

Level 1 AWAKENING

WHAT IS AWAKENING AND REVIVAL?

How does it Comes

How to prepare for it

What is revival?

Revival is divine visitation and habitation of God and that causes a greater manifestation of His kingdom. In revival, people experience a greater manifestation of His presence which brings God's dominion. Nations contented to living under the power and influence of darkness never experience the infinite greatness of God's presence as both are incompatible.

How revival does comes?

Revival comes when the ***grip of darkness*** over a people or territory is broken or weaken and the Holy Spirit is allowed to gain more control bringing a greater manifestation of God's kingdom. As the power of darkness is broken in a family, community, or region is pushed back, the greater the manifestation of the dominion and authority of Christ in that sphere.

The grip of darkness will be discussed in a later chapter but for now it is the power that holds people and nation shaping them into conforming to the will and desires of the kingdom of Satan. As a kingdom, it is ruled by a king with a government designed to rule over the people as subjects according to policies and procedures. This power can only operate by the permission of the people who have been given the power to decide. The people of the land must covenant with that power and give it legal right for it to operate. Jesus himself call, in the John 12:31 referred to Satan as the prince or ruler of this world. Further in Luke 4:5-7, Satan told offered Jesus back the kingdoms of the world saying, "...*I will give you all their authority and splendor; **it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.***" The more control allowed, the tighter the grip becomes.

The influence of the kingdom of darkness works to erode away the appetite for God and His presence. When successful, the people are reduced to a state of spiritual slumber where they know what is right but lack to power to do it. As slumber increases, it suffocates faith in God and confidence in His Word. Slumber leads people to believe the power of God was for a time gone by and is no longer to solve today's challenges. It introduces theologies and wisdom that conflicts and or contradicts God's word and elevates man's wisdom as equal to, or even wiser than God's. Awakening therefore is countering the effects of that power and awaken the craving for the Presence of God in the lives of the people. Awakened people are able to see the influence of the kingdom of darkness on themselves and society and to rise up with the power to reject it.

They embrace the holy appetite for God and the craving for his Presence that leads to the submission to the Lordship of and authority.

Breaking that Grip

So how do we break the grip of darkness? The key to breaking the grip of darkness is to understand how it works. God gave man the right to decide and therefore abides by man's choice. God therefore and can only intervene when man decided to break the Satan and reconcile with God and His kingdom. Repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation allows us to disengage from the oppressor and the Holy Spirit to come in. He will come solely for the purpose of establishing the Kingdom of God. To do that, He will destroy the power, influence, policies and procedures of the opposing kingdom. Consider the principle Jesus taught when said; "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." Luke 16:13

James 1:15 admonishes...when people are given to desires conceived in the system ruled by darkness...that desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. This is the same death Adam and Eve was sentenced to when they rejected the desires of God and pursued their own. Apostle Paul warns us in romans 6:26 the wages of sin is death. Solomon said the wages of righteousness is life.

How do we prepare for revival?

In order to prepare for revival, is the break the grip and the influence of darkness on our own lives and our sphere of influence and give control to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will come where He is invited and will abide in a vessel that has been prepared for Him. He will come for the sole purpose of advancing the kingdom agenda. This requires the person to whom He comes must be willing to allow Him to have control. Furthering this thought, Jesus himself taught us to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. (Matthew 6:33).

A Surrender Life

Self life and my life is not my own

A surrender life is one which *give up control*. Philippians 2:8 says that Jesus "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross". Jesus demonstrated the ultimate sign of surrender by giving up control at the cross. At a cross, a person does not have control of anything. As followers of Christ, we are called to follow Jesus to the same place of surrender. Paul says in Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." In the same way Jesus gave up control at the cross, we ought to give up control. So how do I get to the place where I can surrender control to God? You need a revelation of the cross. You will die to your own agenda when you have a revelation of the cross. The cross is the place where I die to my own agenda. You can only experience revival and an awoken life when you die to what your old nature wants. If you have your own agenda, you will never be one with God, because now the two agendas are in opposition. God only works through the power of oneness and agreement. A crucified man is a man that has relinquished control. The cross is about yielding. God will not pour out revival until you experience death to your agenda. The cross is about yielding control to God. When you give up control, you will not longer ask God to bless what you are doing, you will ask God to take you to what he is blessing. When you give up control, you no longer asking for your will do be done in heaven, but God's will to be done in your life. When you give up control you will be far more concern about what pleases God, than what pleases you. You will become focus on what is in the heart of God. When you give up control to God, you will be yearning to know what is in the heart of God. You will have a burning desire to know what God desires for your life. The cross is about yielding to God your entire life. Be very careful of trying to compartmentalize your walk with God, where you separate some things and areas of your life for God and the rest is for you. But what right does God have to ask me to surrender my entire life to Him? You were bought with a price. We call this redemption in the bible. God bought you from the slave market of sin and dominion of darkness. The apostle Paul it this way, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." You don't belong to yourself, but to God. Since you were bought with a price, make it a point to daily relinquished control. The cross is the only means of change. When you die at the cross, you will then experience the fullness of his resurrection power.

The second trait of a surrender life is *humility*. The opposite of humility is pride. Satan greatest weapon is a closed mind. It is a mindset which says, "I already know it all" A closed mind is the quickest way to quench the Spirit's moving. Humility and humiliation are not the same. James the apostle said in James 4:10 "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you". God only works through the humble. Humility is not inferiority, but identifying yourself as

a servant. As a matter of fact, Jesus said that the greatest will be the servant of all (Matthew 23:11). God is attracted to the humble servant spirit, he is repulse to those who see themselves as bigger than what they are. Humility says, 'I know who I am in Christ, and inspite of who you are, I will serve you". A humble servant is transparent before God. A surrender life has nothing to hide before God because the humble servant knows that the main thing is God himself. The proud puts limits to change and to freedom. A proud person is an emotional and spiritual shield to hide the true hurting and filth condition of the heart. You know you are walking in humility when you take the limits off what God is trying to do in your life. Humility says, "there is absolutely no limits to what changes God wants to do in my life". The humble are desperate to change. They don't worry about their reputation, take their "image off" and take on the character of Jesus as a servant of God.

The third trait of a surrender life is an **Unquenchable Hunger for God**. You are seldom going to find what you are not hungry for. Just like natural biological hunger affects and increases your perception and become more aware of your surroundings, so those who are have an unquenchable hunger for God become more aware of the sweet blessing of a surrender life. The problem many Christians encounter today is that they don't hunger for God, because they are full from eating all the "junk food" from world. Those who truly surrender to God, developed a consciousness of need for more of God in their lives. The surrender life aches for more of "the bread of life" (John 6:51).

No strings attached Disciple of Jesus

The life of a fully surrender disciple of Jesus is one where there are "no strings" attach to our walk with God. We don't want the enemy manipulating us as a puppet. Become the type of the disciples who is sold out to God. How do we do this?

A sold disciple of Jesus lives a life who puts God first. In Luke 14:2, Jesus said that if you are going to a sold out disciple of Jesus you have to die to self and put God above others. A sold out disciple of Jesus loves God more than his own life and others. He loves God mother than his mother, father, children, spouse, friends or anybody else. A surrender life requires that we love the Lord foremost because he is supremely great.

A sold out disciple of Jesus follow Jesus whatever it takes. In Matthew 10:37 we are told that a true disciple of Jesus is willing to suffer same suffering as master Jesus. If you are a sold out disciple of Jesus, you will suffer persecution and trials. The only church people who don't suffer persecution are those who have a water down Christianity.

A sold out disciple of Jesus makes the word of God the center of their lives. . In John 8:30, we are told that a true disciple of Jesus makes the word of God the center of their lives. A disciple honors God's word above anybody or anything else. He or she submits to the will of the Word. When you submit to the word you begin to live a submissive life to the will and purposes of God.

A sold out disciple of Jesus bears fruit for God. In John 15:1-6, Jesus tell us that a disciple who is in communion with the Lord bears fruit. Making a disciple involves helping disciples draw the presence of God in their lives. True disciples not only draw the presence of God unto their lives, but teach others to commune with God.

A sold out disciple of Jesus loves sacrificially to lay down his life for others. In John 13:34-35, Jesus said that the trademark of a disciple of Jesus is to love deeply. Imagine a church which has disciples where everyone will love like Jesus.

As a surrender disciple of Jesus, we must be careful to become so busy that I can't fill it with what is really important. This is why you need to build a Christ centered life, where all of our life is founded in Christ and Jesus is everything to you. Also, live for God's purpose. You were created for a reason. Last, love extravagantly and abundantly. The love God by the way you love others. You serve God by the way you serve others.

What do we experience when we totally surrender to God?

Since Jesus is the perfect example of a surrender life, he is also the perfect example of finding out the blessings of a surrender life. One of the epic moments we find Jesus surrendering was during water baptism (Matthew 3:13-17). Water baptism is the outward demonstration sign to the world of someone who has died to self (Romans 6:3-4). In water baptism we are declaring that we gave up total control of the old man, and now we live for him in the newness of life (Romans 6:11). What occur when Jesus demonstrated his surrender life to the Father shows us what God will do us. Let's look at Matthew 3:16-17 to discover the three blessings of a surrender life.

First, you will ***experience a holy moment***. This was an amazing moment in the life of Jesus. God's Spirit came upon Jesus, the Father spoke to him and there was even "lightning" at the baptism of Jesus. When you surrender to Jesus, you will have an awakening of God's supernatural power and presence in your life. Someone once said, "People who were born in the fire will not be content with smoke". The more of a surrender life you experience, the less you will be satisfied with fake, superficial Christianity. Those who surrender to him, just like in Isaiah 6:1-9, will experience the flames of revival through the coals of heaven. Every great man or woman of God who surrender their lives fully to the Lord have experience this holy moment. Isaiah, though already in the ministry for 18 years, had a holy moment . The great 17th century revivalist of the First American Awakening, Jonathan Edwards, had a holy moment in a field by himself when he surrender to the Lord. William Seymour had holy moment at evangelist Parham's meeting and brought to Azusa Street for the great Azusa Street Revival which touch the entire world. Charles Finney had a holy moment and caught the fire of God while surrendering to God on a field praying by himself. Evan Roberts, the great revivalist of the Welsh Revival, had it at a prayer meeting and surrendering to the Lord while crying "Lord, bend us". The disciples of Jesus along with the rest of the 120 in the upper room, received the first outpouring of the

baptism of the Holy Spirit when they gave themselves in total surrender for ten days of prayer. Jesus knew his Holy Moment had occur, because he was able to say "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." after just a few days after his water baptism.

The second blessing of a surrender life is **REVELATION from God**. Matthew 3:17 also tell us that God the Father spoke unto the life of Jesus by saying "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The surrender disciple of Jesus positions himself to receive a greater revelation of the Father. God wants to reveal himself in a greater way in your life. He wants to speak to your about your identity in him ("This is my son"). He wants to let you know who you are in Christ. Once this revelation is given to you, it will be put to the test. The reason why Jesus went through the wilderness (Matthew 4:11) is because the revelation he had received from the Father had to be tested. The Father had said in Matthew 3:17, "This is my beloved Son", and yet notice how Satan three times tells Jesus "If you are the son of God...". Until you pass the test of the revelation, you will not enter into the manifestation. Miracles are never to verified us, but to verified HIM. This is why Jesus did not give in to do the miracle when Satan said to him, if you are the son of God, turn the bread into stone (Matthew 4:3). If miracles and the supernatural does not verified us, then who then does? God will verified us. So the question is whether you will feed on the promise given to you through the revelation, or the question that challenges the revelation. A surrender life submits to whatever God says.

The third benefit of a surrender life is an **Open Heaven**. In Matthew 3:16 we are told that after Jesus was baptized and demonstrated a surrender life, the "heavens were opened". The original language reads "divide by rending". Those who totally surrender have an unobstructed passage and view of what God is doing. They experience unrestricted accessability to the presence of God. Those with a surrender life have access to the gate of heaven. Jacob said in Genesis 28:17 "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the **gate of heaven**." The gate is a place of transition. The gate is where you go from one realm to another realm. In this verse, Jacob is describing the house of God as the gate of heaven. Where God is there is an open heaven and God shows up to those who surrender to Him. God has a message for all those who live a surrender life, HEAVEN IS OPEN OVER YOU. If you choose to surrender under God's terms and condition, there will be an open heaven where ever you go! Those who surrender to the Lord find their God's presence as heaven to them. For many

The fourth benefit of a surrender life is **Hosting the Holy Spirit**. The bible tells us in Matthew 3:16 that the "Spirit of God" descended upon Jesus like a dove. God's Spirit is attracted to surrender lives. God is calling you to host him through a surrender lifestyle. King David biggest desire was to host the presence of God. This servant of God had "one the thing" in mind and it was to host the presence of God through a spirit of surrender (Psalms 27:4). There is nothing more awesome than having a Spirit controlled life. As you host the Holy Ghost, be mindful of not quenching the Holy Spirit (I Thessalonians 5:19). But how do I know if I am quenching the Holy Spirit? Anything that caused me to lose my peace alerts me to losing His presence. Peace is God's alarm system to your spiritual condition. God comes like a dove, peacefully upon

surrender lives. Since the Holy Spirit is the one who brings peace, not to have peace, is often a sign that the presence of the Holy Spirit is being quenched. The Holy Spirit is a person, and in the kingdom of God, peace is a sign of the presence of Him moving through and in us. Our peace is not based on the absence of bad things or trials, but it is based on the Holy Spirit taking control of our lives. This is why when you start taking control of your lives instead of surrendering control to God, you begin to lose your peace and become worrisome and anxious. Anxiety is a sign that have taken control over your life again (Philippians 4:5-7). An awoken life is one which experience much peace because there is much presence. God's Spirit is continually looking to descend and rest upon a surrender life. As you become a host to the Holy Spirit, now God will use you to bring Him unto others so He can rest in their hearts as well.

The fifth benefit of a surrender life is **ZONE OF DIVINE INFLUENCE**. We are told in Matthew 3:23-25 that " And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan." We see Jesus moving with a sphere of influence where ever he went as a surrender servant of the Father. The moment the power and the glory resides upon a surrender life, all of heaven looks down to see what you are going to do with what was poured in you. God is in us and he wants out. Just like in the temple when the veil was torn, God wants to tear through our fleshly ways so his kingdom glory can come out. When someone surrender to God, God impart upon him or her a divine power to touch others. After a beggar ask Peter and John for money, Peter responded by saying, Then Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." In essence he said, what I have I give to you. I give to you God's presence. Jesus himself was so conscious and aware of the presence of God that when the woman of the issue of blood touched him, he felt the demand on the power of God (Matthew 9:20). A surrender life is able to open the facet of God's power to those around him. Most people pray and fast for a problem, Jesus prayed for a lifestyle of surrender, so when the problem comes his lifestyle of power and presence can deal with it. Pray into a lifestyle of surrender, so when the problem comes you are ready to confront it. **MINISTRY IS IMPARTING THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UNTO OTHERS**. A surrender life is seeking more than a sermon or message, it seeks the presence of God to impact the world. A surrender life is not a lake, but a river of power. We want to enter into a deep surrender life where the presence of God becomes so dominant that people are healed by their mere presence (Acts 5:15).

Grip of Darkness

What is spiritual darkness?

When we speak of darkness we are referring to the power of evil that follows Satan and his works.

As may remember from chapter one, revival comes when the grip of darkness over people or territory is broken or weakened and the Holy Spirit is allowed to gain more control bringing a greater manifestation of God's kingdom. This grip of darkness came in the first place because people yielded to bondage (Romans 6:16).

You must first recognize the darkness. The enemy you fight determines the weapons you will use. The way the enemy comes against you determines the way you must position yourself for spiritual battle. So let's look at three battlefields we often fight darkness.

The Three battlefields

The first battlefield is in the area of **personal bondage**. There are seven areas in which you will fight personal darkness. **The first personal grip of darkness is sin.** We will never understand the glory of grace until we first understand the stronghold of sin. Sin will grip your mind and soul like nothing else. The solution to the grip of sin is repentance. There is no revival story without repentance. Repentance breaks the grip of darkness. Through repentance and the power of the Holy Spirit, we must disengage from the oppressor. It is the unwillingness to change which holds back revival.

We must be very careful not to resort to cheap grace. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor who was killed by the Nazi regime while trying to save Jews, said that "cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession." Grace is not a license to sin, but power to live for God through His Holy Spirit.

The second personal grip of darkness is the carnal nature. The kingdom of darkness was born out of rebellion (Genesis 3:6). The carnal nature is often referred to in the Bible as "the flesh" or "old man". The carnal nature always seeks to have control of one's own life without God's will and way. This is what took place when Adam and Eve rebelled against God. The carnal mind always wants to make the ultimate decision and determination as to what is right and wrong. It seeks to take control, instead of allowing God to take control of their lives.

The third personal grip of darkness is spiritual blindness. By spiritual blindness we mean deception. Satan is the father of lies. He seeks to get us to prefer tolerance over truth. One of the big deceptions is the belief that something is true if it feels right. So many people make unwise decisions based on their feelings. Feelings can be deceiving, because they can be based on

faulty thinking and not on facts. Another deception is the mindset which says "I believe it because it works". This is the belief that the ends justifies the means. Those who operate under this deception are the people who find it easy to lie, cheat, manipulate, misrepresent, pretend. in order to get a benefit or so called "blessing". You can't NEVER get what is right by doing what is wrong. There is no right way to do wrong. The third deceptive mindset is the one which says "I believe it because I believe it". You will often find this deception working on what is called today "postmodernist". The postmodernist believes that there are no moral absolutes. The thought goes like this: "A thing is true because I believe it, I don't believe it because it is true". They propose the idea that personal beliefs define truth. This deceptive mentality holds that you could never be wrong with what you believe as long as you believe. The problem with this way of thinking are obvious, that is, there are moral absolutes. The mere fact that they say there are no moral absolute is an absolute. Whenever someone says to you "there are no moral absolutes", ask them "are you *absolutely* sure?". The mindset God want us to have which breaks the power of deception is ""I BELIEVE IT BECAUSE IT IS TRUE". We don't believe the truth of Christianity because it works, that would be plain old pragmatism, because it feels right, that would be subjectivism, or because it's only true for me, that would be relativism; rather, we believe that Christianity is true because it's based on the person and work of Christ. The Christian faith is not true because it works; it works because it is true. It is not true because we experience it; we experience it—deeply and gloriously—because it is true. It is not simply 'true for us;' it is true for any who seek in order to find, because truth is true even if nobody believes it and falsehood is false even if everybody believes it. That is why truth does not yield to opinion, fashion, numbers, office, or sincerity—it is simply true and that is the end of it. Truth is ultimately true because it is rooted in the nature of God himself.

The fourth personal grip of darkness is spiritual woundedness. This is one of the most prevalent forms of personal darkness in the world. God wants you to break the cycle of pain in your life.. You past is your past. The reason why Satan wants you to stay in the cycle of pain is so you won't be in the cycle of God's will. God wants you to make a break from your pain. You are whatever is in your heart. If you were to see in your heart, what would you call yourself, "Bitter, happy, resentful, hurt, prideful, arrogant, joyful, or pain"? You can't heal others unless I am heal. You need to be heal in order to be fruitful. Often, you are a fruit of your past, but God has called for His purpose. The tendency is to hide our inner wounds from others. We often do what occurs when a guest is coming to our home unannounced. What do we do when someone important is coming to our house unannounced? We clean up and put everything else in a secret room or closet for no one to see. We like to show forth our best to others, while we still have a mess hidden in our heart. The problem with this approach is that our private world will eventually have an impact in our public life. What are the roots of woundedness? The first is a lack of love. Do you have a difficult time showing and giving love to others? Have you ever seen Christians give a hug but at the same time block it with their other hand? Were you missing love in your childhood from your parents? Lack of love from those who meant the most from our lives, often can produce a deep wound in the heart of a believer. The second is the lack

protection and security. Did you see terror in your parents instead of protection? Did you ever feel abandoned by your parents? It is a very painful experience when we feel vulnerable because someone who was supposed to protect us abandoned or betrayed us. Lack of forgiveness is another root of woundedness. There is something very painful real when you have done something, ask for forgiveness, but forgiveness was not granted. Do you have a parent who will still not forgive you because of your past? Do you have a spouse that still has something over your head? Last is lack of healthy affirmation. We were all created to be affirmed. Did your parents were more quick to give praise to your siblings than you? Did they praise others outside of home, before they admire you? Did you lack complement in your life?

But how do I know if I am wounded from one of these lack of needs. You know that you find it difficult to give away the very thing you are lacking, Do you find it difficult to love, protect, forgive or affirm others? If you failed to receive the fulfillment of one of these four basic needs, you will experience – REJECTION. Rejection is that feeling that lets you know that you did not get something you needed from someone else. Rejection is experienced in many ways. Perhaps you were an unwanted pregnancy, your birth was not a rejoicing moment, you were abandon by your parents, experience child abuse, your parents played the game of having a favorite child who was not you, hurtful words, criticism and judgment. What's yours? The manifestation and consequence of rejection can be fear, shame, failure attitude, sadness, low self-esteem, anguish, depression, bitterness, or revenge.

So how does a disciple of Jesus break free from the grip of rejection? The answer is found in forgiveness. Forgiveness is when a person cancels the debt (Matthew 18:27). If someone has offended you or wounded you, they owe you. This is why people often seek revenge when they are wounded. They are seeking for the person who wounded them to pay back. But for those who have been greatly forgiven by God, ought to forgive as well (Matthew 18:32-33). If we don't forgive, it only demonstrate that we really didn't understand how much God has forgiven us, and therefore, the Lord will not forgive those who don't forgive (Matthew 6:15).

The fifth personal grip of darkness is physical infirmities. Sometimes physical infirmities can become a grip in our lives. Luke 13:12 tell us that "and when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity". It is clear from the passage of Scripture that this woman had to be loosen because she was gripped by an infirmity. Infirmities can hold our bodies on a bondage, which can affect the spirit of a man or woman. The solution to the grip of physical infirmities is the healing power of Jesus Christ. In Acts 10:38 we are told "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" and in James 5:14-15 "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him".

The sixth personal grip of darkness is unholy soul ties. God call us to break yokes with unbelievers. In II Corinthians 6:14, Paul exhorts Christians to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" It is clear from this passage we are to avoid unhealthy spiritual connections with unbelievers. One of the biggest soul ties traps disciples of Jesus may find themselves in is dating or marrying an unbeliever. In the Old Testament, we are told that some in Judah had fallen into this trap, as stated in Malachi 2:11, "Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god." In the New Testament, we are told that we ought only to marry those who are believers in Christ (I Corinthians 7:39). We are called to have healthy soul ties in the Body of Christ, that is, his church. In I Samuel 18:1, we find a great example of this when it says that "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." The solution to unholy soul ties is to develop godly soul ties. In Ephesians 4:16 we are told that "from whom the whole body *fitly joined* together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love".

The seventh personal grip of darkness is idolatry. Idolatry is allowing anybody or anything, including ourselves, to be first and foremost in our lives other than God. We are warned in I Corinthians 10:21 that participating in any form of idolatry is to partake in the "table of demons". There is clearly an association, based on this passage, between darkness and idolatry This is why the bible often tell us to avoid idolatry (Habbakkuk 2:18, Zechairah 10:2, Acts 21:25,I Corinthians 10:14, II Corinthians 6:16, I John 5:21, Revelations 9:20). In Colossians 3:5, are called to "mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is *idolatry*..." The solution to breaking idolatry in our lives to make God first and foremost in our lives. If you have any idols at home which you pray to or give homage, destroy or get rid of them. If you have an idol in your heart, destroy and pulverized them out of your heart. There is space for only ONE to rule and it is the Lord God Almighty.

The second battlefield is **social bondage**. By social bondage we mean the collective darkness in society as it manifest. ***The first social bondage we find is religious deception.*** The enemy does not only work in the secular realm, but also in the religious realm. Religious deception often involves adding or taking away the essentials of the gospel message and/or historical classical Christianity. Religious deception is not something new. We find in Genesis chapter three Adam and Eve falling into bondage through the religious deception shared by the serpent. In Colossians 2:8, we are warned to "see to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty *deception*, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world,

rather than according to Christ". The answer to religious deception is the truth. It is the truth which sets the captives free from religious deception (John 8:32).

The second social bondage is family defilement and desecration. Satan is after the family. He knows that if he can destroy or keep families in bondage, he can destroy a nation. When Cain allowed sin to defile him, it spread throughout his generations. Cain killed his brother and we find that his great, great grandson Lamech killed two men (Genesis 4:8-26). In Lamentations 5:7 we are told "Our fathers sinned, *and* are no more; It is we who have borne their iniquities". We must break the generational cycles of bondages. Make up your mind to start an undefiled generation through your family. Consecrate them to the Lord. Even if some of your family members are not presently serving the Lord, be assured God is sanctifying them through your surrendering to the Lord (I Corinthians 7:14). As you surrender to the Lord, God is targeting your family for salvation and restoration.

The third social bondage is economic activity. The enemy will use greed, injustice and manipulation to hold down a region, city and even a nation. There are regions where the enemy has been successful to develop a culture or subculture of greed and selfishness, which is contrary to the very nature of God's love and goodness. If you are not careful, you can get pulled by these forces of darkness working in our society. Jesus said that the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in..." will grip the Word of God to death in you and render you unproductive and unfruitful for the kingdom of God. Surrender to the Lord the love of money and ambition (I Timothy 6:6-10). Develop a generous heart to overcome the pull of the worldly system.

The fourth social bondage is bad government. God is pleased with good government (Romans 13:1-7). Bad government occurs whenever it does not bring forth justice against evil doers and punishes righteous for doing what is right. Sometimes government has become so corrupted that its influence attempts to slow down the progress of the advancement of the kingdom of God. This is why we are exhorted to pray for our government officials (I Timothy 2:1-3). So they may provide leadership according to godly principles. This is why we must make wise choices who we choose to support for those running for office. We enter into a covenant relationship with those we elect into office. We allow them to gain legal access and rights. Elected leaders open doors.

The fifth social bondage is belief system. Often belief systems shape culture and therefore how people conduct themselves. There are societies where there is pro Jesus culture. However, more often than not, there are societies where you will find a Christianity that finds itself being counter culture. There are regions, cities and even nations that are held in the grip of values contrary to the will of God. As a Christian, you need to be ever mindful of avoiding to conform to these worldly belief systems and be transformed by the renewing of your mind through the word of God (Romans 12:1-2).

The sixth social bondage is the laws of the land. Laws often reflect the values of the people of a land. Something can be legal and yet immoral. In the United States, abortion has been legal for decades, yet it is immoral in the eyes of God. The ever present danger of immoral laws is for Christians to begin to accommodate and assimilate these immoral laws of the land. When we are faced with the dilemma of obeying God or the laws of the land, the bible is clear that we need to obey God above all. Peter declared in Acts 4:19 " But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

The third battlefield is in the area of territorial bondage. Territorial darkness can come upon a community which invades and blinds (Isaiah 25:7). Territorial darkness comes by what the people allow into the land. They become the very darkness they allow into their territory. If it is not stopped, it gains ground. It is all about jurisdiction. Satan, through the use of world system, tries to squeeze you into a mold. The message is clear "conform or it will spew or vomit you out". If you see bad changes in the land, then someone is doing more in the spiritual through darkness than the children of light are doing. God's plan against territorial bondage is to raise a network of local churches to locally affect a territory. This is what we find in Acts 19:1-7 and Acts 20:17-38. Churches have been given spiritual authority to dispute and take claim of over a region and territory.

PRAYER and FAMILY ALTARS

Genesis 12:1-8

What is a Prayer Altar?

A place and a time you set apart to draw the presence of God and commune with the Lord. We are told in Acts 3:1 Peter and John went at a specific time to pray at the temple. Reading John 18:1-2, we find that Judas was able to locate Jesus and bring the Roman soldiers to arrest him, because Jesus had a specific place of prayer. It is interesting to note that Jesus prayed for three hours before he was arrested. In Daniel 6:10, we are told that Daniel had a place and time for prayer three times a day.

The prayer altar is the place where we draw the presence of God. The altar is ground you claim for God. It is the place where we surrender and give to God control. Your personal altar is your heart. It is the first territory you need to claim for God. When you make your heart an altar for God, the spiritual climate in your heart begins to change. Failure to do so, a spiritual toxic spiritual environment is created. One of the biggest dangers in our walk with God is learning the principles of God and not drawing the presence of God into our lives. So many children today in Christian homes end up growing without knowing God in a personal way and family time together with the Lord, and not experiencing God's presence. *Personal Prayer Altars and Family altars are the foundation of revival.*

Four different types of prayer altars

There are different type of prayer altars. The first is a *personal altar*. This is where commune alone with God. We spend quality time one on one with the King of the universe. This is where you take time to worship, pray and read the word.

The second type of prayer altar is the *family altar*. The family altar is when the family comes together to draw the presence of God into their home. If you have not started a family altar, you are strongly encouraged to start one right away. Even if some members of your family don't want to join, we encourage to start with those who are willing. Sooner or later, others in your family will join. This is a great way to claim your home for the Lord. This is where you contend for your family members and fight in the Spirit for each family member in your family who is not serving God. If no one in your family does not want to join you in your family altar time, simply make a loving invitation and proceed to have it without them. Let room for God to work in their lives. It make take weeks or months, but stand firm in standing for your family in prayer. Testimonies worldwide are pouring in of the thousands of family members who are now coming to the Lord through family altars.

The third type of prayer altar is the *corporate prayer altar*. This is when the church as a whole come together to pray on a weekly basis. There is something powerful which occurs when the church comes together to pray and to seek the Lord. It is very difficult to find a chapter in the book of Acts where the New Testament church was not praying together. The church began and receive the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a prayer meeting (Acts 1:14). Make up your mind this week to join a corporate prayer altar in your church. Jesus is awaiting for his people to look for him as he is awaiting for them in the house of God (Revelations 1:12-13, 20).

The fourth type of prayer altar is the *prayer wall*. The prayer wall is when churches come together to pray for their city or state. This type of prayer altar may involve one representative from each church in a community coming to pray for the specific strongholds and grip of darkness holding back the kingdom of God from moving forward in that city or state.

The key towards having an effective family altar, corporate altar and prayer wall is to have a personal prayer altar. Failure to have a personal altar is like trying to burn wood which is still "green". All it will do is produce smoke!

Why do we need prayer altars?

Since God created man, his desire was to have continuous communion with man. Out of this close communion with the presence of God, man was able to fulfill his purpose to be fruitful, multiply and have dominion (Genesis 1:26-28). Since God created man in His image, man was able to commune with his creator. We find from Genesis 3:8 that it was the practice of God to visit Adam in the garden. God had created within man, through the image of God, a holy attraction towards God. The garden of Eden became the center of God's presence on earth. But after man fell (Genesis 3), sin made man repel the will of God. God in his loving care for man, turned him away from the garden. He did not want man to eat of the tree of life, lest he stayed in a perpetual state of sinfulness (Genesis 3:24). God wanted man to have uninterrupted fellowship with man, and thus he made a plan for one day through the "seed" of Eve to have victory over Satan and redeem mankind from their sins (Genesis 3:15). After mankind was expelled from the garden of Eden, mankind kept distancing himself from the presence of the Lord, thus becoming restless and on his own (Genesis 4:13-16).

Prayer altars is one of the way of establishing and claim a life, family, region or even nation for the Lord. We find after Abraham is told to go to a land he has never been before, that he set up an altar to the Lord (Genesis 12:7). The very first thing he did and what he always did whenever he went to a new region or territory was to build an altar. The only time you see him not build an altar was in Egypt because force of darkness had intimidated him. In Genesis 13:4, we find that Abraham did not settle in one place. but he went throughout the land and build an altar. We

are also told in Genesis 12:6 that the Canaanites were in the land. The enemy was in the land. When Abraham came upon this territory, he was contending for it. There was a spiritual contention taking place. His solution for contending for the land was to set up a prayer altar upon it.

Altars in the bible are often denoted as a place where we draw the presence of God in a place. We find Abel build an altar of sacrifice which drew and pleased God (Genesis 4:4, 7). The very first thing Noah did when he got out of the ark after the flood was to build an altar. God came and was so pleased that he made a covenant with Noah to never destroy every living creature through a flood. Elijah, while contending with the false prophet of Baal, was able to draw the fiery presence of God and reestablish God's authority and dominion on Israel (I King 18:20-35). In Exodus 25:1-9, we are told that sacrifices were to be made at the altar to attract the presence of God (Exodus 29:18). In Romans 12:1-2, we are urged to present ourselves as a living sacrifice in our personal altars as an act of worship which pleases God. The plan of God was always for us to abide with him (John 15:4), for we cannot be effective nor fruitful without Him.

We are told in Isaiah 25:7 that a sheet of darkness is covering the nations today, which is causing the people of the nations to turn away from God (Ephesians 6:12). This "veil" of darkness away pushes against the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Prayer altars is one of the ways to break through this wall of darkness. It sets up the church in advancing the kingdom of God to break through the gates of hell in a region.

It is always amazing to watch children always long for the presence of a loving parent. Little children get "separation anxiety" when they are way from their mother or father. Jesus told us that we are to emulate and be like little children in our walk with God (Mark 10:13-15). We are to desire the Father of glory like children desire to be with their mother and father. Children can only feel complete security and safety in the presence of their parents. Just like when children don't see or hear their father around and say "Where is father?", so we also be saying "where is Father God?" and look for Him through prayer.

Prayer altars does not give God any "rest". It is a place where we continually seek God. It is a place where we pray "without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17) and knock at the gate of heaven "at all times" (Luke 18:1-8). God is looking for a his people to "cry to Him day and night" (v. 7). God is looking for every heart to be a brazing fire of prayer, every family a prayer altar, every church a prayer cell, every city a prayer wall and every nation a prayer net which draws the presence of God.

What happens at the altar?

1. You minister to the Lord

Many Christians don't know they have the privilege to minister to the Lord. In I Chronicles 15:2 we are told that " Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him forever". The Levites were to minister to the Lord in the temple. In 2 Chronicles 13:10 we are also told that "But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the sons of Aaron are ministering to the LORD as priests, and the Levites attend to their work" . In the New Testament we are told " As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2). We often think of God ministering to his people, but there is a place in our walk with God where we minister to him where he is exalted. Even in the Lord prayer, we see the first half dealing with focusing on praising and worshipping God.

In the prayer altar the first thing we want to do is spend a substantial amount of time worshipping God. Worshipping him for who he is and not just what he has done. There is nothing worst than half worship. In the personal or family altars, we want to start with exalting who God is and not with a list of "God do this for me right now". In heaven a man is not measure by his wealth and fans, but by his worship. It has been said that "worship is not a means to an end but the end of all means!" The whole point of everything we do is to worship God. This is why worship begins in the inside of you, that is, your heart. Why? Because your heart is the most valuable thing you can give to God.

There will be times during your prayer and family altars that you will begin to have distractions or a voice that begins to tell you that it is not worth worshipping God. The enemy of your soul abhors when you worship. He will begin to put pressure on you to stop by telling you "nothing is going to happen when you worship", "You are not worthy to worship", "You sin last week, so God is not going to listen to you right now", and other voices of doubt. What you need to understand is that praise will always get a push back. When Mary began to worship Jesus at his feet with an expensive ointment, Judas began to criticize her. No doubt Mary heard Judas. When you get a push back, you bush right back. Mary did not let Judas still you the opportunity to worship the King of glory. The same thing occur with Job. The question the book of Job was answering was the devil's question in Job 1:9, "Does not Job serve you for nothing?", in order words, Job worships you because of all the blessings you have given him. But though Satan was allowed to take everything that God had blessed Job with (Wealth, health, and family), he was there was one thing Satan could not steal from Job - Worship. *Press through the noise.* Bring in focus. The question you need to ask yourself is "Who is doing all this talking when I am trying to talk to God?" Stop listening to the enemy. When the devil used Peter to try break Jesus' focus to go to the cross, Jesus said, "Get thee behind me". The enemy will try to make you look at anything but the Lord. **PUSH BACK**

There is a difference between praise and worship. Praise thank God for the shoes, house, food or clothes. But worship says, "If I had no shoes, I have no house, if I have no food or clothes, I worship you for who you are and not because of what you can give me." Worship is casting down your crowns, that is, all your accomplishments and your victories at the feet of Jesus. The best way to worship is by reading the word of God and then exalting God through what you learn about Him. The way we get more praise is by getting in God's word, for there your esteem for God grows. You will struggle praising when you stop reading the Word. In the word we surrender. We often don't have much to say in praise and worship because our hearts is in something else.

Learn to "hallow" the name of the Lord. Jesus showed to that the way to the Father is to begin to ask God to hallow his name in our lives. This means that God wants his name to be special in your life. He wants his name to have a place of honor and reverence so you can develop a healthy fear of God.

2. Draw the presence of God

An altar is a Gateway to heaven. It is an opening for God's presence to show up. In Genesis 12:8 and 13:4, we find that when Abraham built the altar that he called upon the name of the Lord. In Genesis 28:22, Jacob built a pillar as a "gate of heaven. The awesome thing about drawing the presence of God is that holy presence will begin to reveal the ungodly in our homes. An altar is a SPIRITUAL GATEWAY BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND UNSPIRITUAL REALM. At the prayer altar you are contending that you are separated unto God. In your life, home, church and even city, establish a place to draw the presence of God. It is easy to enter the presence of God when you have established the altar of God. USHER IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. God's presence is your heart's home. In Psalms 84:1-4, David declared that the presence of God was his home, there at the altar of God. The reason why often are hearts are restless is because we "miss home". God's presence is your home and you will forever be restless until you "go home". Church father Augustine, his book Confessions, said it best when he said, "...You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You". The reason why we continue to feel restless is because we have been in false homes, such as relationships, careers, money making ventures. Your true home is God's presence.

When you begin to develop an appetite for God presence you will gain a greater appetite over the inferior appetite to the things of this world (ex. drug addiction). When you draw God's presence, even your appetites will change. It is not enough to just a moral will to do right, you need a greater desire. The altar is the place for his presence to draw near because he wants to reveal himself to you. The God that you serve is a revealing God. If you seek him with all of your heart, he will not only show up, but reveal his greatness, glory and grace. The problem we have today in many place is that the cry of sin has become louder than the cry of prayer.

3. Offer Sacrifices

At the prayer altar we offer sacrifices. But what kind of sacrifice can we possibly offer since we no longer offer animal sacrifices in the new covenant? We offer ourselves. (Romans 12:1-3). God is asking that you yield yourself to him. The altar is the place where you surrender completely to him. It is the place where you LAY DOWN YOUR AGENDA. God wants you to lay down your life for Him (Romans 12:1-2) and for his work (Romans 12:3-14). ABSOLUTE SURRENDER is the ultimate sign of love. When you surrender, and only when you surrender, will you be able to set apart your life for God.

In Romans 12:1-3, we are shown three conditions of a life given to God. The first thing we are told is to *be "presentable"*. This means we are to surrender voluntarily. God wants you voluntarily present at his disposal. God is looking for servants who willingly give of themselves away. God does not just want something, he wants everything. God is not interested in just certain areas of your life, he paid for all of it (I Corinthians 6:20). Voluntary surrender is an expression of devotion. It is not about what I can get, but what I can offer. Notice how in Romans 12:2 worship is mentioned in a life given to God. Worship is giving our all to God. The result of a life given to God is transformation. The word used here in the original language of the passage means a change from the inside out. It is the same word used when Jesus showed his glory to three of his disciples (Matthew 17:2). The divine glory which was in the inside began to show in the outside of Jesus. Keep in mind that there is no transformation until we have consecration. God is looking for a REAL "YES". Only when you offer a real yes, wholly surrender, complete yielding, will you know his perfect will for your life. The reason why we so often can't find the will of God is because we are too busy asking God to do our will. This is what I want, while God is saying this is my vision for your life. God has a vision for your life, marriage, children, ministry, church and community. God is asking you to come to an end of yourself and make it all about him. The reason why Christianity seems not to be working for some people is because they have made the gospel as casual acceptance of Jesus rather than an absolute total surrender to Jesus. To accept Jesus for real means to accept the call to surrender completely to him. Is your life a blank check before the God of the universe? In Matthew 13:44 we are called to put everything on the line for Jesus. Why? Because Jesus is worth losing everything for! We give our lives because he is worth everything and that is why he is worthy. God is worthy of your trust, faith, hope, dreams and heart. The problem today is that we are wasting our lives doing a Christian spin of the "What's in it for me" dream. The call to discipleship Jesus requires superior love. Are you willing to Love Jesus ON HIS OWN TERMS? Are you willing to relinquish, abandon, to say good bye, renounce to anything that will get in the way of surrendering? This is your offering to God at the prayer altar every time you go before God.

In the Old Testament, the priest were to dedicate the meat offering with its fat. Fat signifies that which is extra. We often gain weight because we have too much fat. What's the spiritual fat you need to dedicate to the Lord at the prayer altar? When you go before the prayer altar, ask God to reveal the fat the offering he requires of you. He may ask for the fear of failure, shame, guilt, rejection, desired to be loved by everyone, or the jealousy.

Jesus did not give us options to considers, but commands to obey. The reason why God wants you do daily offer him your life is because it is much easier to follow Jesus when you are dead to your dreams, dead to your plans, dead to your ideas, and given to the life and purpose of Christ. God is calling you daily to abandon everything to and for Christ (Luke 9:57-62). radically abandon people cannot be stopped because they cannot be bought, and the devil have nothing in them by which he can pull strings to pull them away from God or his mission.

A life given to God as an offering is also "*acceptable*" (Romans 12:1-3). What are we after in offering our lives to God? What are we trying to accomplish? The answer is THE DELIGHT OF GOD. We want to see God take delight and pleasure in what Jesus is doing in and through us. When you have a prayer altar which pleases God, you will see God demonstrate his delight in your home through peace and protection. When you have a prayer altar which pleases God, you will see God demonstrate his delight in your church through power and his presence. When God took delight in the offering King Solomon offered to the Lord, the delight of God came upon it and God demonstrated his glory so powerfully that the priest could not even enter the temple (I Kings 8:10-11).

Also, a life give to God as an offering is also *usable for God's purpose*. As you spend time in your prayer altars, offer your talents and gifts to Lord to advance the kingdom of God. Notice how Paul the apostle in Romans 12:4-13, he begins to urge the people of God to offer their gifts to service the body of God. Picture this, you were chosen to proclaim the glory of God to the ends of the earth, why then would you waste your gifts and talents on something which is temporal and has no eternal value? The biggest lie Satan has ever conceived is "ADVANCE YOURSELF". This is the same trap Adam and Eve felt into. As you go to the prayer altar on a daily basis, go before God not for the purpose to advance yourself, but offer yourself to ADVANCE THE KINGDOM OF GOD NO MATTER WHAT THE COST.

Altar of Prayer (Part II)
Desperate Prayer

Jesus' Model of Prayer

Jesus' disciples, like most Christians were taught to pray from an early age and no doubt were comfortable with their prayer life. As they journeyed with Jesus however, they began to notice such a drastic contrast from their own prayer life that they approached Jesus with the request, teach us how to pray.

Jesus, from His vantage point as the Son of God, spent time with His father observing many prayers that were not acceptable. He knew what would please His father and was therefore able to counsel his followers on effective vs. ineffective prayer. His presentation on the subject forced his disciples to rethink prayer.

In what we today call the Lord's Prayer, Jesus laid out a model of prayer in three phases;

1. It's all about my Father and what He wants
2. Pray for yourself (in that context)
3. It is all about my father

Effective prayer therefore requires the following assumptions:

- God is my father
- I have some understanding of what He wants
- I agree with what He wants
- I am praying to pursue what He wants

If these assumption holds true then I must ascribe to the following:

- He knows what He is doing and is committed to accomplishing His desires
- He sees and thinks differently than I do, therefore whatever He does, He is right
- If what I want conflicts with what God wants, I must yield my position
- I need to trust that His plans for me are better than my own plans
- Prayer outside of this is trying to persuade God to change His mind, robbing Him of His desires.

During this phase of training, the disciples were impressed with Jesus but did not understand Him or what He wanted. They were just excited to have a seat at the table. Praying therefore according to this model would not have made much sense to them then. It was not until after Jesus' ascension, they began to understand layer by layer the unfolding of the plan of God and what He wanted from them. Their prayer then took on a different meaning.

Prayer for them was a time to yoke themselves with the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to reveal the Fathers desires, then allowing themselves to be molded as tools necessary for the work. Even when the demands of the ministry grew at alarming rates, these leaders covenanted to stay focused on reading the Word to understand God's work and then praying it through. As they

were careful to hear and understand the instructions given by Jesus, He went with them confirming the word with accompanying signs (Mark 16:20). The Father was getting what He wanted.

To be continued...

But is it not time for us to reconsider prayer.

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- a) Provision
- b) Forgiveness
- c) Deliverance/protection from satanic forces

take a closer look at these phases.

Our father who are in Heaven; hallowed be they name. thy kingdom come and thy will be done in the earth as it is in heaven.

- First focus is about His father.
- Second, prayer is an asset that gives the father what He wants
- Third, pray for today's needs
- Pray for protection and deliverance
- Come back to the foundation...its all about Him. All in my prayer should align itself with His Kingdom's agenda

The secret of fasting

What is fasting?

Biblical fasting is a temporary abstinence from food or certain types of food while still drinking fluids or just water. Fasting is a spiritual discipline which Jesus still expects us to do. In Mark 2:20, Jesus said that once he was to ascend into heaven, disciples of Jesus are expected to fast. In Matthew 6:18, Jesus said "when you fast", not "if you fast", meaning that he expects Christians to fast.

Three types of fast: Absolute fast, normal and partial fast

Absolute fast is when a person abstains both from eating and drinking (Ezra 10, Acts 9:9, Esther 4:15). It is recommended that a person going into absolute fast does not go longer than three days, unless they have received clear instructions from God to do so.

In a *normal fast*, a person abstains from both eating and drinking with the exception of water. Most of the fast mentioned in the bible are normal fast (Nehemiah 1:4, 9:1, Psalms 109:24, Joel 2:12).

Partial fast is when you do without certain type of food such as meat or fish. In Daniel 1:15 and 10:3 we find Daniel fasting only meat, choice food and wine. In Daniel 10:3 the word "mourn" is used, which depicts the practice of fasting.

The key to any type of fasting is that it must mean something to you. If it does not mean anything to you, it won't mean anything to God. One thing is very clear in Scriptures regarding fasting, you will never walk deeply with God unless you fast and pray. Fasting is not an optional spiritual discipline to be used only in emergencies like a spare tire. All the great men and women of God fasted. Paul fasted when he was called to the ministry (Acts 9:7-9), Esther fasted to avert the destruction of the Jews, Anna fasted and saw her savior Jesus in the temple, Peter was fasting when he received a revelation regarding reaching Gentiles (Acts 10:10), Elijah fasted 80 days when he received reassignment, new generation and victory over Jebezel (nemesis), Moses fasted when he received the 10 commandments and Jesus fasted 40 days before he started his ministry. It is clear that you are in good company when you choose to fast.

Three main reason why we fast

Fasting makes you focus on God. Fast makes you return to God (Joel 2:13 "now return"). In Ezekiel 16:49-50 we are told that people were so given to pleasure than made

their stomach their king. They ate themselves out of the pleasure of God. Fasting is designed so you can feast in the Lord. There are those in the bible who found themselves losing their blessing and birthright in their lust for food rather than hungering for God and his promises (Numbers 11:4-7, Heb. 12:15-17). Fasting makes you return to seeking the Lord. What would you be willing to give you to have an open heaven with God? What food would you be willing to sacrifice for a season so you can see a mighty outpouring of God? Do you remember the last time you were love sick for Jesus and were so hungry for God that the only hunger you felt was for his presence?

You can always come up with a reason not to fast. But keep in mind that the most powerful fast are those done when you did not feel like it doing it. There is never going to be a perfect time to fast where all of the conditions for the best possible fast experience are present. This is where trusting in the Lord comes in.

Fasting brings the presence of God. In Matthew 9:14, Jesus explained that when you fast you will experience the presence of Jesus in the same presence of the Spirit as when he was here walking physically on earth. But why? Because while prayer draws you to seek him, fasting breaks you free from whatever is pulling you from the world system.

Fasting breaks the grip of darkness. In Isaiah 58:6, the question is asked, "Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke and to let the oppressed go free and break EVERY YOKE"? If there is an issue or habit to be loose, it is because you have a yoke that needs to be broken. As you fast, don't be surprised if you experience resistance. If you experience spiritual resistance, wear it as a badge of honor. Your goal is to become one of the ten most wanted man or woman in the kingdom of darkness. There is power over the grip of darkness except through fasting and prayer. Prayer and fasting makes a way for the kingdom of God to push back the power of darkness. We are invited to feast in the Lord and stop any fighting and strife (Is. 58:4). People who want God choose reconciliation over revenge and revival over retaliation.

Fasting makes us desperate for God. God is not attracted to heartless activity. God is constantly looking for a heart who is after him. Hungry people are desperate people. In fasting, we get hungry and build a desperate appetite for Jesus. God is tired of those who are going through just religious exercises without their hearts in it. Whenever we fast without our hearts in it, God says, "religion again?"

Why it does not work for some people? Fasting has often been used to get God to do our will, instead of getting us to surrender to his will. God is looking for those who will surrender to his will through fasting, so when God answers the prayer, he will get the glory.

In Joel 2:12-17, God the call of fasting was so important that he calls the children of God to move urgently in doing so. Urgency should lead to immediacy to seek the Lord. God is saying to stop the procrastination and hesitation in seeking God through fasting and prayer. The reason we often don't immediately obey God's command is because we think we have time. The leaders were also ask to immediately move into intercede in prayer and fasting. Give speed to obedience. Total obedience is when you do what God wants you to do, when God wants you do it, where God wants you to do and how God wants you do it. Procrastination is a priority problem. When you procrastinate, you think other stuff is more important to do NOW.

Make of covenant to seek HIM

In II Chronicles 15:12, we are called as children of God to make a "covenant to seek the Lord". Court the presence of God. It is not enough to hear messages in church. Judas heard of Jesus' sermons, yet something was missing in his life which cause him to miss God and drift away into deception. What you need today is a holy appetite and craving for his presence. The lack of appetite for God's presence is the biggest reason why people don't experience revival in their personal and church life. Revival is an invasion of God by His Spirit upon those who crave Him. As Duncan Campbell once said, "Revival is a community saturated with God." The reason why God moves in places is because HE IS INVITED. INVITE HIM AND HE WILL SPREAD HIS GLORY upon you and your family. Summon His presence. But how do you invite the most important HOST you ever had? You do so with DESPERATION WITH EXPECTATION. God is looking for complete abandonment through fasting, prayer, repenting, surrendering.

Today, there are those who are like those mentioned Jeremiah 2:13 who are like a cistern who can't hold water. God said, " For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Often, people today can't hold water of power of God in their lives. They are leaky Christians.

How would you like to pray and fast for 40 days? If you were to fast three days per month, during the months of February through December, and 7 days in January, you will end up with 40 days worth of fasting per year. Imagine what your walk with God would be if you were to dedicate 40 days per year in fasting and prayer. The key is to be diligent. Why? Keep in mind that no man is greater than his prayer life.

Dealing with Distractions
Dealing with Idols

Level 2 Set Apart Life

The seven essentials Part I:

The seven essentials Part II:

The seven essentials Part III:

The seven essentials Part IV:

The seven essentials Part V:

The seven essentials Part VI:

The seven essentials Part VII:

Spiritual Authority (God, govt, home - over spiritual demonic power, under to be over,

Level 3

Counting the Cost

Living and Maintain an Awakening Lifestyle Walking in Destiny Holy Spirit controlled Life

Manifestation of the Kingdom The Witness and Suffering Spiritual Warfare and the Presence of
God Kingdom Resources