

Awakening Total Life Challenge: Newness of Soul
Pastor Stovall Weems
Message Text: Luke 5:33-39

I. Launch Question

- Why is fasting an important and normal practice for the New Testament believer?

II. Questions for Discussion

As we begin this season of fasting, recognize that fasting is less about making sacrifices to obtain a blessing and more about moving into a spiritual realm of faith and power by denying the desires of your flesh. Living in this world can clog up our lives and desensitize us to the voice of God and fasting helps us detach ourselves from the world and attach ourselves to God. Fasting gets the power of God that is in your spirit working in your mind, will and emotions so that you can experience newness both in your mind and soul. If you want to see miracles and change in your life, it all starts with your heart. Discuss the following;

Challenge#1: Turn to God with all your heart.

1. In our main text, Jesus tells 2 parables of the absurdity of putting a new patch on old clothes and of new wine in old wineskins. By this He is saying that He wants to do something fresh and new in our lives and it doesn't mix with an old, stale heart. What detrimental old things --habits, attitudes, traditions and lifestyle choices --have you become comfortable with? Are you going through the motions or is your heart bitter or hard from life? How can you prepare your heart to be open to change, to the new things God wants to bring to your life as you turn to him? How can you show God you are ready for change and newness?
2. Read Joel 2:12-13. The first step in turning to God is repentance and the time to repent is now. What characteristics of God

encourage us to turn to him with ALL of our hearts? What is holding you back from totally surrendering to God? Why are you attached to those things? What can you detach from in order to attach yourself to God more?

3. What does God promise to those whose heart is loyal to Him in 2 Chron 16:9? How does this affect your passion for God? What about your intimacy with Him?

III. Personal Application

God wants you to have a great new year and this year will be your best year ever IF it is your best year spiritually. Prayer and fasting make up a powerful weapon for the believer and help us align ourselves with God. It's not enough to want to seek God more, you must commit to a practical plan of action to walk it out. Prayerfully think about the steps you need to take in the next 21 days. Make God your priority and apply these to your life starting today!

1. Establish a daily time of personal devotion to God. (This consists of prayer and daily bible reading)
2. Participate in this season of fasting.
3. Prioritize God's house.