

## Harvest Fellowship Teaching Series

Pastor CW Turner

Fasting Articles 1 of 3

***“Why We Should Fast”***

Dear Friends,

Every year starting the second Sunday of January, we as a Church begin a 21 Day season of Prayer and Fasting. We do this to seek God’s Will for us individually and collectively as a Body of Believers for the new year. This is a time when we will see Him do Mighty Works, we will see Him Answer Prayers, we will see him Adjust our Lives further into His Image and Plan, and we will see Him Working in our Church and Ministry.

Fasting is something that not many of the People of God find important to do. Many know about it. Most have heard about it. Few practice it because it seems to have been dismissed or even *“swept under the rug”* as old school, impractical, or fanatical. ***I am here to tell you it is none of those. It is something we need to do. Most importantly, it is something that if done in the right way, can lead us into a greater depth with God than anything else we do.***

Fasting is the deliberate act of a person to reconnect with God, to go deeper with Him, to receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit in a greater than normal way.

***Terri and I as your Pastors feel this is an important way every year to bring us into this very special time with God.*** During this time our services will take on a very special meaning, our outreaches will become more powerful and influential, we will become more healthy, and we will see and experience God in new ways. ***So, with that... I encourage you to join this journey.***

***I will be sharing these Fasting Articles to help answer some basic questions. Please read them and be willing to learn and grow.*** Harvest Fellowship cannot be a mighty church if we the people aren’t ***Mighty in God.*** Thank you for joining in.

***This article answers a very basic question; Why We Should Fast.*** Let me tell you this is not exhaustive, it is very simple. It is only meant to help you understand some basics. God will reveal more to you as you move into this very special time of pursuing Him.

***Blessings***

***Pastor CW***

- ***It is Assumed by Jesus that we Will Fast***

In the Great Sermon on the Mount Jesus spoke specifically about three activities that should be a part of the Christian Life. These are ***Giving, Praying,*** and ***Fasting.*** Matthew 6:2 Jesus said; ***Whenever you give...*** in Matthew 6:5 He said; ***Whenever you pray...*** And then finally He said; Matthew 5:16 ***Whenever you Fast.***

The point is that Jesus in each of these three very important activities for His followers ***assumed that we would be doing them.*** Now, we are pretty good at ***Praying.*** We are even, *not too bad* at ***Giving.*** But ***Fasting*** has become for many a lost art.

***Fasting should be as much a part of our lives as His followers as Praying and Giving.*** It is assumed by our Lord that we will be about all three. It is my humble opinion that we are weak as God's People and churches are weak because we are not spending times in Fasting along with Prayer.

- ***Fasting Gives us a More Intimate Connection to God***

***It is amazing how close to God we get during a time of fasting and prayer. The first part of the fast may be a little harder. It may not be as we say, "all that". But as we go longer and intensify our prayers during the fast we will experience His presence in ways we never planned or expected. All of the great Christians of the past have practiced fasting in their lives.***

- ***I am Reminded of Elijah at the Brook of Zarephath. After a time of being there in deep spiritual distress God sent ravens to feed him and gave him water from the brook.***
- ***I am reminded of Jesus time of fasting in the wilderness for 40 days and nights. Afterward, the angels came and ministered to Him.***
- ***I am reminded of the time John the Apostle was on the Isle of Patmos for the preaching of the Gospel and during that time on the Lord's Day while he was worshipping, God came to him and gave Him the Revelation.***

***It is yet to be seen what God will do for us during this time of prayer and fasting. Start right now, preparing yourself to come apart from this world and pursue Him for this time, and you will see Him in a new way like nothing you've ever seen before.***

- ***Fasting Allows God to Deal with us More Personally***

***As you focus more intimately on God he can deal with you more personally. Your attention grows further away from the flesh and closer to His Spirit. This is exactly where the Lord is. Jesus said, "God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. (John 4:24)***

***God will be able to convict you of sin, reveal to you truth, inspire you to greater heights, and show you more precious treasures that belong to you as His children while you draw closer to Him through this time of Prayer and Fasting.***

- **Fasting Helps us with Prayer Concerns**

*While you are fasting, you should have some specific prayer needs to pray about. This is one of the many reasons you should be "Praying about what to Pray about" Right now in the preparation time before the fast.*

*This will be an intense time between you and God, and it will be during these times He can show you His might on your circumstances. You should be praying for people who need to be saved during this time. You need to pray for specific needs, you need to pray for miracles. You need to pray for your children, your family, your friends, your church.*

*As a church we will see God doing marvelous things during this time. The testimonies of answered prayer will be so inspiring as we go through this very special time.*

- **Fasting Takes Our Appetite out of Authority**

*Fasting is a time when we are not under the control of our appetites or what we refer to as our needs. Rather than your appetite ruling you, you will be ruling it. When our appetites are controlling us, we become gluttonous in every way. Ephesians 5:18 says, "Do not be drunk with wine which leads to reckless actions but be filled with the Holy Spirit".*

*We as the children of God should never be under the control of any influence other than the Holy Spirit of God. Fasting can get us to that place where He can gain that control of our lives. This is where His Best Blessings lie.*

*"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is Good. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him" (Psalm 34:8)*

- **Fasting Purges and Restores our Physical Body**

*There are physical benefits to fasting. You will naturally lose weight, though you shouldn't fast so you can lose weight. It will amaze you how fast your weight changes. You will become more flexible because you will literally lose body fat. You will be able to breathe easier. You will be able to think clearer. Your body will rid itself of toxins and impurities that have been plaguing your life. You will change old habits that have been holding you down and even making you sick.*

*Daniel and his friends fasted from the King's delicacies and came out healthier and stronger than all those who had been eating and drinking the King's fineries. We can do the same and be better all year if we will participate in this time of purging with God leading us.*



## ***A Final Note***

***We will all benefit from this time of deliberate focus on God. I would ask you all to spend time praying and seeking Him on how He would have you to participate in this period. There will be many great things for those who seek to know Him through prayer and fasting.***

Jeremiah 29:11-14 New Living Translation

<sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> In those days when you pray, I will listen. <sup>13</sup> If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you," says the LORD. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land."

***We are On the Journey to Greater Things***