



REACHING PEOPLE.
CHANGING LIVES.
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DAYS OF PRAISE

JANUARY 10 - APRIL 10

DEVOTIONALS WEEK 3





30 MINUTES OF PRAYER

30 MINUTES OF READING THE WORD

30 MINUTES OF WORSHIP / PRESENCE / REST

*No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. **Hebrews 12:11***

Your greatest challenge will be completing the challenge. Learn to recognize excuses as lies the mind creates because the flesh hates discipline.

What is the Challenge of this verse?

How can you apply this to your life?

What will you work to change?

Prayer



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Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. **2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV)**

Repentance is the condition of a heart determined to change and finds mercy. Sorrow is the burden of regret that seeks reprieve, but never finds it.

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So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Romans 2:3-4 (NIV)

When one determines they are righteous by measuring how good they are to how bad they judge others to be this is hypocrisy. True righteousness is when the love of Jesus Christ looks at the wrong of others and loves them into the desire to change.

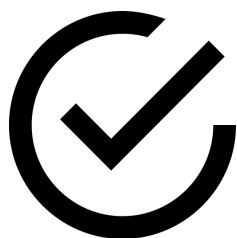
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God "will give to each person according to what he has done." To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger." **Romans 2:6-8 (NIV)**

Careful never to judge the perceived wrong in someone else's life to justify or excuse the obvious wrong in your own. God's judgment will never take into account another's doing in dealing with your wrong.

What is the Challenge of this verse?

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Those who trust their own insight are foolish, but anyone who walks in wisdom is safe.
Proverbs 28:26 (NLT)

When what you feel is your perception of what is real then your life is steered by the deception of your own heart.

What is the Challenge of this verse?

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*You can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back from wandering will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins. **James 5:20 (NLT)***

The destiny of God is not measured nor achieved by our status, possessions, profession, wealth, power or fame, but the number of lives that our life touches and changes in the time measured out for us.

What is the Challenge of this verse?

How can you apply this to your life?

What will you work to change?

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In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire— may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **1Peter 1:6-7 (NIV)**

The making of a pure person is a process of suffering, affliction and trouble until we learn to respond not according to the fury of our flesh but the gentleness and patience of the Spirit.

What is the Challenge of this verse?

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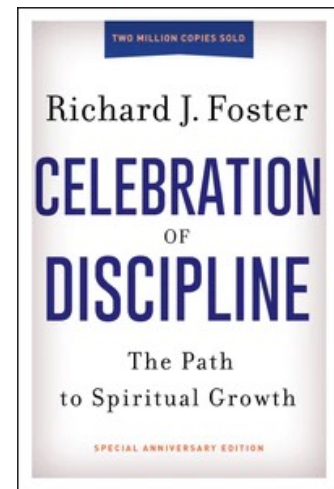


CHALLENGE FOR THIS WEEK:

Consider **FASTING** for one whole day this week, sun up to sundown, specific meals or even something more intense based on your abilities. As you fast, pray for Montclair Tabernacle and ask God to continue to speak to our church and to do a new work in us.

Truths about fasting: (Celebration of Discipline)

It is sobering to realize that the very first statement Jesus made about fasting dealt with the question of motive (Matt. 6:16–18). To use good things to our own ends is always the sign of false religion. How easy it is to take something like fasting and try to use it to get God to do what we want. At times there is such stress upon the blessings and benefits of fasting that we would be tempted to believe that with a little fast we could have the world, including God, eating out of our hand.



Fasting must forever center on God. It must be God-initiated and God-ordained. Like the prophetess Anna, we need to be “worshipping with fasting” (Luke 2:37). Every other purpose must be subservient to God; like that apostolic band at Antioch, “fasting” and “worshipping the Lord” must be said in the same breath (Acts 13:2). C. H. Spurgeon wrote, “Our seasons of fasting and prayer at the tabernacle have been high days indeed; never has heaven’s gate stood wider; never have our hearts been nearer the central glory.”

God questioned the people in Zechariah’s day, “When ye fasted... did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?” (Zech. 7:5). If our fasting is not unto God, we have failed. Physical benefits, success in prayer, the ending with power, spiritual insights—these must never replace God as the center of our fasting. John Wesley declared, “First, let [fasting] be done unto the Lord with our eye singly fixed on him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaven.” That is the only way we will be saved from loving the blessing more than the blesser.

Once the primary purpose is firmly fixed in our hearts, we are at liberty to understand that there are also secondary purposes in fasting. More than any other single discipline, fasting



reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting, these things surface. If pride Controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David said, "I humbled my soul with fasting" (Ps. 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear—if they are within us, they will surface during fasting. At first we will rationalize that our anger is due to our hunger; then we know that we are angry because the spirit of anger is within us. We can rejoice in this knowledge because we know that healing is available through the power of Christ.

Fasting helps us keep our balance in life. How easily we begin to allow nonessentials to take precedence in our lives. How quickly we crave things we do not need—until we are enslaved by them. Paul wrote, "'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be enslaved by anything" (1 Cor. 6:12). Our human cravings and desires are like a river that tends to overflow its banks; fasting helps keep them in their proper channel. "I pummel my body and subdue it," said Paul (1 Cor. 9:27). Likewise, David wrote, "I afflicted myself with fasting" (Ps. 35:13). That is discipline and discipline brings freedom.

Numerous people have written on the many other values of fasting such as increased effectiveness in intercessory prayer, guidance in decisions, increased concentration, deliverance for those in spiritual bondage, physical well-being, revelations, and so on. In this, as in all matters, we can expect God to reward those who diligently seek him.

