

WHY FAST?

Reflection:

During the season of Lent most Christians will give up or fast something until Easter. So you might be thinking, "Why do we fast?" Fasting may seem like hard work and will have little reward. But, we fast in order to make room for something greater in our lives. (that Greater thing is God!) In the Bible we read about individuals and full groups that fasted when a decision needed to be made, they needed deliverance from an enemy, they needed God's guidance, and just to be closer to God.

Why will you fast this Lent season? Why do you want to make more room for God?

Will you fast (or sacrifice) something for all 40 days of Lent?

Scripture Passages:

Matthew 6:16-18

Isaiah 58: 1-12

2 Chronicles 20: 1-12

Esther 4:14-17

Worship Songs:

"Whatever It Costs" Rachel Morley

"Lead Me to the Cross" Hillsong United

"The More I Seek You" Gateway Worship

"Clear the Stage" Jimmy Needham

"Set a Fire" United Pursuit

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-Reflect on what you want to give up this Lent season.

-If you are not giving something up, what good thing do you want to add in your life?

THE WAY OF WORSHIP

Reflection:

Often times we devote our worship to God on Sunday mornings or evenings. We may focus our attention on him when we hear a worship song or read scripture. In reality, we are to live every day and every moment as a means of worship to God.

Why do we worship him?

Do we really love him?

A lot of people focus their attention and devotion on things other than God. Those things could be their job, a relationship, a hobby, or school.

What is the first thing you think of in the morning?

Is it God or something else?

Worship should be second nature to people who are devoted to following Christ. Our worship should overflow from a place of genuine love for our Creator.

Scripture Passages:

Psalm 63: 1-8

John 4:23-24

Romans 12:1-2

Hebrews 13:15-16

Worship Songs:

"I Will Wait" David Leonard

"Surrounded " UPPERROOM

"Open Space" Housefires

"More to Me" Steffany Gretzinger

"Praise Goes On" Elevation Worship

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-Journal or write out the things you devote your time to in a day.

-Pray for God to give you a desire to worship him more

-Practice devoting your mornings and evenings to time spent with God.

HUMBLE SERVANT

Reflection:

Our society is one that glorifies self. We are constantly being told to find success in our own eyes, do what we think is best, and to find our own happiness. We know that as Christians, Jesus urges us to deny ourselves. We shouldn't be prideful in what we own, what we do, or what we think is best. God knows best and encourages us to pick up our own crosses daily.

What does humility look like?

Why is being humble important?

We will come to know God deeply when we humble ourselves and when we give up our ways of thinking for his heavenly way. We will know what it means to love others by putting their needs before our own as well.

The Lent season begs us to deny ourselves and seek humility.

How will you do that?

Scripture Passages:

Isaiah 66:1-2

James 4:7-10

Matthew 23: 4-12

Philippians 2:1-4

Worship Songs:

"Humble" Audrey Assad

"Mercy Mercy" Hillsong United

"Available" Elevation Worship

"Calling on Fire" Bellarive

"Surrender All (Give You Everything) Jesus Culture

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-1-2 Times this week choose to do something someone else wants to do over your own wants. (or do something that would show love & support for them)

-Sacrifice a material possession and give it to someone in need.

GRATITUDE

Reflection:

Normally when something is being taken away we aren't very grateful. During this Lent season maybe you have felt ungrateful and annoyed from giving up something you really like. When we try to be disciplined or practice something to get better, it often comes with frustration.

Why do you think it's important to practice gratitude as you deepen your relationship with God? As we begin to be thankful and grateful for what God has done in our lives, our moods and temperaments may begin to shift. In the Old Testament David would be in the lowest valley still praising God, he was covered in sin and still praised, or joyful and praised. It shouldn't matter what season we are in to be grateful.

What are you grateful for as we approach Easter?

Scripture Passages:

1 Thess. 5:14-18

Psalm 118: 19-24

Psalm 103: 2-5

Worship Songs:

"Great Are You Lord" All Sons and Daughters

"You Have Won Me" Bethel Music

"Sing Holy" Bryan & Katie Torwalt

"Yours (Glory and Praise) Elevation Worship

"I'd Rather Have Jesus" The Evidence

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-Keep a piece of paper or journal with you throughout the week and write 2-3 gratitude moments from every day.

-In conversations you have mention things you are grateful for

SELFLESSNESS > SELFISHNESS

Reflection:

In each sacrifice week we have mentioned something along the lines of how our society magnifies living selfishly. It is all around. We have advertisements enticing us to never be content with what we have. We have our phones that continually distract us and other things too. Those things can be good, but are they allowing us to be selfless or more selfish? Jesus practiced the way of selflessness with everyone he met. He gave to those in need, washed the disciples feet, stopped to heal people when we had something else on his plate, and literally died for humanity. (the ultimate act of selflessness). This Lent season urges us to be selfless as we give things up and replace them with things from His kingdom.

Reflect on how the journey has been thus far.

Do you feel your actions have shifted to be more selfless? Why or why not?

Scripture Passages:

John 13: 1-5

Luke 8: 40-56

Philippians 1: 15-18

James 3:16-18

Worship Songs:

"Take the World, But Give Me Jesus" Ascend the Hill

"To My Knees" Hillsong Young & Free

"First" Lauren Daigle

"Satisfied in You" The Sing Team

"Your Love is Better" Will Reagan & United Pursuit

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

- Take away something from your life that glorifies yourself (tv, games, phone, etc) and try to replace it with something else this week.

EYES FIXED

Reflection:

There are so many things we can look at in a given day. There are so many things we can control and things that we cannot. Have you ever felt in times when your faith is tried that you are trusting in something you can't see? That is what we are to do all the time. We are to fix our eyes on Jesus and we are to set our minds on things above. There is so much to distract us on this earth that takes us away from God. But, still he asks us to seek him and find him. We are to look for him even when we can't see.

During these final weeks of Lent, what do you want to focus on?

Where do your eyes need to shift to?

PALM SUNDAY REFLECTION:

How would you have felt seeing Jesus ride through Jerusalem?

If you knew that soon Jesus would die for you, how would that change your praise?

Scripture Passages:

Matthew 21: 1-11

Hebrews 12: 1-3

Worship Songs:

"More than Anything" All Sons & Daughters

"Fall Afresh" Jeremy Riddle

"Fix My Eyes" For King & Country

"Eyes on You" Mosaic MSC

"Starmaker (High Above the Earth) Phil Wickham

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-If you want to fix your eyes more on God practice adding some things to your week like prayer, bible study, watching an information faith video, etc.

PRIDE

Reflection:

Pride has been something that has destroyed Christians more than we like to discuss. More than just selfishness, it assumes the place of knowing best. Sometimes pride drives us to believe that we know better than someone else and sometimes even God. If pride comes before the fall, then we are all dealing with the same issue that Adam and Eve were at the very beginning. We tell ourselves that we can do it alone and that we DON'T need a savior. But, we do. We cannot live this life without Him. And if we try, we are living life not to the full. Jesus offers abundant life, agape love, grace, mercy, and a seat at his table.

What pride do you need to surrender to God?

GOOD FRIDAY:

Reflect on what Christ's crucifixion means to you. Don't just give it a minute or two, but really think about the weight of it all. What would you want to say to Christ?

EASTER SUNDAY:

Reflect on what Christ's resurrection means to you. Follow the above prompt just the same. Knowing that Christ was raised from the dead, how do you want to live differently?

Scripture Passages:

Mark 14: 32-42

John 19: 16-42

John 20: 1-16

Worship Songs:

"The Hymn (O What Mercy) Tim Be Told

"Struggle" Tenth Avenue North

"How to Be Yours" Chris Renzema

"Boldly I Approach (the Art of Celebration) Rend Collective

"Broken and Beautiful" Matt Maher

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

-Dedicate time to talk to the Lord about prideful things you do or think.

-Reflect on your Lent journey and all the Lord taught you through it.