



## **Moving God thru Prayer and Fasting**

**Sunday Sermon – 1/14/2024**

**Bishop Steven A. Norman, Pastor**

**2 Chronicles 7:12-16 (NLT) "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this Temple as the place for making sacrifices. 13 At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues among you. 14 Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. 15 My eyes will be open and my ears attentive to every prayer made in this place. 16 For I have chosen this Temple and set it apart to be holy—a place where my name will be honored forever. I will always watch over it, for it is dear to my heart.**

Biblical Fasting is defined as voluntarily going without food and other desires in order to focus on prayer and fellowship with God. You can pray without fasting, but I don't recommend anyone to biblically fast without praying.

Prayer and Fasting is a privilege that is expected by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Jesus says in **Matthew 6:5 "when you Pray"...** and in **Matthew 6:16 "when you fast"...** denoting that it's not a option!

Just because you give in to temptation on this fast doesn't mean you have to give up. Get up, start over, and keep on fasting!!!

Prayer and Fasting is not a way of manipulating God. It's a way to draw closer to God, experiencing more of who He is.

The closer we draw to God, the greater His Glory will manifest in our lives.

When done properly with the right motive, Prayer and Fasting will attain an open reward from God.

**Matthew 6:17 ...your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you openly.**

**2 Chronicles 7:12-16 "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this Temple as the place for making sacrifices.**

In The Old Testament God had instructed Solomon to build a temple so God could come down and dwell among His people and Sacrifices could be made there.

In the New Testament God dwells with his people, but in a different temple. That temple is the body of His chosen ones.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, (He is in our spirit, soul, and body all of us)**



**whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

**20 For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**

Because we are saved (born-again) our total being belongs to Him.

But because He dwells in our total being, He still expects sacrifices to be made in this temple (our bodies, from our total beings) but of a different kind than what is mentioned in the Old Testament.

As we make spiritual sacrifices to God with our bodies expect the reward of more open doors.

#### **4 Ways, New Testament Believers have the Privilege to show Worship through Sacrifices.**

##### ***1. Offering ourselves unto God as a living sacrifice***

**Romans 12:1 "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."**

Paul says that as Believers, we can by the mercies of God say, "Thank you!" to God's fantastic gift and the work of Jesus Christ. We can do this by presenting to God something much more precious and valuable than an animal, our souls and bodies.

We should see our daily living, as sacrificial worship to God.

##### ***2. Offer God Your Praise***

**Heb. 13:15 "Through Christ then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of the lips that give thanks to his name."**

The spiritual sacrifice of praising God pleases Him. We are commanded to praise Him for all that He is and thank Him for all He does for us.

This is the one thing we can give to God that He doesn't give to us.

The sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise should be made often, no matter how we feel or what our current circumstances are.

**Colossians 3:17 (NLT) Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:18 Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.**

##### ***3. Offer God Your Material Resources***



**Hebrews 13:16 "And let us not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."**

There are two ways mentioned in this scripture in which we can worship God: doing good and sharing.

"Sharing" probably refers to the generous giving of our material resources to God's work (the local church) and His people.

This type of sacrifice is explicitly identified by Paul as a sacrifice which pleases God: **Philippians 4:18-19 (NLT) At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts (material resources) you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. 19 And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.**

The Apostle Paul shows us the motive and attitude we should have in our monetary giving.

A. Giving is a privilege:

**2 Corinthians 8:4-5 They (the church at Macedonia) begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem.**

*Until we understand that giving is a privilege blessing from the Lord, It will be hard for us to give from the proper perspective that it's a privilege. Acts 20:35 ...It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

B. Something that we should do generously:

**2 Corinthians 9:6-7 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.**

Our giving to the work of the Lord is a great indicator of how much we can expect to receive from the Lord.

C. As an expression of our commitment to God:

**2 Cor. 8:5 They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.**

These believers counted giving their material wealth to the work of God just as important as giving themselves to the Lord.

When we give our money to God in these ways, by supporting our local church, other Christian workers, and ministries, and helping the needy, God regards these types of sacrifice as an expression of worship, fully as spiritual as praising him.

The giving of our money represents a giving of ourselves since money represents the time and effort and creativity that we have invested in order to gain it. Such giving is also an expression of our trust in God's faithfulness to continue to meet our material needs--which Paul tells us God will fully supply (Phil. 4:19).



#### **4. Offer God Your Service to Others**

**Heb. 13:16 "And let us not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."**

The other sacrifice mentioned in **Heb. 13:16** is "doing good", "serving the most deserving".

This phrase refers to performing deeds of loving service to other people as representatives of Christ.

*When we relate to the people God brings into our lives with Christ-like, sacrificial love, grace and forgiveness, God regards this as an expression of our worship to him.*

**Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.**

Again, we see our love offerings and generous sacrifices comes up to the altar of God as “**a sweet-smelling aroma**”.

God is well pleased by a lifestyle of “Doing Good” to others.

**Galatians 6:9-10 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

Not only is a lifestyle of doing good for others pleasing to God, but He will reward us for it.

*We should be motivated to love others because we understand and believe in the love that God has for us (1 Jn. 4:16-19).*

**13 At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues among you.**

How this would be interpreted today is that sometimes we will have to reap, for the bad we sown.

But even if we sow a bad seed, God says he has a remedy for that.

**14 Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves,**

The word “humble” (kana‘ ) means to subdue one’s pride and submit in self-denying loyalty to God and his will.

David said in **Psalms 35:13 I humbled myself with fasting;**

Some things are not going to turn around in our lives until we **FAST AND PRAY!**

**be given to him.**