

Mount Aery Baptist Church  
Bible Study  
Journey With Jesus Lesson 1  
March 8, 2017

### ***What is Lent?***

Lent is a period of 40 days not including Sundays, dedicated by Christians to repentance prayer and fasting in preparation for Resurrection Sunday. This is the period of reflection upon the voluntary struggle and suffering of Jesus, The Christ and His ultimate triumph over death, hell and the grave.

### ***What is Fasting?***

A Biblical definition of fasting is a Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes. It is Christian, for fasting by a non-Christian obtains no eternal value because the disciple's motive and purpose are to be God centered.

Fasting is voluntary in that it is not to be coerced. Fasting is more than just the ultimate crash diet for the body. It is abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.

There is a broader view of fasting that is often overlooked. This is the approach Richard Foster takes when he defines fasting as "a voluntary denial of a normal function for the sake of intense spiritual activity."

So then, fasting does not always deal with abstinence from food. Sometimes we may need to fast from involvement with other people, or from the media, from the telephone, from talking, from sleep, etc., in order to become more absorbed in a time of spiritual activity. Fasting includes abstinence from anything that is legitimate in and of itself for the sake of some spiritual purpose.

Read the following:

Matthew 4:1-11

Mark 1:9-12

Luke 4:1-13

They Synoptic Gospels each depict Jesus in the wilderness in some form. How are the Gospels similar? How do they differ?

What do we learn about Fasting from these texts?

What do we learn about prayer?

What do you make of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness as it relates to your own life?

Jesus gave up much in the wilderness. What did he gain while in the wilderness?

What we can learn from Jesus in the wilderness:

1. Fasting must be intentional
2. Invest your time to studying the word
3. Temptation will occur
4. We must make time for repentance
5. God will continue to supply your needs while fasting
6. It's not as much as about what you give up, but more about what positive characteristics and practices are you taking on. It's about what we can gain