

pray . fast . give .



Living Lent | Day 3

Fasting: Giving Up For The Children

"...strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. 'We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,' they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust."

Acts 14: 22-23 NIV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

Sacrificial Giving – Glorify God, Honor The Children - Jesus showed us how to give, He gave His life. This past year has shifted our priorities and our needs. Some who have never been in need find themselves sitting in long lines for basic essentials, COVID testing and now, the COVID vaccine. In Acts 14:22 Jesus encourages them by saying to the disciples to put muscle and sinew in your lives. I urge you to stick with what you had begun to believe and not quit. All the while He was making it clear to them that it wouldn't be easy: Anyone signing up for the Kingdom of God has to go through plenty of hard times.

God told us in Jeremiah 29:11 (MEV): "For I know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." The Morningstar campus is secluded, yet serene: the perfect setting for safety and healing. But it can also be forgotten because it's so isolated. God has shown me, as caretaker of this beautiful sanctuary, that He has not forgotten or abandoned the Children of Morningstar. He will bring light to this

campus and prosper these young lives during this Lenten Journey and cause His followers to be reminded of the basic act of following Christ- denying self. As we humble ourselves, pray, seek, and turn our hearts to Christ, He will hear and answer prayers.

There is power in fasting. Whether it was Daniel in the Old Testament or the disciples in the New Testament, both were aware of the power of fasting. Jesus taught that our fasting and praying should be done in secret for the acceptance of God, not so we can get more of Him, but so he can get more of us. God always works from the inside out. Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) records this admonition: “Above all else, guard your hearts, for everything you do flows from it.” God wants our hearts. Fasting goes deep, and it starts with the condition of the heart.

Jesus also taught the true way to fast in Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV): “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Fast for something specific – the Children of Morningstar.

Praying and fasting always go together. You can pray without fasting, but fasting should never be done without praying. While fasting helps us focus our praying, it also intensifies our prayers and expresses our availability to be used by God. Prayer and fasting don’t always yield immediate results. We should trust God’s timing, leaving the results of fasting to Him and be joyful of the tangible gift to God of denying ourselves.

You will undoubtedly receive a blessing and see measurable results when you look back on your time of prayer, sacrifice, and fasting that yielded God’s abundant life for the Children of Morningstar and for you! The spiritual disciplines to give of your resources, for nothing really belongs to us, glorifies our God in heaven.

“We are never more like God than when we give.” Author Unknown.

Francis of Assisi said, “For it is in giving that we receive.”

Challenge to Prayer and the Exercise of the Privilege of Generosity

As you pray and sacrifice throughout this Lenten Journey, will you take this opportunity to pay forward in generosity a gift of at least \$1 per day throughout the 40 days for the Children of Morningstar? It is a privilege and a blessing to give as we all look forward to Easter and the Resurrection.

[Donate Now](#)

Contributor

Donny Harris, Brunswick, Georgia, is the Facility Coordinator at Morningstar Children's Home and a faithful Member and Elder at Union City Church. As the Facility Coordinator, Donny sees up front and personal the many physical plant needs at **Morningstar**. Affectionately known as Mr. Donny by the Children, he engages the kids to help around the campus and they love the interaction and team-building that they are able to participate in, knowing that at the end of the "work" they are likely to be able to enjoy a Gatorade with him—an opportunity for him to pour into them the thirst for Jesus!

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