

How to Fast Successfully?

Text: Luke 4:1-12

The next 21 days are going to be like a huge battle in a Judean desert to people who committed to pray and fast. We will be tempted to quit, or not to pray, not to spend time with God, and a lot more. The Bible says that Jesus was tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin (Heb 4:15). Every day for 40 days, the devil haunts Jesus with his persuasive words. As a man, Jesus had a choice to give in, and the Devil must have known that.

We all have our version of being in a Judean desert. But here is God's commitment to those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God. Here is our assurance:

Hebrews 4:14 "Since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. (15) for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are. (16) let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

The devil will cast a shadow of doubt in who you are. He will do it every day. He will do it constantly until you do something about it. Notice that Jesus told him to back off each time the devil tried to outsmart Him.

(4) Jesus answered, "It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone."

Deut. 8:3 – "man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."

(6) And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. (7) If you worship me, it will all be yours." (8) Jesus answered, "It is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only."

Deut. 6:13 – "Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name."

(9) "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from there. (10) For it is written" "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. (12) Jesus answered, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test.

Deut. 6:16 – Do not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at Massah.

In the next 21 days, I charge those who commit to pray and fast... hear what the Spirit is saying... you don't need a new thing, what you and I need is to hear what the Spirit is saying at this hour, at this moment, in this season of your life. God through the Holy Spirit can turn your life from chaos to order, from bondage to freedom, from confusion to peace. He can turn your life that is shattered by the unfairness of life and difficult challenges that are too strong for you - God is Your Hope, and that hope is given to us by the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

1 Peter 1:3-6 – "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, (5) who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed on the last time.

The devil is a good strategist. He knows when, where and how to attack. Yes, he can attack in the crowd Peter denied Jesus in the midst of many. But, in most cases, he attacks in a place where you think you are safe... In this story, Jesus was alone and very hungry, in the desert where there is no food source at all.

So be vigilant, be aware of the whole devilish plan against your own Judean desert experience. It will not come easy. Temptation becomes harder to resist in time of deepest need. It becomes attractive at its best in our lowest and deepest point of need. But understand beloved that in every temptation/trials/test that comes into our lives, they have come for a purpose.

(6) In all this, you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. (7) These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1 Peter 1:6-7

The Holy Spirit is with you. Ask Him to help you. God is our refuge. He is our very present help in this season of prayer and fasting. Come boldly to His throne of grace.