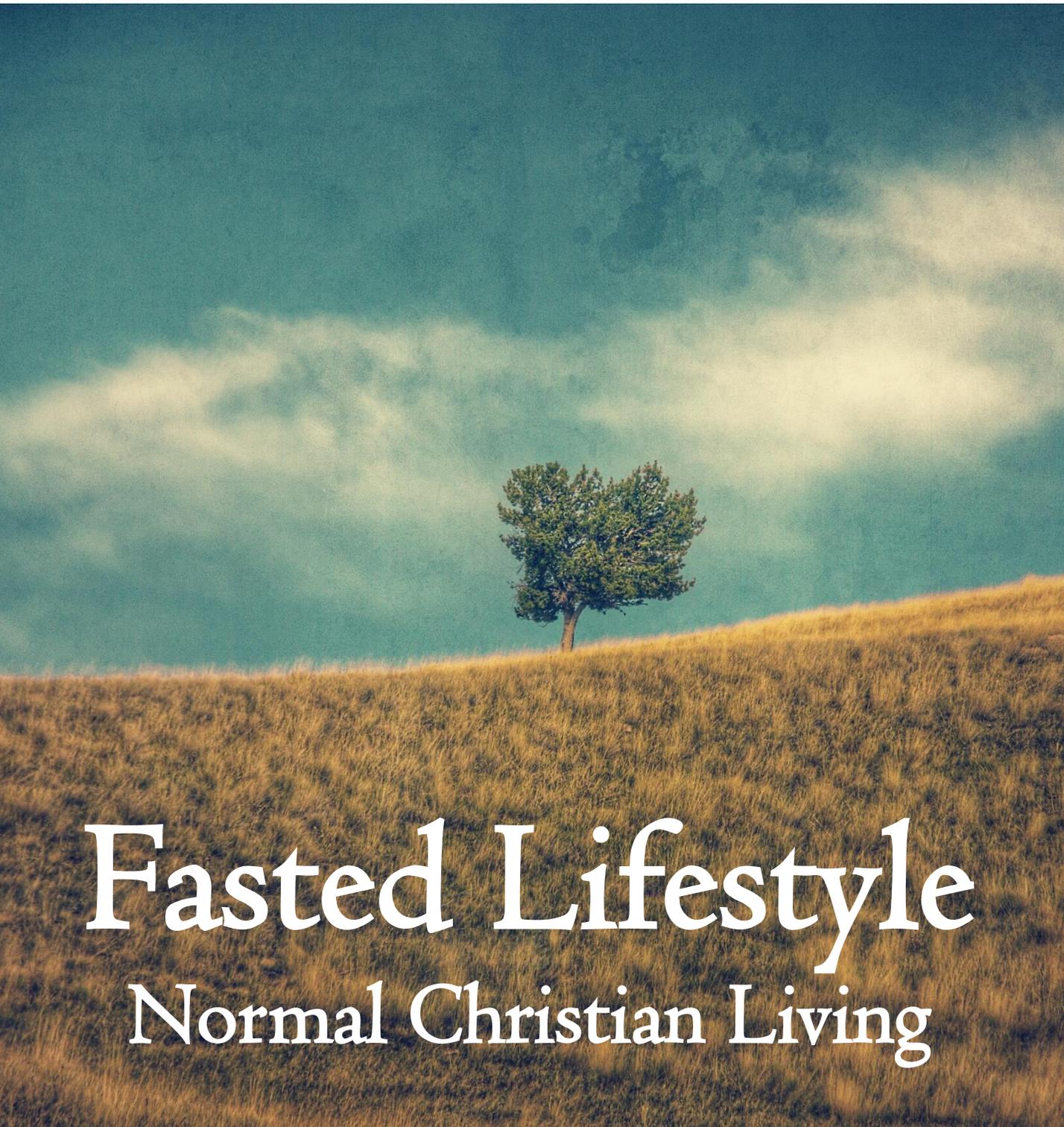


Week 6

Joel 2 Lifestyle

A landscape photograph of a grassy hill with a single tree under a dramatic, cloudy sky. The sky is a mix of teal and dark blue, with soft, white clouds. The grass is golden-brown, suggesting a late summer or autumn setting. A single, full-canopied tree stands on the crest of the hill.

Fasted Lifestyle

Normal Christian Living

But when you fast... and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matt 6:17-18



“Fasting? You mean Christians are supposed to fast?”

This is a common response we get when we talk about fasting among the body of Christ. Fasting is not a topic that is commonly taught in churches.

It is a concept that is foreign to most of us. Many consciously distance ourselves from the idea because we think it is not relevant to modern day Christianity.

We also shy away from the thought that we have to “suffer” and go without food. Some of us actually fear fasting. And many have the mindset that we will not be able to work and fast at the same time.

But truth be told, the fear of fasting is worse than fasting itself. There is so much treasure that God has in store for us that can only be unlocked through living a lifestyle of fasting. We need to develop the right understanding concerning fasting, so that we may live out this lifestyle and unlock all the treasures that God has prepared for us.

So what is fasting? Is fasting for me? Why should I fast and how do I live out a fasted lifestyle?

Fasting is a willing abstinence or reduction from some or all food, drink, or both, for a period of time.

From a broader perspective, fasting is the restraining of our natural pleasures or strengths with the purpose of positioning ourselves to receive freely from the Holy Spirit.





EMBRACING VOLUNTARY WEAKNESS

Embracing Weakness to see God's Power

You see, as we fast, we are embracing voluntary weakness. And as we embrace voluntary weakness, we will be able to experience more of God's power and presence. We become weak in the natural in order to receive more strength from the Spirit. It may seem like a paradox but this is true.

Jesus revealed to Paul that the release of God's power in his life was connected to his willingness to embrace weakness. This revelation is foundational to understanding fasting.

**... “My grace is sufficient for you,
for My strength is made perfect in
weakness.” ... (2 Cor. 12:9)**

Many desire to walk in “*perfected power*,” but few want to embrace the necessary weakness that has to come before that.

The most challenging issue in fasting is the physical weakness it produces. But this can be overcome with the grace that God richly avails to us.

Setting of our hearts to receive more of God

As we fast, we are setting our hearts to receive more of God. As we deny ourselves from food physically, our hunger and desire for God increase spiritually.

Our spiritual capacity to receive from God increases. We receive greater measures of revelation at an accelerated pace, and with a deeper impact upon our hearts!



**Wow, don't we
want that?**



CHANGE
AHEAD

This is why Daniel had great revelation and understanding. Because he lived a fasted lifestyle, setting his heart to understand God's heart.

Fasting also changes us internally! Fasting results in the tenderizing of our hearts. It also leads to the changing of our desires and enlarging of our desire for righteousness (Heb. 1:9). When this occurs, the choices we make in life will be different, which in turn leads to different outcomes in the places we go and the people we meet, outcomes that will impact lives.

Fasted Lifestyle - Normal Christian Living

It may surprise you, but fasting is meant for every believer throughout Church history, including our day and age. It is not just reserved for the super saints or the "very spiritual few". Fasting is an integral part of normal Christian living. It is what the disciples and the early Christians do. Fasting was a regular part of Paul's life (2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27). John Wesley and his friends faithfully fasted 2 days a week.



Readings and Prayers for the week

Readings for Week 6

Read Daniel Chapter 9 and 10. What was Daniel fasting and praying for? Why is Daniel someone that receives so much revelation and understanding from God, even compared to his three friends?

Daniel prophesied that in the End-Times God will raise up “people with prophetic understanding” who will teach multitudes (Dan. 11:33 - 35; 12:3 - 4, 10). These will be ones that live a fasted lifestyle seeking God’s face.

Do you want to be one of them?

Prayers for Week 6

Use Col.1:9-10 to pray for yourself that you will be one who knows and understands God’s heart and for grace to cultivate and walk out a fasted lifestyle.

For more details on the whys and whats of fasting, as well as how to live out a fasted lifestyle, check out the full articles “Fasted Lifestyle – Normal Christian Living” and “The Practical Handles of Cultivating a Lifestyle of Fasting” on our website @www.joel2lifestyle.com/resources