

Lent: Fasting and Prayer

Fasting gives rest to the overworked organs of the body. To enjoy food is alright, but to be a slave to it is the bane of life. The more you concentrate on food, the more disease you will have. It is all in the mind, willpower takes our concentration away from food. Mental power is superior. One should learn gradually to make greater use of the mind. Your mind is superb. Whatever you command, it will do. Depend more on your mind although you cannot deny the body entirely.

Health is not the purpose of life. Communion with God is the purpose of life. Fasting is one of the greatest ways of approaching God. It releases the life-force from enslavement to food, showing you that it is God who really sustains the life in your body (Luke 4:4 – “Man cannot live on bread alone but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God”).

The physical results and the spiritual experiences of fasting are wonderful. When we fast we should rely even more on God’s energy within. The spirit within becomes disassociated from the demands of the body as the body itself is freed from gross habits. The body becomes self-supporting and independent. When you refrain from overeating and when you fast, the life-force takes rest and becomes recharged. It is true that on a longer fast, you may feel weak during the first days because the life-force has been accustomed to dependence on food, but gradually, as the days pass, you no longer feel any weakness.

Every one of us is going to die someday, so there is no use in being afraid of death. You don’t feel miserable at the prospect of losing consciousness of your body in sleep; you accept sleep as a state of freedom to look forward to. So is death, it is a state of rest, a pension, a reward from this life. There is nothing to fear. When death comes, laugh at it. Death is only an experience through which you are meant to learn a great lesson: you cannot die. Why wait for death when you can realize this now? The first lesson you have to learn is that life is not dependent on food. By fasting you can prove it to yourself.

Regularity is admirable and necessary in all circumstances: whether you sleep or don’t sleep; have food or no food, have vacation or no vacation. We must acquire the habit of regularity in order to obey the laws of God. The greatest discipline lies in body, mind and spirit. And in that lies the heart of fasting. You are pure energy and you are pure consciousness. Whatever you command, the mind impinges on the consciousness of the life-force, it will manifest accordingly.

Anything can be done by mind power. Make your life and body impervious to suffering. Conquer yourself. By long fasting you realize that everything is in the mind. The mind will not show its miracle unless you make it work. And it will not work as long as you continue to depend more and more on material things. When you learn through fasting, how to depend on the mind, it will work in everything whether disease or prosperity or finding God.

Lent is the best time to depend on God and prove to ourselves that we live not by bread, but by the Word of God. Jesus is the Way to be followed. Let us follow Jesus. He will lead us to the Resurrection, Easter.

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