



# SESSION 6

## Prayer and Fasting

**Fasting takes prayer to another level in our faith and effectiveness in the prayers we pray.**

**Connect:**

Discuss the following questions:

What key insight or takeaway from last session's study that you would like to share with the group?

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Other than food, what is something to which you often turn for a pleasurable distraction watching TV? Social media? Sports? Shopping or something else?

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**Watch:**

**Now it's time to watch the video for this session. As you watch, use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.**

### I. THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING IN CONNEXION TO PRAYER

A. In Matthew 17:14-20, we read the Jesus disciples were unable to bring healing to a demon-possessed boy. So the Father brought the child to Jesus and asked him for healing

B. Jesus identified two reasons why the disciples could not drive the demon out of the boy - they were "unbelieving perverse" (verse 17)

1. **Unbelieving:** not connected to God. In other words, their faith was weak.
2. **Preverse:** too connected to the world. The disciples were being influenced by the world.

C. Jesus provides the solution to the problem; "this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (verse 21)  
Prayer and fasting can be defined in this way:

1. Prayer connects us to God
2. Fasting disconnects us from the world

### II. THREE PRINCIPLES FOR PRAYER AND FASTING

A. Set your objective

1. Decide where you are fasting. Have a focus in mind before you begin a fast. Set specific goals and objectives that line up with God's priorities.
2. Know what you are believing God to provide when you come to Him in prayer and fasting. Share the subjective with others and make your request public.

B. Decide what type of fast you will do.

1. Complete fast: A fast in which you are simply drinking liquids (Be sure to always get medical supervision and just use good sense before you begin a complete fast.)
2. Selective fast: a fast in which you remove certain food types or food groups from your diet. One example is the Daniel fast, in which you don't eat meat, sweets or bread.
3. Partial fast: how fast Pick certain meals in the day to skip, such as breakfast or lunch. Replace the time you would have spent eating by spending time with God.
4. Soul fast: A fast in which you choose not to engage in certain things that feed your mind, will, or emotions, such as abstaining from social media. You get away from "life as usual" and instead choose to fix your mind on the things of the Lord.



# SESSION 6

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### C. Expect Results

1. **Healing:** When you fast and pray, God will bring healing to the broken things in your life - your body, relationships, mind, emotions, and other areas.
2. **Holiness:** When you fast and pray, God will chew the areas that have been grieving him So you can change those things and grow closer to Him
3. **Help:** When you fast and pray, God's favour and blessing will be upon your life

**DISCUSS:** Discuss what you just watched by answering the following questions

1. What are some inaccuracies or misperceptions you have held about fasting how have these impacted your openness to fasting as a spiritual practice?

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2. Jesus identified two reasons in Matthew 17:17 why the disciples couldn't drive out the demon: they were "unbelieving and perverse" How would you define each of these terms?

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3. Think about the definition of prayer and fasting giving during the teaching. How does fasting provide the solution to the problem of being "unbelieving and perverse"?

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4. The first principle when it comes to fasting is to set your objective. What are you believing today for God to provide in your life? What are some of the objectives you could set for fasting?

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5. The second principle of fasting is to decide what type of fast you will do. What type of fast covered in this week's teaching most appeals to you? Why that particular fast?

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6. The third principle of fasting is to expect the results. What three things can you expect God to do in your life when you fast and pray? Which do you need the most of in your life right now?

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7. How has your understanding of the relationship between prayer and fasting changed in light of this week's teaching?

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8. How do you feel led to incorporate fasting into your life moving forward? What benefits do you hope to gain from adding fasting to your prayer life?

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**RESPOND:**

The Bible states that Jesus “called his 12 disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness” (Matthew 10:1) However, as you saw in this week's teaching, those same disciples were unable to draw out a demon out of one particular boy. Read the following passage on your own and answer the questions that follow

- 14 And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying,
- 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”
- 16 Then Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.”
- 17 And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.
- 18 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”
- 19 So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.
- 20 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” **Matthew 17:14-21**

How would you explain Jesus reaction to the father after hearing this week's teaching?

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What does Jesus say to the disabled to encourage them to have faith in God?

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why do you think fasting allows us to tap into more of God's unlimited power?

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**PRAY:**

as you conclude this last session, go around the group and one important take away that you've learned about prayer during the course of this study. Share any personal prayer requests that you would like the others to pray about, both now and after this final session. Thank God for all that He is showing you come I taught you, and given you through the small group study ask for His continued blessings on each of you as the group completes this time together.