

DAY 15 | JAN 25 | TO VALUE INTEGRITY

1 Samuel 16:7b: The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

Proverbs 4:23: Above all else, guard your heart. For EVERYTHING you do flows from it.

Matthew 5:8: Blessed are the PURE in heart, for they will see God.

If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a noise? Whether a noise is heard or not, the fallen tree is dead, and there is now a hole in the forest. There is impact. It has been said integrity is what you do when no one is looking. Does it matter what you do when no one is looking? Do you think there is really an impact? How about with your relationship with God?

God looks at the heart. We cannot hide this from Him. The core of who we are, He knows. What we look at, think about, talk of, and act on is all clear to our Creator. Integrity is from the heart.

A lack of integrity does not protect the heart; rather, it tries to destroy it by disobeying God. True integrity protects the heart, keeps it pure, heals, and ultimately obeys God.

A consistent lack of integrity that disobeys God is defiance to God. It slowly builds a brick wall between us and God until we can hardly hear Him at all. Lack of integrity hinders our connection with God.

True Integrity is not being perfect. It is humbling, repentant, and obedient to God even when no one is watching. Read more about private behavior in Matthew 6:5-6 and Matthew 25:31-46.

REFLECTION

- Do you value integrity?
- Why does God choose to look at the heart of a person?
- How might God use your integrity to impact the people around you?

PRAYER

Father, I know you see my thoughts and know them completely. I want to be obedient to you. Allow others to see that you change me from the inside out.

DAY 16 | TO BE CLEANSED JAN 26 | OF SIN

Psalm 25:18: Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.

Nehemiah 1:6b, 8-9: I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

1 John 1:8-10: If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

The Scriptures reveal the sinfulness of cities such as Sodom, Gomorrah, and Nineveh. Those who repented and turned to God were blessed and those who did not were destroyed.

The real question is not, can it happen in our community today, but will you allow it to happen in you? Let's be honest before God about those things in our heart. Confess our sins to Him and repent!

REFLECTION

- Imagine what our community would look like if a true transformation occurred among Christ followers. What are some things that would look different?
- Will you pray for the revival to begin in you?

PRAYER

Holy God, I understand that a city or region cannot receive Your blessing if it is built on sin and bloodshed. That type of foundation causes the people to labor and gain nothing. Lord, we humbly ask Your mercy and for Your forgiveness to be poured out in the community in which we live. Lord, at this time I also name the specific sins that I am aware of such as injustices or covenant breaking, and I repent of them. I ask that You use me in my community wherever you desire so that You are glorified and seen in our midst.

DAY 17 | TO EXPERIENCE REVIVAL

JAN 27

Psalm 86:6: Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?

Psalm 80:18-19: Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, Lord God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

What does God want from us?

First, we must humble ourselves. We must admit that God is God, and we are not. We must submit to God and come to Him in brokenness and repentance.

2 Chronicles 7:14: If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Second, we must pray and seek God's face. No revival or awakening comes without prayer. Extensive prayer. Fervent prayer. Corporate prayer. Continual prayer.

It is worth noting that the prayer here is focused on seeking God's face and not God's hand. We are seeking God for Himself and not for what He gives us. We are locked in on God's glory, not on our need.

Third, we must turn from our wicked ways. God wants obedience, not religious ceremony. We cannot just say the words of repentance and pray the prayers of repentance. We must do the deeds of repentance and obey God in every part of life.

If we do these three things, then God promises to respond in three ways. First, He will hear us. He will hear those prayers. Second, He will forgive our sin. He will remove our sin as far as the east is from the west. And third, God will heal our land. He will pour out His favor and blessing upon us.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln had just been elected President. The nation was teetering on the brink of war. There was cruel slavery in the land. The President faced widespread opposition and hostility. He issued a proclamation for our country, a proclamation which expresses the spirit of this passage.

"Whereas a joint committee of both houses of Congress has waited on the President of the United States and requested him to recommend a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities, and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of these states, his blessing on their arms, and a speedy restoration of peace. And whereas it is fit and becoming in all people at all times to acknowledge and revere the supreme government of God, to bow in humble submission to his chastisement, to confess and deplore their sins and transgression, in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to pray with all

fervency and contrition for the pardon of their offenses and for a blessing upon their present and prospective action.

Therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do appoint the last Thursday in September next as a day of humiliation, prayer, and fasting, for all the people of the nation. And I do earnestly recommend to all the people, and especially to all ministers and teachers of religion of all denominations, and to all heads of families, to observe and keep that day, according to their several creeds and modes of worship, in all humility, and with all religious solemnity, to the end that the united prayer of the nation may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and bring down plentiful blessings upon our country."

REFLECT

- During this time of prayer and fasting, have you humbled yourself before God?
- How will you continue having a humbled state before God when our 21 days of prayer and fasting end? Is there a practice you can commit to, such as kneeling before Him at the beginning of everyday to recognize Who He is?
- How will you continue to pray and seek God's face when our 21 days are over?

PRAYER

Father, I pray for revival to break out in Your streets, in schools, government, business, media, entertainment, and congregations. I ask, Lord, that You raise up dedicated Christians who will become a voice to reform our region and to make a difference in the lives of all who live here.

DAY 18 | JAN 28 | TO UPHOLD RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE

Psalm 89:14: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Matthew 6:33: But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

There are more slaves in the world today than at any other point in history: over 27 million slaves worldwide.

As Christ's followers, God makes it clear that we are to take a stand against injustice and fight for those who do not have the ability to fight for themselves. "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow" (Isaiah 1:17). When I compare this command to the statistics of injustices like human trafficking, poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse, and so many others, I begin to feel helpless. How do we even begin to act justly when injustice seems to be taking over? Where do we start?

The best place to start is where many great Biblical leaders before us have started: with prayer. Look to the examples of men like Moses, Ezra, and Nehemiah who turned first to God and pleaded for His guidance and intervention. These men saw God change the attitudes of kings and rulers to move in ways that were beyond what they had imagined. The rulers of their day, who were once set against God, allowed a nation to be freed from slavery, a temple to be rebuilt by an exiled people, and a city wall to be built in only 52 days. Each of these men were guided in their work by the One who has a passion for those under unjust oppression.

There is an overwhelming amount of work to be done to solve the injustices in our world today. So, where do we begin to stem the tide of heartbreak? The best place, the only place to start, is on our knees, asking God to give us His wisdom and discernment as we work to uphold justice in our circles of influence.

REFLECTION

- What injustices cause your heart to break?
- Where is God giving you influence to fight injustice?

PRAYER

Father God, Your Word shows that You care deeply for those who are suffering under injustice. I ask that You would be with our leaders and work through them as You have so many times throughout history. Give them a passion to establish just laws and the wise discernment they need to solve issues. Where there is a lack of passion, move in their hearts to create an urgency to uphold justice. Give me a fire to stand for those who are suffering all kinds of injustice. Show me how I can work to influence those around me and move in my own community to show Your love and compassion. May Your Kingdom come even now!

DAY 19 | JAN 29 | TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S PRESENCE AND POWER

Psalm 43:3-4: Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

Jim's Story...

I remember the first time I really felt the presence of God. It happened when I was 17 and had just met up with the person I was dating at the time. We were living in separate towns, and our relationship wasn't a good one. We were untrusting, bitter, and often vaguely angry at each other. However, that day instead of the bitterness and anger I expected, I saw peace in her eyes. I saw a change; I saw someone with depth. We talked for two hours and then parted ways. While I was starting my old, maroon, Ford Tempo to go home, I muttered a quick but sincere prayer: "God I don't know what she has with You, but that's what I need."

And that's when it happened. It felt like something descended on my little car, and for the first time I knew peace. I felt so relieved. I laughed at myself, and then I cried, realizing all the hurt I had done to others. I realized that people who were laughing and crying should probably not be driving 60 mph down country roads, so I pulled the car over and prayed about what was happening. I talked to the Holy Spirit as He dwelt in my little Tempo... and my life has never been the same.

REFLECTION

- Have you met and encountered the Holy Spirit of God? When and where was that? What led up to that encounter?
- How are you different because of that moment? What has changed in and around you because of that?
- As we begin to draw our time of fasting to a close, where has God shown up?

PRAYER

God, I pray that Your Spirit comes down in real and powerful ways in my life. Come alongside me today and demonstrate who You are. Show me the power of Your radical love. Show me who I am because of what You have done, and show me how that can impact those around me with Your will and love.

Come alongside me in my interactions with others, in my conversations with You, and in how I treat my family and my friends. Be near to me. Show me Your presence and Your power. Make me a different person because of how You love me. But more than anything, I pray that You reign in my life. I pray that You are present and vibrant in all that I think, say, and do.

DAY 20 | JAN 30 | TO BE FILLED WITH GOD'S GLORY

Psalm 22:27-28: All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

Habakkuk 2:14: For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

At a time when Israel was rebellious, immoral, and indifferent towards God, Moses prayed, "Lord, show me Your glory!" God was quick to respond to this prayer. And Moses saw with his own eyes a portion of the glory of God. But he also heard the voice of God declaring His glory.

God defined His glory by describing His nature. "I am the Lord, God! I am compassionate, merciful, loving and forgiving. And I am perfectly just and will not excuse the guilty." "Yahweh! The Lord God! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin. But I do not excuse the guilty. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children and grandchildren; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations" (Exodus 34:6-7).

So, when we pray for God's glory to come, we are praying for His nature to overwhelm our nature. We seek His nature to drive out the influence of sinful nature, demonic nature, or any influence in a region or culture that contradicts Him. This hour is not unlike the time when Moses prayed this great prayer. We, too, are at a time when our nation and the world have never been so contentious with God. The name of Jesus stirs deep resentment in many people. Holiness is rare. Morality is in rapid decline. And the church of Jesus Christ is in a battle for its existence.

Moses could have prayed, "God meet our needs." But this circumstance demanded so much more than "meet our needs." He prayed, "Show me Your glory!"

We are in a desperate place today. We join our hearts in intercession to pray, "God, show us Your glory!" Overwhelm the numbness of our hearts with Your fire. Revive me with Your presence. Show Your glory in the church. Show us Your glory in America and all over the world.

"Father God, Show us Your Glory!"

REFLECTION

- Will you begin to pray, "Lord, show us Your glory" so that the world will see and know Him?
- What does it look like to be the 'salt and light' where you live?

PRAYER

Sovereign God, I pray that the believers in our community would be a city set on a hill and 'salt and light' to the world. I ask that we would influence other nations with righteousness. I pray You give me Your perspective on reaching this world with the love of Jesus. Lord, may I hunger and thirst after You and desire that for all people.

DAY 21 | JAN 31 | TO CONTINUE TO SEEK GOD FIRST

Psalm 9:10: Those who know your name trust in You, for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek You.

Jeremiah 29:13: You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

1 Chronicles 29:13: Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the Lord your God.

Colossians 3:2: Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

I remember when I first met my wife and was interested in her. I looked for opportunities to run into her. I deliberately sought out ways I could have a conversation with her. I was curious about her and wanted to learn more about her, and I confess that I chased after her. We laugh about it now because I was shyer than she was, and I was determined to get to know her. And it worked. We will be celebrating our 32nd anniversary this year.

For the last 21 days, we have been chasing after God as we pray and fast. We have deliberately chosen to focus on Him and seek His presence. We have deliberately chosen to take time to read His Word and listen to His voice. For some of us, we can honestly say we didn't really 'hear' from God in a profound way during this time. For others, this has been an amazing time of growth, and we have felt His guidance and direction about something we were seeking. Regardless of what we have learned through this time or if we have 'cheated' on something we were going to fast from, these past 21 days have been crucial to us because we have obeyed God's command to seek His presence. It is always a beautiful thing when we chase after God and put Him first because we desire to know Him more. And He promises us that when we seek Him, we will find Him.

As we conclude our 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is important to ask, "Now what?" How can you remain committed to seeking Him? Very simply, decide to love God and seek Him. That's right, decide. Look for opportunities to spend time with Him and to learn from Him. Daily. Decide to chase after Him and not the things of this life that quickly distract us from Him. Daily. Give Him your whole heart. Daily. Look for Him in each day, through people, circumstances, the Bible, and creation. Daily. It will take intention, effort, desire, and time. But it will be worth it as your relationship with Him grows, develops, and you learn to love Him more and more.

Hebrews 11:6 says that God will reward those who earnestly seek Him. Will you continue to earnestly seek after the God of this universe who loves you completely and desires to walk with you daily? The reward will be great because God is great!

REFLECTION

- How will you continue to pray daily and seek God through Scripture now that our 21 days of prayer and fasting are ending?
- Will you pray daily for a hunger and a thirst to chase after God and seek His presence?
- What will you commit to intentionally doing so that you are seeking God daily?

PRAYER

Father God, thank You for these last 21 days of focusing on You. Thank You for the promise that You will be found when I seek You. Thank you that You don't hide from me but that You constantly draw me near to You. Please put a hunger and a thirst in my life for You Lord. You are so beautiful. So amazing. So, forgiving. So good. And I have decided to chase after You with all of my heart from this day on. Daily. Lord, may I put You first and seek Your face. Daily. I love you; Lord and I want to love and know You more. Amen.

+++ 21 DAYS OF FASTING +++

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IN 21



+++ 21 DAYS OF FASTING +++

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