a matter of whether you take notice of one or the other, and so allow that emotion to direct you accordingly.

**In a general sense**, the power to follow a positive course in one's life can sometimes come from willpower. But when a person is gripped and held by the power of sin, only the power of righteousness can compete against the powers of darkness. So in this case, God's power is needed to set us on the right pathway - our own willpower will not be sufficient. Light, when we allow it to enter our darkened mind, will liberate us and empower us to walk in righteousness, the Light of God's Word.



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***“ . . . It is not whether or not you have emotional thoughts, positive and negative, for you will have both. It is a matter of whether you take notice of one or the other, and so allow that emotion to direct you accordingly. . . .”***

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To sum up we can say that emotional stability comes as a result of not partaking of (listening to) the negative thoughts and emotions that we may experience from time to time. Now emotions include both the positive and the negative. To be stable, however, one must not listen to the negatives which come from this world or the spiritual world or indeed ourselves. If we are actively connected (i.e. in an experiential sense) to the Light of truth concerning a certain area, then if there had been any darkness, God’s Light would have been the power that abolished it from our lives. In other words, if we are walking in the Light of truth, then any darkness that would come against this truth must stay out in the cold.

Some Christians, however, have much darkness in their lives, even though God’s provision has been made available to them to remove this darkness and live in the Light. Indeed God has called us all to walk in the Light of His truth by His power (grace) at work in us. Then, as the Word says, we shall know the truth (based on Calvary) and the truth shall set us free (John 8:31,32). Amen.

**Just to briefly summarize** what we have taught here in terms of emotions: You are what you believe. You are not what your vacillating, erratic and unpredictable negative emotions would try to tell you about yourself. Such emotions, for those in Christ, are temporary. They will pass away, but the real you will not.

May you have the victory in Christ Jesus.

**TIME LIMIT - Due on or before.....**

*This time limit is based on a minimum of ..... hours of study per week.  
You should allow as a general guideline, ..... hours to answer the questions.*

*TOTAL ALLOWANCE ..... hours.*

*If you are having problems completing this study within these guidelines, you may need to seek assistance from those in charge of distribution.*

## STUDY QUESTIONS

*The following questions are designed to assess how much you have understood and retained from your studies.*

*Answer and number all questions on line-ruled paper, giving two or three scriptures with each answer whenever possible. Also give an explanation, whenever possible, of how you arrived at your answer.*

*Answer these questions according to the instructions given regarding the grade you have chosen to work at, i.e. either Intermediate Grade or Ordinary Grade.*

*If you do not understand a particular question, contact those responsible for distribution.*

*For ease of correction **write the actual question down on your answer sheet before answering each question, and please print all answers to the questions.***

*Note: If you do not agree with any particular viewpoint expressed in the studies and you have another viewpoint, answer questions relating to this area in the following manner:*

*The view that the studies teach is . . . . .*

*But I believe . . . . .  
(and state the reasons why you do so )*

***Note: Remember the time limit and complete the study and your answers within the allotted period.***

*If you are studying at Intermediate Grade, you will later be eligible to do the Advanced Questions if you so desire. You will not be able to use your study books or notes to help you answer these questions. In fact all you will be able to use are Bibles and Concordances. So prepare for this by studying properly and answering these questions according to the instructions given.*

*(See letters concerning how to study.)*

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## FASTING

### Study Questions

1. In regard to fasting, as well as other issues in life, what is the principle thing we should establish before we begin?
2. Give three Old Testament examples of people fasting, and state the reasons why they did so.
3. What warnings do we find in Isaiah 58:1-7, and what does this tell us about fasting?
4. What principles did Jesus bring out concerning fasting?
5. Do we fast to change God's mind?
6. What influence can fasting have on God? Explain.
7. Briefly stated, what can be accomplished spiritually by denying the body its sustenance?
8. What part of our make-up will we be exercising when we resist the demands of the flesh, and how can this help us spiritually?
9. Fasting may help us say "Yes" to God, but where does the power to do God's will come from?
10. What is the desire of the flesh, how does this line up with God's desires, and how do we avoid having the flesh control us?
11. What can fasting help us hear and understand?
12. *"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective"* (James 5:16). How can fasting be of assistance?
13. Comment on Jesus' advice to the Disciples in the story found in Mark 9:25-29.
14. Why can't we rely on our senses and emotions to guide us, and how can we retrain ourselves so that we are not guided by our senses and emotions?
15. For what purpose did Jesus fast in the wilderness?
- 16 (a) What can help us hear the voice of the Lord more clearly, and how does this happen?  
  
(b) How do we place ourselves in the best possible position for this to take place?
17. Explain why fasting will not give us faith.

18. What can fasting help do in relation to our faith?
19. If a person is still struggling to gain victory after having done all the obvious things, what other avenue may help achieve the desired result and why?
20. How do we fast according to the Word of God?
21. In order to help others, what spiritual position do we need to be in, and how can fasting help in this regard?
22. With what attitude(s) should we fast?
23. What should fasting always be accompanied by if it is to be effective?
24. What will happen if we fast with unconfessed, habitual sin in our lives?
25. On entering a fast for the first time, what physical symptoms may a person experience, and how should a person initially begin fasting?
26. If a person who is on medication or suffers from some sickness is considering fasting, what should they first do?
27. How can we prevent fasting from becoming a regimented or religious act?
28. During a fast, why is water a good substitute for strong stimulants such as tea and coffee?
29. How should we prepare ourselves spiritually for fasting?
30. What are some of the physical benefits of fasting?
31. When can a fast become a farce?
32. List some things which will nullify the benefits of fasting.
33. What will fasting not achieve? Give examples from scripture.
34. How can the purpose of a fast be achieved, on both an individual and a group basis?
35. “Long fasts are inherently spiritual.” What warning is implied in this statement?
36. Counsellors try to piece together scattered emotions in order to help the confused and hurting. What is wrong with this approach, and what is the true answer?
37. How can we know that the full range of emotions is not “the real us” ?

38. We are emotional beings, but what truth about emotions should we remember?
39. What kinds of factors can impact on our emotions and emotional stability?
- 40 (a) If it is not emotions, what is it that determines the real you?  
 (b) What then is the potential of every human being?
41. What is the difference between character and personality, and what changes take place as God's power works within a person?
- 42 (a) How do psychologists deal with psychological problems?  
 (b) What is the real problem and what is the first thing that needs to be addressed?  
 (c) What is the right way to address these kinds of problems?
43. Explain the origin of dark emotions, when this took place, how and why.
44. How do we know that sin can't be blamed on one's environment?
45. How can we become emotionally stable, and what is the Christian's responsibility in this process?
46. Where do emotions come from (i.e. on what are they based)?
47. How should we deal with negative emotions?
48. At what grade did you study this booklet and answer the questions, Ordinary Grade or Intermediate Grade?
49. Do you wish to commit yourself to studying at 7 hours a week or 4 hours a week in regard to your next study?

*Note: Please send \$..... with these answers for your next study.*

*Note: Under certain circumstances, you may not feel you can commit 7 hours a week to the next study. You can then opt to study at 4 hours a week. The time limits will be adjusted accordingly. Should your situation change, you can increase your time to 7 hours a week - just notify the college or those in charge of distribution.*



## **WE BELIEVE:**

1. The Bible is the inspired, infallible and authoritative written Word of God.
2. There is one true triune God, eternally co-existent in three persons Who form the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. These three dwell together in perfect unity, forming one heavenly government called God, and each of the three divine persons we recognize to be God.
3. God the Word stripped Himself of His rightful godly privileges and became flesh, a human being called Jesus Christ. Nevertheless He remained God the Word, being both truly God and truly man.
4. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin. He was crucified, buried, and then raised from the dead by the power of God. He now sits at the right hand of the Father, and is the only Mediator between God and man.
5. In the spiritually lost condition of men - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (are deprived of God's saving presence).
6. Salvation is found in no one else except Jesus, and there is no other name under heaven which is given to men whereby mankind can be saved.
7. In the essential need of the new birth by faith in Jesus Christ. The only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ.
8. Spiritual regeneration (the new birth) is brought about by making Jesus Christ Lord and Saviour, and by believing that Jesus' precious shed blood was the price needed to redeem man from sin.
9. In the Person and work of the Holy Spirit with His gifts and fruit abiding in the Church.
10. In the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, as the Spirit gives utterance.
11. That believers should be water-baptized, as the Lord commands, by full immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
12. That divine healing is provided in the New Covenant through Jesus Christ, by applying faith to God's Word of promise.
13. In the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by Whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life.
14. Jesus Himself shall descend from heaven to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to meet with Him in the air. This event is known as the Rapture of the Church.
15. In the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth along with His glorified saints. This event will take place after the Rapture (the snatching away).
16. That all who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour will enjoy everlasting life with Him.
17. That all who do not accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour will spend eternity in everlasting torment in the lake of fire, along with Satan and his forces of evil.

1 Prince, Dr. Derek., Fasting,