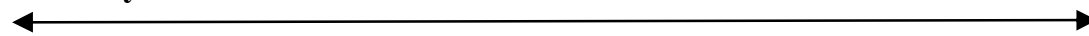


Subject: A Call to Action

Scripture Reading: Joel 2: 1 - 17

Memory Verses: Mark 2: 19 & 20



Objective: To assess the true purpose and benefits of fasting.

1. How was Joel instructed to alert Israel about the impending calamity?
Joel 2: 12 - 17
2. How has it been shown from scripture that the desire to please God must precede fasting? **Zechariah 7: 1 - 13**; And what is the result when that principle is followed? **Isaiah 58: 6 - 12**
3. Fasting, no matter how sincere, is not a 'cure for all'. How does scripture bear this out? **2 Samuel 12: 13 - 18**
4. Describe the fast that is frowned upon by God? **Isaiah 58: 1 - 5, 1 Kings 21: 5 - 13**
5. At what time did Jesus say His people would need to fast? **Mark 2: 18 - 20**; And what seemingly impossible situations can be managed, dealt with or reversed when fasting is done purposefully? **2 Chronicles 20: 1 - 4, 13 - 15 & 20 - 24, Ezra 8: 21 - 23, Matthew 17: 14 - 21**
6. What is God's expectation of the children of the bridegroom? **Mark 2: 19 & 20**

Note: There are some who see no need to fast, while others even scoff at those who do. There will always be a reason to fast - situations, the church, others, and personal. Fasting does not cause believers to become immune to sin, however, it does help to strengthen believers to be able to overcome during times of temptations.

7. What benefit of fasting was shown in Jesus' life? **Matthew 4: 1 - 11**

Note: It was never God's intention that fasting be seen as a means of 'bribing Him or twisting His arm for our every desire.' When applied appropriately fasting gives us the time to humbly communicate with God, allowing Him to convict our hearts and teach us His will. Penitent hearts are disciplined in righteousness and more strength is gained to overcome sin. As Jesus fasted, so should we.

