

Articles and Sermons :: Fast from Judging by Francis Frangipane

Fast from Judging by Francis Frangipane - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/6/27 20:17

If you have ever gone on an extended fast, you know it can be a life changing experience. There are many types of fasts. The king of Nineveh along with the people of his nation fasted three days from food and water. God heard the sincerity in their repentance and spared their nation, making them an example of the power inherent in fasting and prayer (see Luke 11:32).

A fast can be a powerful tool to help stimulate revival or, conversely, it can degrade into a religious exercise that has almost no spiritual significance. The Pharisees fasted twice a week, but did so to be seen of men. Their fast became a thing of pride. At its essence, the purpose of a fast is to help us reach our spiritual destination faster, hence the name fast. Jesus said "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Matt. 5:6). The goal of our hunger is for righteousness to prevail, either in us personally or in our family, church, city or nation. Fasting takes us there faster.

Yet, we must not allow our fast to become a form of self-inflicted punishment. Fasting is not about "severe treatment of the body" (Col. 2:20-23). During the time you would have nourished your body, nourish your soul instead. Draw closer to the Lord. Read the Word of God, memorize Scriptures or pray for yourself and your loved ones or church.

Isaiah 58 tells us that a fast can also be a time to show God's love to others. The Lord says, "Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free and break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him . . .?" (vs. 6-7).

Therefore, when you are fasting from food, consider also ways to help the disadvantage and hurting. You might even devote your food money to a relief agency that is caring for people suffering in destitute places.

The Intercessor's Fast

Perhaps the most life changing fast is the one I urge intercessors to employ. I ask them to take a month and fast from judging. It is interesting to watch their reactions. "What will we think about?" they query. I am only saying do not let your concluding thought end judging a person, rather, let it end in a prayer for mercy.

The instinct to judge, to criticize, is a curse upon the church, and it brings death upon us as individuals. A curse? Death? Yes, every time we judge, we are simultaneously judged by God, and each time we condemn another, we ourselves are condemned (Matt. 7).

Many Christians will pray, engage in spiritual warfare and rebuke the devil, yet often the enemy they are fighting is not demonic. It is consequential. Life is being measured back to them according to their attitudes toward others. They are under judgment because they are always judging (see Matt. 7:2).

When I say "fast from judging," I do not mean we should abandon discernment. No. But judging people is not discernment. Fault-finding is not a gift of the Spirit. When we see something wrong, instead of only turning critical, we must learn to pray for mercy for that situation. We will still see what is wrong, but we are harnessing our anger and seeking to redeem what is wrong by the power of Christ's love.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (Matt. 5:7). When we resist the impulse to judge or condemn and, instead, pray for mercy, an amazing thing happens: a door of fresh mercy opens before us. You see, in every moment of every day there are two doors in front of us. One is a door that brings waves of mercy into our lives, while the other door opens to a life full of obstacles and difficulties. How do we enter the mercy door? The key to a life blessed by God's mercy is to give mercy to those around us (See Matt. 18).

There are Christians I know who have not made spiritual progress for years. They attend church, they tithe, yet they maintain a judgmental attitude. They always have something negative to say about others. As such, they position themselves under God's judgment. Their capacity to receive divine mercy is closed because they do not show mercy toward others.

James wrote: "Judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13). It is a sobering verse: judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy.

Are you pondering why your version of Christianity doesn't quite feel like the abundant life Jesus promised? (See John 10.) Perhaps it is because you are too judgmental. The good news, however, is this: mercy triumphs over judgment. If you know you are a sinner and that there are areas wrong in your life, yet you strive to be merciful, God promises He will respond to you as you have responded to others. The areas in your heart that need mercy will find healing in the life God grants to the merciful.

Beloved, ponder the next season of change in your life, perhaps it is time to embrace the mercy fast. Yes, for thirty days, see what changes occur when you fast from judging.

Re: Fast from Judging by Francis Frangipane, on: 2010/6/27 23:16

I understand what Francis Frangipane is trying to say but I think the article as a whole is very unbalanced given the many scriptures that talk about judging. I don't think it's an either/or. He seems to say "stop judging and show mercy". The New Testament shows that we are to be merciful and in many instances we are to judge. Getting unbalanced in "mercy" or "judgement" can both be wrong.

Francis says:

"When I say 'fast from judging,' I do not mean we should abandon discernment. No. But judging people is not discernment. Fault-finding is not a gift of the Spirit. When we see something wrong, instead of only turning critical, we must learn to pray for mercy for that situation. We will still see what is wrong, but we are harnessing our anger and seeking to redeem what is wrong by the power of Christ's love."

If Paul had been so merciful as to let the man sleeping with his father's wife (in the Corinthian church) to stay in fellowship then he would have been leavening the church.

1Co 5:3 For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing,

Paul certainly passed judgment on that man.

I think, instead of running to extremes, it's better to stay within the framework of scripture knowing that we are to extend mercy and know that judging does, in many instances, have its place.

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2010/6/28 6:03

I have to agree with sscott. It seems a bit confusing, and leaves me asking more questions than it gives answers.

For one thing, there is no scripture to show we are to fast from judging. Isaiah 58 tells us how to use the time in fasting from food.

One has to ask, if we can fast from judging, does it not open the door to other things we could fast from?

From unforgiveness, bitterness, hatred, jealousy, anger, etc.

Fasting in general will take care of those sins.

Also, to what level of judgement do we fast too? Outright sin such as adultery? Do we say we are fasting from judging, so after the 30 days is up, we'll deal with it?

Ephesians 5v11, 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.'

God tells us to judge with righteous judgment, John 7v24. Or, according to His word, not our own standard.

Somewhat of an unbalanced article.

Re: - posted by StarofG0D (), on: 2010/6/28 7:12

on the other hand, there is a great need for this!!!

I've heard zac poonen talk about this same thing.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.

if our judgment is merciful, then the Lord shall also be merciful to us.

We must bear the failings of others. If we constantly are looking at the failings of others, then we are apparently not seeing the failings of our own...

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2010/6/28 7:26

If we are talking about taking the plank out of our own eyes, yes.

If we are talking about overlooking sin, no.

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/6/28 7:40

Re:
by enid on 2010/6/28 4:26:02

If we are talking about taking the plank out of our own eyes, yes.

If we are talking about overlooking sin, no.

I ask this humbly, why is it so important that you not overlook someone else's sin?

Re: StarofG0D - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/6/28 7:45

I agree with Francis.

There is not Scripture to tell you WHAT to fast from is there? It just tells you to fast.

So what if someone wants to teach someone else to fast from judging? It means they are judging if they are fasting from judging!!! (huge grin) You know what 1 John 1.8 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

If you can possibly admit that you judge and you are led to fast from judging, praise God and so be it.

Amen StarofG0D!!

God bless us all as we help each other get home!!

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2010/6/28 8:00

Does scripture tell us to overlook sin?

What is discernment for?

Most churches no longer correct because people will leave. They exchange truth for numbers.

Proverbs 23v23, Buy the truth and do not sell it...'

Matt 1v21, 'And she will bring forth a Son, and you will call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.'

From their sins, not in their sins.

Have to wonder why someone who names the name of Christ would not want to depart from iniquity/sin.

But God knows.

Re: Enid - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/6/28 9:21

I've got to go to work and I didn't want to leave you hanging all day, here are some quick responses (not to argue with you) but to reason together!

by enid: Does scripture tell us to overlook sin?

Lisa: God forbid we overlook our own sin.

by enid: Most churches no longer correct because people will leave. They exchange truth for numbers.

Lisa: I agree with your second part.

by enid: Have to wonder why someone who names the name of Christ would not want to depart from iniquity/sin.

Lisa: How do you "know" they don't want to depart from iniquity/sin?

bro enid, I believe we stand at opposites end on this issue but I hope we can reason together.

I'm going to add something I put on another thread (you can probably copy the paragraph and google the link)...

I believe Christians can take this church discipline thing too far. Because I've wondered how many pastors and elders have ACTUALLY prayed "first" about kicking a particular someone out of church or if they just chose to go by the letter of the law (matt 18.19) over praying first? Just asking.

And I'm wondering if there are any men and/or women who would beg the Lord and/or pastor/elder and say, "Before you curse this fruit tree, let me hoe around it (this person), water it (this person), and see if this tree can live (bear fruit) and then in a year make a decision." Is there any who would be willing to work (lay down their life) with a person like that?? Remember James 5.20 Just asking!

God bless you, enid,
Lysa

Re: Fast from Judging by Francis Frangipane - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/6/28 9:52

Fasting from judging...sounds like an oxymoron to me...

Does it mean that after the fast you can go back to it? That is what happens when you fast. When you fast from food - which is the fast Jesus talks about, one returns to it afterwards.

If we are guilty of sin, we are to confess our sins, repent and LEAVE it, forsake it for all time.

Maybe I am too dense...

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2010/6/28 15:19

OUTSTANDING article Greg! I see this negative, critical judgment attitude all too often among Christians.

Of course this article is not talking about willful sin and dealing with it in a Biblical manner. Being judgmental, negative and critical and deal with willful sin in the church are like apples and oranges. But what happens is that in our desperate desire to justify our negative, critical and judgmental attitudes we try to blur the difference between the two.

Great article Greg - thanks for posting

Patrick

<http://www.jonahproject.com>