

SERMON GUIDE:

January 8, 2028, Pastor Jason Smotherman

Joshua 24:15

Church has become a place where we understand why we sin, but it needs to return to a place where we repent from Sin.

Joel 2:12-17

What is fasting? It's an intentional, voluntary act of abstaining from things (usually food) that only bring you temporary peace, comfort, and fulfillment.

Abraham Lincoln is known for making the statement, **"Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the ax."**

- A dull ax makes for far more work
- A dull ax can be much more dangerous than a well-sharpened one.

Ecclesiastes 10:10

Declaring a spiritual fast is a means of interrupting the dulling effects of life's routines. Fasting is taking time to regain the edge

The Bible is full of "different" kind of fasts.

- The Disciple's Fast - Fasting for freedom from addiction
- The Ezra Fast - Fasting to solve problems
- The Samuel Fast - Fasting to win people to Christ
- The Elijah Fast - Fasting to overcome negative emotions and habits
- The Widow's Fast - Fasting to provide for the needy
- The Saint Paul Fast - Fasting for decision making
- The Daniel Fast - Fasting for health and physical healing
- The John the Baptist Fast - Fasting for influential testimony
- The Esther Fast

The important thing to know is, regardless of the fast, **Fasting makes the issue meet the answer fast**

Jentezen Franklin wrote on Fasting;

Whenever you begin a fast, remember, if it doesn't mean anything to you, it won't mean



anything to God. Without being combined with prayer and the Word, fasting is little more than dieting.

You want your edge back.

You want your edge sharpened.

You want your spiritual vitality back.

You want to return to Him.

Fast from the things that are making it DULL,

Before you fast from food, make sure you are ready for BREAKTHROUGH.

Decide that you are ready to Fast from:

- SIN
- DISTRACTION
- COMFORT AND APATHY
- SELFISHNESS
- NORMAL CHRISTIAN EXISTENCE

That pattern addressed three specific duties of a Christian: giving, praying, and fasting.

We fast because our hunger for HIM is larger than our hunger for anything else.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS:

- What is the importance of fasting? What scriptures make it clear that fasting is important?
- According to Matthew 4:1-11, who fasted? What came against the individual who fasted and what was the outcome in the story?
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- What kind of fasts have you done previously? Is there a specific fast that the Lord is calling you to this month?