

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I TRUST EVERYONE'S CHRISTMAS WAS FILLED WITH LOVE AND HAPPINESS. MINE WAS VERY GOOD, I HAD SEVERAL VISITS WITH MY FAMILY. IT'S ALWAYS A BLAST TO SEE JOSEPH, HE CHANGES FROM VISIT TO VISIT. HE'S SO FULL OF LIFE, THREE YEAR OLDS SEEM TO RUN ON ELECTRICITY. MOM IS MY ROCK, IT DOES MY SOUL GOOD TO VISIT WITH HER. I LOVE MY VISITS WITH HER AND MY SIBLINGS MORE NOW THAN EVER. THEN THERE IS MY BABIES, DECEMBER NOT ONLY REMINDS ME HOW MUCH I MISS THEM FOR CHRISTMAS BUT ALSO FOR THE BIRTHDAYS. FAITH TURNED 30 AND JO 25. THEY ARE MY HEART, JO WAS ONLY HOME FOR A FEW DAYS BUT I GOT TO SEE HER TWICE, I DON'T KNOW HOW PARENTS CAN GO YEARS WITHOUT SEEING THEIR CHILDREN, FIVE MONTHS FELT LIKE YEARS TO ME. THEY ALL MADE MY CHRISTMAS.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO SENT CARDS, I WISH I ^{COULD} SEND MORE BUT WE'RE LIMITED ON HOW MANY ~~WE~~ GET.

I READ A POLL THAT STATED MOST PEOPLE GIVE UP ON NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS AFTER 4-6 WEEKS. I HOPE IF YOU MADE ANY YOU WILL HANG IN THERE AND SEE IT THROUGH. MINE WAS TO GET CLOSER TO THE LORD, TO BE SO SENSITIVE TO HIS SPIRIT THAT I NOT ONLY HEAR IT, BUT OBEY IT. WHICH LEADS ME INTO THE TOPIC OF THIS BLOG: FASTING

I'VE BEEN FEELING LED TO DO SOME STUDIES WITH THIS AND THIS ONE IS STRONG ON MY MIND. THE FIRST THING I HAVE TO SAY IS THIS, PLEASE DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME AND THINK THAT I AM BOASTING ABOUT FASTING. IT IS A PRIVATE THING TO DO WITH THE LORD, BUT IF WE DON'T SHARE WITH PEOPLE THE BENEFITS OF IT AND THAT IT CAN BE DONE, THEN MAYBE THEY WILL NEVER TRY IT. I'M NOT SUGGESTING YOU START WITH A FORTY DAY FAST, OR IF THE LORD WILL EVER LEAD YOU INTO ONE, BUT YOU CAN START WITH A ONE DAY FAST. I DID SHORT FAST AND

BUILT UP FROM THERE. IT WAS TWO YEARS BEFORE ~~BEFORE~~ MY FIRST FORTY DAY FAST. JUST LET THE LORD GUIDE YOU.

I NOTICED FOR YEARS THAT I HEARD LESS AND LESS PREACHING ON FASTING, NOT A POPULAR SUBJECT I SUPPOSE. BUT I DON'T WANT YOU TO CHEAT YOURSELF OUT MANY BLESSINGS SO LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT IT. FIRST OF ALL IT'S A MEANS TO WHICH WE ARE ABLE TO BRING NOT ONLY OUR MINDS BUT OUR BODIES AS WELL UNDER SUBJECTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. (1 COR. 9:27) TO OVERCOME WE HAVE TO BE DETERMINED AS PAUL.

JESUS SAID IN MATT. 6:16-18 WHEN YOU FAST, NOT IF YOU FAST. (ALSO IN LUKE 5:34-35) AS AN EXAMPLE TO US IN MATT. 4 JESUS FASTED FORTY DAYS BEFORE HE WAS TEMPTED BY SATAN. IF THE SON OF GOD NEEDED IT, HOW MUCH MORE DO WE? IN MATT. 17:21 JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES WHEN THEY ASKED WHY THEY COULDN'T CAST OUT THE DEMON THAT "ONLY THROUGH PRAYER AND FASTING COULD YOU ATTAIN THAT KIND OF POWER. IN ACTS 13:2-3 WE SEE IT'S A WAY FOR US TO MINISTER TO THE LORD.

I'VE FOUND THREE KINDS OF FASTING IN THE BIBLE. IN ACTS 9:9 WE SEE PAUL (THEN SAUL) DIDN'T EAT OR DRINK THREE DAYS AFTER BEING STRUCK DOWN ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS. I'VE DONE THREE DAY TOTAL FASTS AND IT'S HARD, YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO THIRST TO DEATH.

IN DAN. 10:2-3 WE SEE DANIEL DID A THREE WEEK PARTIAL FAST. HE ATE NO GOOD FOOD OR DRINK. I KNOW PEOPLE WHO WERE BLESSED WITH THIS KIND OF FAST, I TRIED IT, BUT I GUESS BECAUSE GOD HAS LED ME TO FAST SO OFTEN THAT IT FELT LIKE I WAS CHEATING.

AND THEN THERE'S THE REGULAR FAST. IF YOU'RE GOING TO FAST LONGER THAN A FEW DAYS YOU NEED TO DRINK WATER. IN EX. 34:28 WHEN MOSES WAS ON MT. SINAI HE FASTED FORTY DAYS WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER, BUT HE WAS IN THE ACTUAL PRESENCE OF GOD. BUT WE HAVE TO KEEP OUR KIDNEYS FUNCTIONING. SO ON LONG FASTS AT LEAST DRINK WATER, OFTEN ON LONG FASTS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU

WORK, TO KEEP MY ENERGY UP I DRINK SOME JUICE OR MILK OR SOMETHING. I'VE PRAYED ABOUT ^{IT} AND I TRY TO DISCERN WHICH TYPE OF FAST TO DO. I HAVE ALSO SPLIT IT UP WHERE I DRINK JUICE FOR HALF AND WATER FOR HALF. I FEEL THAT I GET A GREAT BLESSING EITHER WAY. I'VE DONE FORTY DAYS WITH JUST WATER AND I'VE DONE IT WITH OTHER DRINKS. THE THING TO DO IS PRAY AND ASK GOD TO LEAD YOU, SET A DATE TO START, THEN A WEEK BEFORE YOU START CUT BACK ON YOUR PORTIONS, MAYBE SUBSTITUTE MEALS FOR SOUP, IT WILL HELP YOU NOT TO HURT AS MUCH. TO ME THE FIRST FOUR OR FIVE DAYS ARE THE WORST, AFTER A WEEK I RARELY NOTICE BEING HUNGRY EXCEPT FOR VERY BRIEF MOMENTS. THEN ITS LIKE THERES A STRAIGHT CABLE FROM THE... HEAVENS TO YOUR HEART, YOU'LL FEEL THE SPIRIT EVEN IF YOUR NOT THINKING ABOUT HIM. IT WILL COME ON YOU ALL THE TIME, I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A ONE MAN REVIVAL.

NOW LOOK AT THE GREAT FASTING CHAPTER IS. 58. THE FIRST FIVE VERSES TELL US HOW NOT TO FAST, BUT STARTING AT VERSE 6 WE SEE THE BENEFITS. FIRST IT LOOSES THE BONDS OF WICKEDNESS, WHATEVER SATAN IS TRYING TO HIT YOU WITH, MAYBE A HABIT YOU NEEDED TO BREAK, MAYBE DOUBT, MAYBE LUST, WHATEVER IT IS IT HAS TO GO. FROM EXPERIENCE I TELL YOU THAT IT WILL. IT WILL UNDO YOUR BURDENS, SET THE OPRESSED FREE AND BRAKE EVERY YOKE.

VERSE 8 TELLS US THAT OUR HEALING WILL SPRING FORTH SPEEDILY. BE IT PHYSICAL, MENTAL, MONETARY, IT WILL HAPPEN. AND OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL GO BEFORE US BUT THE LORD WILL BE OUR REAR GUARD, GOD WILL HAVE YOUR BACK. THEN V. 9 SAYS WE WILL CALL ON THE LORD AND HE WILL ANSWER.

THESE ARE GOD'S PROMISES, ONE THING HE CANT DO IS LIE. EVERY TIME I FAST FOR SOMETHING GOD ANSWERS, BUT YOU HAVE TO DO IT WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE. AFTER MY ARREST I HAD LOVED ONES GOING THROUGH

VERY DIFFICULT TIMES, I FASTED AND GOD DELIVERED THEM. I'M NOT SAYING FASTING MOVES THE HAND OF GOD, JUST THAT GOD'S WORD IS TRUE, IF WE OBEY HIS WORD, HE DELIVERS ON HIS PROMISES.

I FEEL THAT WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO LIVE BELOW THE LEVEL THAT GOD INTENDED. WE CHEAT OURSELVES OUT OF BLESSINGS. JUST TRY IT FOR YOURSELF AND WATCH WHAT HAPPENS. BUT AS I SAID, PRAY ABOUT ^{IT} FIRST, WHAT KIND OF FAST, HOW LONG, BUT I PROMISE YOU THIS, YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.

ONE FINAL THOUGHT, USE WISDOM, IF YOU'RE ON MEDICATION TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR FIRST. I'M NOT DOUBTING GOD'S POWER BUT HE DID TELL US TO BE LIKE.

WITH THAT I'LL CLOSE, THANKS TO ALL THAT RESPOND TO OUR BLOGS, ITS COOL TO GET THAT LETTER FROM THEM AND SEE YOUR COMMENTS.

GOD BLESS

JOE