



Fasting

Women's Discipleship Class – September 18, 2019

Chris Osborne

Verses Covered This Week

Matthew 9:14 – 15

Acts 13:2 – 3

Acts 14:20 – 23

Esther 4:11 – 17

2 Samuel 1:11 – 12, 25 – 26

Ezra 8:21 – 23

Matthew 6:16 – 18

Zechariah 7:4 – 6

Revelation 3:15 - 17

We've talked about the fact that you're going to live your life off of the objective writing of the Holy Spirit, the Bible. You're going to live off the subjective direction of the Holy Spirit inside our spirit which always has to conform with the Bible. You've got to have both to be totally effective. The last time we were together we looked at the fact that your prayer life has to be directed and governed by the Holy Spirit of God. You don't get to govern it. You don't get to go to God and give Him your list and tell Him what to do and then go home. He tells you how to pray, what to pray, how long to pray. So your prayer life is governed by the internal direction of the Holy Spirit. So obviously one key question then is, what can I do to be as in tune and as attentive to the Holy Spirit as I possibly can. So we're going to look at this tonight. I want you to look at an unusual verse that at first doesn't make sense. We're going to cover a little ground again.

So go to Matthew 9:14 - 15. One of the problems that we face when we do intercessory prayer, one of the great difficulties we face and the reason it's so hard to hear Him is that we have a tendency to be focused on a thousand different things. We've got kids at home, we've got a goofy husband, your work outside the home. You've got a zillion things. So when you come into your prayer time, you're not always focused. And it's hard to get there. And then there's things that happen in your life whether you lose someone you love, whether your husband loses his business, whatever trial you may go through, that then damage your ability to hear Him. So you want to be as focused as you can be. Now listen, Matthew 9:14 & 15, to an unusual thing Jesus says, actually when you think about it, seems backwards.

¹⁴Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁵And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.”

So you would expect Him to say the opposite. I mean, these guys don't have the Holy Spirit in them yet. Holy Spirit is Jesus permanently indwelling you. The Bible says in Romans 8, His Spirit bears witness with our spirit, that we're the children of God. So the assumption would be, why would we need to fast when we have the Holy Spirit? They don't have the Holy Spirit and they don't need to fast. Now why would that be? Why would Jesus make that statement? They don't possess the Holy Spirit and therefore they don't need to fast. You have the Holy Spirit permanently in you, but you need to fast. Why the distinction?

Because the Holy Spirit wasn't there?

That's right. The Holy Spirit wasn't, but that's the point. If He's not there, I would need to fast. Jesus says, “No, you don't.”

So that we can depend on Him?

You can't depend on Him because He's not there.

No, I'm saying now.

OK. But why would I need to depend on Him? What would be the distinction? The real key, that's actually correct, but the real key is, and that's the key answer. If Jesus is in the room with me, physically in proximity to me, I can ask Him a question. I can say, “Jesus, what did God mean in Exodus 4:12?” He's right there. He immediately answers. But with the Holy Spirit in me, He's gone. Now I have the Holy Spirit in me. I have to be sensitive to Him. And so even though the proximity is better in one sense, now I have to discipline myself to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. And that's going to require spending some time fasting. Now, let me show you a couple things, how it works, I'll tell you how to do it, and then we'll rock and roll.

Look at Acts 13. Go over to Acts 13 and really, primarily, verse 2. You always want to take something in context. And we'll really start in verse 2. Now remember the church is in Antioch. Probably the first real great church. Paul and Barnabas are there.

²While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³Then, after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

The Holy Spirit spoke to whom? The whole church. So obviously you've got two statements of fasting. This wasn't one hour. This occurred over several days. So you've got the church fasting and what happens? They hear God and after fasting, then they commission the ones that God told them to commission. So fasting does two things here. It enhances, obviously, my ability to hear the Father. And it has an impact on my prayer life when I'm praying over someone that God is

calling out to do something unique. So He leaves everybody else in Antioch, but the fasting opens up their hearing to the Father. Now this may have enormous bearing when you're looking at and particularly tonight, I think it's something, and I'll apply this in a minute, this would have enormous bearing as a church when you're picking a new pastor. It may well be that if you don't fast, you don't pick the right man.

Now look at Acts 14. Now they've stoned Paul and they think he's dead.

²⁰When the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city. And on the next day he went with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹When they had preached the gospel in that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." ²³When they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

So we have the same thing here. They do another commissioning service, but only after they fast. They don't just commission. They fast in response to the commissioning. So the fasting does a couple things. It allows them to hear whom God has picked and then the fasting, I think, is key. Why is it so important to the commissioning? Because it enables them to know how to pray for the particular individual. You take every pastor in town, you take Troy Allen at First College, take Brian Fisher at Grace, you take me at Central. All three of us unilaterally, probably pretty much believe the same thing. But all three of us have different needs in our families, in our callings, in our personalities, in our giftings. So all three of us need different prayer things. If you just pray the same thing for all three of us, you're probably not praying under the leadership of the Spirit. Because we all have a different need. And so part of fasting enables you to pray correctly for the person that you're commissioning.

Now look at the book of Esther. Go over to Esther chapter 4. Remember she's being raised by her cousin. She's being raised by her cousin, she's great looking, the king's an idiot. He asks his wife to come in and show off her beauty. She says, "No." He flushes her. So he's got to have a new girl. He checks for a year and finally brings Esther in. And there was a weird rule which is hard to understand in our culture. But the rule was with the king, these guys were tyrants and this guy's no different. If she just shows up in the court while he's busy and says, "Hey, Bud, I need some eggs when you come home tonight." And he doesn't like it, he kills her right there. I mean this was not an easy life to live. So she knows this. Well her cousin, who raised her, Mordecai, it's hard to know why, but he's been pretty obnoxious to one of the most powerful men in the land, Haman. He won't stand when Haman walks by. He won't acknowledge him. He won't respect him. So Haman's hacked. So Haman finds out he's a Jew and so he decides, "Look, I'll just wipe out all the Jews." He gets the king to sign a deal to wipe out all the Jews and the king can't change it. So now they're in a rather major predicament. The king's going to wipe out all the Jews; there's nothing they can do. So Mordecai sends word and he says, "Look, we've got a little issue here. You need to do something about it." And here's Esther's response. Look in verse 11:

¹¹All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law, to

be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. As for me, I've not been called in to come to the king these 30 days.

So obviously marriage is not real good, right. She hadn't been called in a while. She's thinking, "I go in here, I'm toast." She doesn't go in; the nation dies. So watch this.

¹²They told Mordecai what Esther had said, ¹³then Mordecai told them in a reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in all the king's palace you will escape any more than all the Jews. ¹⁴You keep silent this time, relief and deliverance will rise to the Jews from another place but you and your father's house will perish.

Now this does speak to a question Diane Graham had the other night about God personally impressing you to pray and you don't. Does that mean it won't happen? No. He may use someone else to pray, but obviously if you don't pray what He leads you to pray, there is a discipline that will come in your life because of your disobedience. That would be the implication here.

Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this. ¹⁵Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, ¹⁶"Go gather all the Jews who are found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf; don't eat or drink for three days, night or day. I am my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish." ¹⁷So Mordecai went away and did everything Esther had ordered him.

I want you to notice in this, they're in national crisis. Esther, at no point asks them to pray for her. Now why doesn't she ask them to pray for her? She said fast for me, don't pray. Why? If you fast and don't pray, you're dieting. OK. So the Bible doesn't say, if you diet that you get closer to God. It doesn't say if you diet that you'll hear God. That if you diet you'll understand what to pray. No, no, no. You have to fast. So fasting is you take the time that you are not eating and you focus on the Father. So fasting demands prayer, or it is simply dieting. So she doesn't ask anybody to pray for her, she basically says, "Y'all have to fast." And then they should understand what that means. We're not going to eat for three days. And so for three days we are going to pray.

Now slide over to, let me show you another reason. Slide over to 2 Samuel chapter 1. How many close friends did King David have? One. Who was it? Jonathan. So did David's parents value him? No. How do we know that? He says so in the Psalms: my parents rejected me. And remember when they came to anoint him as king, Samuel did, the dad said, "Well we've got a bunch of boys, but we've got one more left. He's out with the sheep." So they've got all this stuff lined out. So the father disses him. When David goes to and sees Goliath out there and asks the guys in the nation, "Why isn't anybody doing anything about that." His brothers bad mouthed him. So David is totally rejected by his family. The only men around him, Joab, Asahel, Asariah, the three brothers, are bloodthirsty and vicious, although they will lead most of his campaigns. He had one friend. The crown prince. That friend was incredibly deep. Because at one point, now if Saul died, who's the king? Jonathan. Jonathan looked at David one time and said, "My dad knows that when he dies, you will be king and I will be your second man." He literally gave the throne to David before his father ever died. Which is why, by the way, God took his life on Mt. Gilboa along with Saul's. Because if Jonathan isn't dead, people are going to be screaming that he should have the kingdom. So God took his life to give the kingdom as well as he could to David. So

David has one friend in his life who is willing to give up everything for him. And now he dies on Mt. Gilboa. Here's what David says when he hears it.

¹¹The David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. ¹²And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan, his son, and for the people of the Lord and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

David is extremely grieved. As a matter of fact, look in verse 25.

²⁵“How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan lies slain on Your high places. ²⁶I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant have you been to me. Your love to me was extraordinary; surpassing the love of women.

Which we'll look at when we get to the marriage section. So David fasts in his grief. Now most people who go through a deep grief process would never even dream of fasting. Because we would assume that would make it harder. I don't eat, I stay away from food, it's going to be harder to get through the grief that I'm going through. For David it was one of the key points of taking the only man that was ever his deep friend, the only man that would give everything up for him, and the loss of that was intense. And yet, in the middle of that grief, the very first thing he did was he fasted that entire day as he faced the fact that his best friend was dead.

Now slide over to the left. Look at Ezra 8:21 – 23. I love this. They're going from Persia back to Israel.

²¹I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. ²²I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way since we had told the king, “The hand of our God is for good on all who seek Him, and the power of His wrath is against all who forsake Him.” ²³So we fasted and implored our God for this, and He listened to our entreaty.

He fasts for protection inside God's call. So you have, Jesus said we're the ones that need to fast to be able to hear God. And to enhance that, you fast. To be able to know how best, obviously, to pray for those commissioned, you fast. Which would mean, by the way, those in your life that God has put in your life, if you want to know how best to pray for them, you're going to have to fast. Pray in the middle of a deep call. I fast in the middle of my grief. I fast for protection. So obviously fasting has numerous things that it does in your life. So the real key is, let's reverse this, I'm not going to ask you how many of you have fasted. But if you haven't fasted, you've ignored Jesus, your ability to hear God has got to be diminished. If it's enhanced by fasting, then it's diminished by not fasting. Your ability to pray for me correctly and the next pastor is enhanced by fasting, diminished by not. All these things, my ability to handle grief is diminished when I don't fast. So we have Jesus saying, “When I'm gone they're going to fast.” The oddity is from about the 7th century to the 20th century, no books on fasting. There's finally a couple books that come out in the 1950's. Because we don't do this do we? And yet, Jesus anticipated we would, but we don't. And so we wonder why we can't hear Him when we pray. We don't know how to pray for our friends. There are issues we face. Our prayer doesn't seem to be impacting. We

struggle in grief. All of this an impact of fasting that we don't do. So obviously if Jesus thought we would and we need to, this is damaged when we don't. It is enhanced when we do. Fasting is pivotal.

Now we're going to look at a couple more verses and then I'm want to walk through one thing. I'm not going to have time to go into one deal tonight. You do have Jesus, Moses, and Elijah doing 40 day fasts. Don't ever do that unless the Holy Spirit writes it on your wall. If He comes in and writes on your bathroom window: 40 days. OK. And you see a little dove fly off when you open the door, then you do that. If you don't see this written on your bathroom wall and you don't see a little dove fly out and hope your husband didn't think it was dove season and shot it, don't do this. Don't ask me. Don't call me. "But it's in the Bible." Don't call me. Don't do it. If you do it, though, if you decide to ignore us, I want you to make your will out to the church. OK.

Go to Matthew 6:16 – 18. We're going to see our favorite people in the New Testament; the Pharisees. These guys are beyond idiots. In fact, there's an argument made, and it's probably correct, the entire Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6, and 7, that Jesus wrote it for these guys and the Sadducees. Listen to this. Matthew 6:16 – 18.

¹⁶“When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites do, they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly I say to you, they’ve received their reward.
¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Now this was really good. Because the Pharisees fasted two days a week. Anybody know why? Market days. They fasted Tuesdays and Thursdays because they were market days. Everybody's in town so they put on the gloomy face and walk around. Here's the great thing for you in this day and age. OK. You can tell people you're fasting and nobody will believe you. I sat down with a guy at lunch one time and we were sitting there. He said, "Man, you're not eating." I said, "Well, I'm fasting." He said, "Yeah, right." I just ignored him and we went on with lunch. So you can be honest because nobody's going to believe you. You do not have to worry about this. You can tell people. I've been fasting for 40 days. They're not going to believe you. So you can just be honest. Nobody's buying it because nobody does it. So you don't have to worry. But the key point is, when you do it, now here's the deal. It's not for you to look spiritual. Now I have run into people even in this day when reading this who have tried to impress me with how often they fast.

Now go to Zechariah 7:4 – 5. So here we go. Listen to what he says.

⁴The word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, ⁵“Say to all the people of the land and the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month for these seventy years, was it for Me that you fasted? ⁶When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves?

So when I fast, it is for one thing. For God. I have one agenda. Now this is going to sound a little contradictory, but I want you to listen carefully. When I fast, now listen, all of these are

consequences if I fast correctly. The purpose of my fasting is to meet God on a deeper level. I'm not fasting so I can get over my grief. I'm not fasting so I can know whom to pray for. I'm not fasting for protection. I'm fasting to meet Him on a deeper level. And if I meet Him on a deeper level, all these things will be consequences out of my purpose in fasting. I have one purpose and that is to experience Christ on a deeper level than I do without fasting. Which He obviously said I would do. Now one of the reasons, and I'm going to say this real carefully, so I don't want you to go home, if you're taking medicine and stop taking your medicine. Do not do that. But one of the reasons we don't fast is we don't need it. I can go to the doctor, I can get a pill, I can go home, I can feel better. We don't allow the issues in our life to drive us to Him in fasting so He can then handle the issue in our life. So I want to be careful. I'm not telling you to quit taking whatever the doctor's given you. Do not do that. So your fasting is to meet Him.

Now the question is obviously how often should you fast. What does the Bible say about that? Zip. So there is no rule. Baptists love rules, just like the Pharisees. "We'll fast twice a week." No. Does the Bible say how long to fast? No. You've got 40 days, which you're not doing. You've got 3 days with Esther. There are some three day deals. So the Bible doesn't say how often. It doesn't say how long. So really, when you look at all these, it does seem like that it is circumstances that drive your fasting. Not a Biblical direction of "I've got to do it twice a week or I'm not spiritual." No. If you feel like you and the Father are on really good hearing terms and your walk is really good, you don't need to fast. When you come to a stumbling block, you're struggling a little in your relationship, then I would back up and fast. I lose someone I love; I'm going to fast. Not to conquer my grief, but to deepen myself with the Father so He can consequentially handle my grief. So I want, we're going to fast circumstantially. Now let me give you a real simply fast and then I'll open it up for questions. I stole this from somebody, I don't know who it was. The easiest fast to do and it's a good way to start, is what you do is you eat breakfast on Monday morning, skip lunch on Monday, skip supper on Monday. Pick up with breakfast on Tuesday morning. You've got a 24 hour fast. Pretty simple to operate. Isn't debilitating. You start with a 3-day fast, you're going to discover, "Oh my goodness. I shouldn't have done this." You want to start simple. And if I'm struggling in these areas, I would just do a 24-hour fast. It's real simple, real easy. Now, again, at lunch and at supper, you need to pray. Whatever time you would have spent at lunch and supper, you're praying. If you just skip supper and you're eating with your family and you're not eating, you're dieting. So we're not dieting. We're fasting. So in my fasting I'm seeking the Father in prayer with my Bible open, in prayer alone in a room without my husband, without any friends, without my children. You've got to get alone. So if you do fast, you're going to have to tell your husband, "Look, I'm fasting. I need you to take the rats tonight. And I've got to be alone." So you're going to get alone for those two times with your Bible. You're going to sit down with the Father. And, again, you're not fasting for these issues. You're fasting to find Him so that He handles these issues. If I find Him, He'll help me through my grief process. If I find Him, I'll know how to pray. So I want to find Him and that's what you're going to do. And I would start with a real simple 24-hour fast. Particularly if I'm in a circumstance that I'm struggling with today. I would start that even this week and eat a breakfast, skip a lunch, skip a supper, go back to breakfast. Now you always drink liquids. You're only giving up food. You're not giving up liquids. But it's a real simple way to start. And probably there are a lot of us in here that have something going on in our life that we don't know how to pray for. We're struggling. He said we need to so I would do it.

Questions

A. Because sometimes it's a redundancy for emphasis. Because if they don't pray, they really are just dieting for three days. So I think fasting demands prayer. But sometimes it's just a redundancy. And sometimes in Hebrew poetry, redundancy is always the key. The heavens declare the glory of God. The firmament shows His handiwork. The Hebrews were big on saying the same thing twice. And so you've got prayer and fasting. They are two distinct things, but again, you don't have to say prayer, but they do simply as a redundancy and as an emphasis.

A. No. You can only fast from something besides food if you're diabetic. If there's some issue you have physically that you can't do that. In the Bible it's always food. So when you start saying, "Well, I'll fast from golf. I'll fast from my favorite TV show." No. That's not biblical. And the reason the Bible wants you to fast from food is it's a necessity for you. And it wants you to understand what you think is a necessity really is not if you're in His presence. So, yeah, I don't think so. Unless, again, there are people physically, diabetics, where's Melody Thompson.

Melody: I have learned how to do it. I have two snacks that I do every day that I don't need. But I do them every day. When the church was fasting, I gave those two snacks up and used that time.

But you have to really be careful if you're diabetic, if you have a blood sugar issue, there are things like that. But other than that, if you don't have that kind of issue, then it's food.

A. Then they miss the point of fasting. Because you don't fast for anything. You fast to find Him. So if I'm fasting to get something, it's incorrect. Which is really what He said to the Jews. The Jews were fasting to get their homeland back and for everything to be wonderful.

Q. Is there a book or books in the Bible that you recommend for fasting?

A. No, I would recommend, I've shared before, my favorite two books are 1 and 2 Samuel. When I fast, I generally go back there. I just love the books. I ID with David and his family mess. So I go back there. I just find the book I feel most comfortable with. There are two ways I read the Scripture when I'm involved in that. One is I'll read it real fast. And sometimes I'll take a section of Scripture, Colossians 1:15 – 22, and I'll just study hard every detail. I go into the Greek. I look at the tenses. I'll look at the mood. I'll look at all the stuff. I work really hard. And sometimes that's my agenda. It just depends on what I need at the moment. Interestingly in my life, I got caught up years, when I was first called to preach, particularly in all the legalism of all the quiet time stuff. You pray for 10 minutes, you read your Bible for 10 minutes, you do this for 10 minutes, and I discovered something interesting in my own quiet life. There were days when I would pick up the Bible and I was just uncomfortable. I'd shut it down and start praying and I mean my prayer life would just go crazy. There are other times when I'd start praying and I didn't feel I was getting anywhere. I'd open the Bible and I'd read 40 chapters in just a few

minutes. So it just depends, I think, on where the Holy Spirit wants you to be on that particular point in time.

Q. So you said you fast to find Him. So if you have a situation and you go and you fast for protection on a situation is that the wrong reason for fasting? There's a situation we're really seeking God's will in this, but you don't know God's will?

A. I think you're right on the edge and that's where the struggle is. For example, I don't think, when you read this, I don't get the idea they were fasting to hear Him. I think they were fasting and all of a sudden He spoke out of the blue. And so I don't think even fasting, I want to know what God wants me to pray, even then I think what I would say is, "God, I'm going to fast. You know this need, but I'm not fasting for the need, I'm fasting to find You and You give me what I need for the need."

I still think you don't want to go into fasting even for an answer. I think you want to go into fasting only to find Him. And part of the reason is you have this verse, you don't ask, you don't get because you don't ask. But you ask to spend it on yourself. And so there are two reasons why you don't get things. It's because you don't ask or you ask for yourself. So I think, I want to be careful and I want my fasting, for me the best thing has been in my life out of Zechariah to keep my fasting, when I have a need I explain to the Father, "I'm fixing to fast. You know the need I have. I'm just coming in here to find You." And so I fast and let Him handle the need.

But even with it on my mind, even with it on my mind, that's OK. That's just not going to be my motivation. I'm just going to go in and say, "I've got this need, but Father I am just trying to find You." Which is why I'll open up the Scripture instead of praying. Because generally if that's where I'm going, I'll pray only about the need. If I read the Scripture, it will kind of pull me away from that and pull me back to Him.

A. I think it is something you feel led to do at times by the Holy Spirit. But if you look at these, it's driven by your circumstances. I don't think there's anything in the Bible about duration or time. It's not how long or how often. Neither one of those are in the Bible. So I'm driven by my circumstances. Because if I'm struggling in here, it's because I need His presence more. Which is His argument in Matthew 9.

Yeah, I think that's a circumstance. She's grieving and so she's struggling and that grief is the circumstance that will push her into a fasting. I think absolutely.

Let me tell you something. If you're fasting at a concentration camp, you're way more godlier than I am. That's all I got with that. I got nothing else there. That's way out of my spiritual domain.

A. That's part of my reasoning. We have no poverty. Oh, I think absolutely. There are a number of reasons we don't fast. And you're dead on. You know what the poverty level in this country really is? You take the poverty level any other country, our poverty level here is 31 times higher than any other poverty level in the world. We don't have poverty here. I went to a house, we made a house visit. We went into a neighborhood that the

gangs allowed no one in. And the only reason they let us in is because we were with Compassion. We went to a house, 8 people in a room where Susan Quiring is sitting, you take the room where her back is and you run it to about, we looked inside, you run it to about here, and about that width. 8 people. They have nothing. Now our people whine when they've got iPads and cell phones and you see people saying.... Ocasio Cortez the other day said, "The Millennials have never known prosperity while every Millennial sits in Starbucks ordering a \$37 coffee with phone and an iPad." "I'm struggling." They need to get their little fanny over to Honduras for a week. I'll take them there. Because we do not know poverty in the country. And I think you're dead on. I think our prosperity, the fact that we can take anything we need to alleviate our problems, we don't need to fast. And the problem is that's true for upper middle class Christianity. I read an article, as a matter of fact, it's weird you bring it up. I read an article this morning. Christianity is sweeping Iran. It's underground. It's primarily woman led. But it's sweeping Islam inside Iran. And it was interesting because there have, it said the persecution has enhanced our church because it got rid of the non-disciples and it got rid of the converts, the people that weren't serious about Christ. And so you've got this network of people that are, I guarantee you, fasting and praying and weeping and the church is blowing out. The reason our churches aren't blowing out in America is we're rich, we're this. Here it is. Hang on. Here it is. Church of Laodicea.

¹⁵I know your works, you're neither cold nor hot, whether you were either cold or hot.

¹⁶Because you're lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

¹⁷For you say, "I am rich, I have prospered, I need nothing," not realizing you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

That's us in America. Yeah, I think it is. I think prosperity is one issue. Because you go in this home, and I'll tell you how important this home was. We go in the home, every family had a little guy in Compassion. So he came out and I said, "Listen, do you have the letter from your sponsor?" He went in, pulled out the letter from his sponsor with the family's photo, happens to be Jack and Jan McReynolds. But this little guy had kept the picture of the family and the letter. He can't read it because it's in English. It's been translated for him. But he kept that. Because they are dying for relationship and mentoring and being blessed. We get a letter, what do we do? We chunk it because it has no meaning to us. It had a lot of meaning to him. And I think that does go back to what you're saying. It's our prosperity. You know the best thing you can do is take a month and get off Facebook. And start spending some time with the people face to face. I don't think fast from Facebook. I think exorcise Facebook.

Lisa McDougald reminded Chris about our meditating assignment and asked for another assignment.

New Assignment

You have two weeks, OK. You're going to meditate like we looked at on Colossians 1:15 – 20. We talked about, the last time I was in Sunday morning, the fact that the reason we have to resolve as Christians, we've forgotten who we are. Aggies don't resolve to wear maroon. They don't resolve to go to Kyle Field. They don't resolve to have their rings. Because you love being an Aggie. This is why you're a Christian. They asked me, when I took comprehensive exams, they said, "If you have one last sermon to preach, what passage would it be?" It's this passage. Maybe the greatest passage in the New Testament on who Jesus Christ is. So I want you to tell me, here's what you have to do. You have 2 weeks. I want you to write down for me on a piece of paper, with your name, 10 things that you've gleaned from this passage. So you're going to have to infer from the passage as well.

How in depth?

I just want 10 things! Bullet points! By the way, OK, this is a great question. I don't want the normal woman thing of 10 novels. OK. I don't want 10 novels. I want 10 bullet points. Think your husband. How was your day? Good. That's what I want. I want some manly statements.