

Prayer and Fasting Seminar 2009

Grace Church

January 23rd-24th



**“Expressing Our
Dependence on God”**

www.gracewyoming.com

PRAYER AND FASTING SEMINAR

January 23rd and 24th, 2009

Friday Evening (6:30-9:00pm)

- 6:30 Pizza
- 7:00 Introduction – Pastor Dave and Matt Howard
- 7:15 Prayer Session 1: *Prayer as an Expression of Our Dependence on God* – Pastor Daniel
- 8:00 Break
- 8:15 Prayer Session 2: *A Look at What Jesus Taught on Prayer* – Pastor Daniel
- 9:00 Finished

Saturday Morning (9:00am-12:00pm)

- 9:00 Refreshments
- 9:10 Introduction – Pastor Daniel
- 9:15 Fasting Session 1: – Pastor Dave
- 10:00 Break
- 10:15 Fasting Session 2: – Pastor Dave
- 11:00 Time of Prayer
- 11:30 Conclusion – Tony Cooper
- 12:00 Finished

“Dependence on God in All Things”
Matthew Howard

PRAYER SESSION 1:

Prayer as an Expression of Our Dependence on God

Daniel Patz

“Prayer is simply talking to God but prayer is primarily about expressing our dependence on God by declaring God’s **sovereignty** and **empathy** in all things.”

“Follow Me” – Dave VanAcker

Rick Warren’s Invocation – 2009 Presidential Inauguration

Prayer Testimonies:

David Brainerd:

Hudson Taylor:

Often with only one large room for coolies and travelers alike, they would screen off a corner for their father and another for themselves, with curtains of some sort; and then, after sleep at last had brought a measure of quiet, they would hear a match struck and see the flicker of candlelight which told that Mr. Taylor, however weary, was pouring over the little Bible in two volumes always at hand. From two to four A. M. was the time he usually gave to prayer; the time he could be most sure of being undisturbed to wait upon God (*Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret* [Chicago: Moody Press, n.d., original 1932], p. 235).

John Paton’s Dad:

Thither daily, and oftentimes a day, generally after each meal, we saw our father retire, and "shut to the door"; and we children got to understand by a sort of spiritual instinct (for the thing was too sacred to be talked about) that prayers were being poured out there for us, as of old by the High Priest within the veil of the Most Holy Place. We occasionally heard the pathetic echoes of a trembling voice pleading as if for life, and we learned to slip out and in past that door on tiptoe, not to disturb the holy colloquy. The outside world might not know, but we knew, whence came that happy light as of a new-born smile that always was dawning on my father’s face: it was a reflection from the Divine Presence, in the consciousness of which he lived. Never, in temple or cathedral, on mountain or in glen, can I hope to feel that the Lord God is more near, more visably walking and talking with men, than under that humble cottage roof of thatch and oaken wattles. Though everything else in religion were by some unthinkable catastrophe to be swept out of memory, or blotted from my understanding, my soul would wander back to those early scenes, and shut itself up once again in the Sanctuary closet, and, hearing still echoes of those cries to God, would hurl back all doubt with the victorious appeal, 'He walked with God, why may not I?' (*John G. Paton: Missionary to the New Hebrides*)

1. Prayer is simply talking to God...

2. ...Prayer is primarily about expressing our dependence on God...

1. We are completely dependent on God.
2. We often fail to act based upon our complete dependence on God.
3. Being a follower of Jesus means living a life that continually recognizes and acts based on our dependence on God, namely trust.
4. Prayer is one of the primary ways of expressing our dependence on God.

Here are some all things we are dependent on God for. **We are dependent on God...**

1. For our very breath to live.
2. For the forgiveness of sins and the imputed righteousness of Christ.
3. For the forgiveness of ongoing sins and restored fellowship with Him.
4. For growth in godliness and overcoming present sin.
5. For overcoming the painful effects of past sins.
6. For a love and devotion for God.
7. For a right understanding, delight and obedience to His Word.
8. For a consistent faithful prayer life.
9. For the right things to pray for.
10. For answered prayer.
11. For faithfulness and fruitfulness in evangelism.
12. For the salvation of those we love.
13. For fruitfulness in all our relationships (family, church, neighbors, work, etc.).
14. For faithfulness to our spouse.
15. For grace to glorify God in difficult or painful relationships.
16. For the ability to love our enemies and endure evil.
17. For the ability to forgive sins against us.
18. For power to use our spiritual gifts for the glory of God and good of His church.
19. For genuine humility.
20. For a genuine love of others.
21. For fruitful labor in our jobs.
22. For health and length of life.
23. For sustaining grace when health is gone.
24. For the ability to be content in all things and rejoice evermore.
25. For the ability to exercise.
26. For the helpful assistance of doctors and medicine.
27. For the ability to sleep.
28. For the ability to have energy in the day to do what you need to do.
29. For physical provision.
30. For pleasures and privileges that go beyond provision.
31. For the ability to give generously.
32. For wisdom in making decisions and counseling others.
33. For right emotions.
34. For the ability to overcome or endure physical and emotional pain.
35. For the ability to help those we love.
36. For the ability to use our words for edification not destruction.
37. For the blessings of a good government.
38. For protection against the devil and his army.
39. For religious freedoms.
40. For victory over worldliness.

3. **By declaring God's sovereignty and empathy in all things.**

God knows and is mighty!
"Sovereignty"

God cares!
"Empathy"

PRAYER SESSION 2: A Look at What Jesus Taught on Prayer

"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. (6) But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (7) "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. (8) Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (9) Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. (10) Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (11) Give us this day our daily bread, (12) and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (14) For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, (15) but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:5-15)

(The first 3 points are taken from Dave VanAcker's chapter "Dependent on and Trusting in God")

1. WE ARE TO PRAY

It is Assumed

It is Commanded

It is Practiced by the Godly

2. WE ARE COMMANDED TO PRAY TO GOD AND FOR GOD

We are to Pray to God

We are to Pray for God and His Glory

3. GOD ALREADY KNOWS WHAT WE WANT, THINK AND NEED

Jonathan Edwards on why we should pray even though God knows are needs already:

It is not in order that God may be informed of our wants or desires. He is omniscient, and with respect to his knowledge, unchangeable. God never gains any knowledge by information. He knows what we want a thousand times more perfectly than we do ourselves, before we ask him. For though, speaking after the manner of men, God is sometimes represented as if he were moved and persuaded by the prayers of his people. Yet it is not to be thought that God is properly moved or made willing by our prayers. For it is no more possible that there should be any new inclination or will in God than new knowledge. The mercy of God is not moved or drawn by anything in the creature. But the spring of God's beneficence is within himself only. He is self-moved, and whatsoever mercy he bestows, the reason and ground of it is not to be sought for in the creature, but in God's own good pleasure. It is the will of God to bestow mercy in this way, viz. in answer to prayer, when he designs beforehand to bestow mercy, yea, when he has promised it, as Eze. 36:35, 37, "I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it. Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." God has been pleased to constitute prayer, to be antecedent to the bestowment of mercy. And he is pleased to bestow mercy in consequence of prayer, as though he were prevailed on by prayer. — When the people of God are stirred up to prayer, it is the effect of his intention to show mercy. Therefore, he pours out the spirit of grace and supplication. ("The Most High: A Prayer-Hearing God")

4. WE ARE TO PRAY KNOWING GOD PROMISES TO ANSWER PRAYER

Matthew 7:7-11

James 4:2

1 John 5:14-15

James 5:16-18

FASTING SESSION 1-2:

Fasting as an Expression of Our Dependence on God

David VanAcker

Passages on Fasting

2 Samuel 12:11-23, 1 Kings 21:4-12, 2 Chronicles 20:1-4, Ezra 8:21-23, Esther 4:1-17, Isaiah 58:1-12, Jeremiah 14:10-13, Joel 1:1-16, Joel 2:11-16, Jonah 3:1-10, Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-17 (Mark 2:18-20; Mark 5:33-35), Luke 18:10-14, Judges 20:24-28, 1 Samuel 7:3-10, 1 Samuel 31:8-13, 2 Samuel 1:11-12 (2 Samuel 1:2), 1 Kings 21:25-29, Zechariah 7:1-14, Ezra 9:1-7, Nehemiah 1:1-11, Nehemiah 9:1-3 (the entire chapter is a good one re. fasting), Psalm 35:10-19, Psalm 69:5-18, Psalm 109:21-27, Daniel 6:1-23, Matthew 4:1-2, Acts 13:1-3, Acts 14:21-23

Main Points

1. The chief call on our lives is to glorify God by following Jesus in the power of the Spirit.
2. There are two key aspects to following Jesus: conversion and sanctification.
3. One aspect of sanctification is coming to recognize our complete and utter dependence on God.
4. The two primary biblical expressions of our recognition of our dependence on God are prayer and fasting.
5. There are a number of different reasons that people fasted in Scripture.
6. Fasting is primarily about expressing our dependence on God by declaring his sufficiency in all things.
7. God, in his love, gives us instructions on fasting.

Introduction

FASTING SESSION 1:

Fasting as an Expression of our Dependence on God

1. The chief call on our lives is to glorify God by following Jesus in the power of the Spirit.

2. There are two key aspects to following Jesus: conversion and sanctification.

3. One aspect of sanctification is coming to recognize our complete and utter dependence on God.

4. The two primary biblical expressions of our recognition of our dependence on God are prayer and fasting.

5. There are a number of different reasons that people fasted in Scripture.
 - a. People fasted because they needed help and so they turned to God.

 - b. People fasted because they grieved the sins of others.

 - c. People fasted as a sign of sadness.

 - d. People fasted out of a religiosity or false piety (hypocritically).

 - e. People fasted because they were commanded by God to fast.

 - f. People fasted because they were remorseful or repentant over their own sin

 - g. People fasted in preparation for ministry.

- e. Biblical fasting is meant to turn our attention to righteous acts (v.7).

- f. The ultimate result of fasting will be to see and savor the glory of God (v.8-11).

Instruction from Matthew 9:14-15 (Mark 2:18-20; Mark 5:33-35)

*Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"
¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."*

- a. Fasting is not meant for things that are, but for things that we long for (v.14-15).

- b. Christians will fast (15b). Again, it does not say "if they fast" it says "they will fast."

Practically Speaking