



# The 21-Day Daniel Fast Daily Devotional

## God bless you on your Daniel Fast . . .

If you are reading these words in January of 2008 a massive company of faithful followers of Jesus Christ are consecrating their bodies, souls and spirits unto the Lord. This is not just a few people, but some estimate that a million or more men and women are starting the 2008 New Year with prayer and fasting.

Scripture teaches us that there is great power in prayer and fasting. It isn't in the specific foods that we consume or withhold, but instead the power is in the consecration - setting apart - a period of time to seek a God.

I wrote this 21-Day Daniel Fast Daily Devotional as part of the support the Lord led me to offer His people by way of the Internet. On December 4, 2007, God inspired me to start a weblog totally devoted to the Daniel Fast. What I didn't realize was that there was a void of spiritually grounded information about the Daniel Fast available to the Body of Christ.

The result is the Daniel Fast Blog, plus I've been donned with the illustrious title of "The Daniel Fast Blogger." The site can be accessed at <http://DanielFast.wordpress.com> and there are pages and pages of information about the Daniel Fast.

Toward the end of December, I was urged to develop a devotional to help people as they walked through their 21-Day Fast. So that's what you are reading now . . . The 21-Day Daniel Fast Daily Devotional. It contains one of the most valuable lessons the Lord has ever presented to me about the Body, Soul and Spirit. I hope you too will find value in it.

Thank you for all your support by purchasing the Daniel Fast books that I've written. Your backing came at a time when I was crawling out of a deep and lonely financial hole left by the traumatic hit in the real estate economy. You served as God's hand of blessing and truly were part of wiping away the tears so the joy could in fact come in the morning! Halleluiah!

Please let me know how this devotional has helped you or thoughts that it's inspired. I truly want to produce high quality tools for God's people. That is what He has called me to do.

God bless you and I hope the very best for you as you embark on your personal 21-Day Daniel Fast.

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## Day 1 - First Fruit Offering

*The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house.*  
Ezekiel 44:30

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Today is the first day of your fast. You are consecrating yourself, setting yourself apart, for this 21-day period to focus on the Lord. You are dedicating this time at the beginning of the year as a “first fruit offering” unto God.

There are many ways to make first fruit offerings. By dedicating the first part of the New Year to prayer and fasting, you are giving the Lord your first fruit of time. In Ezekiel 44:30 we learn that the first fruit is to be the priest's. So as you give this first period of time to your High Priest, Jesus Christ, you are saying, “Lord, I put you first in my life.”

Many also give a first fruit offering of their resources, just as God instructed the Israelites to do of their produce. And the promised reward was “a blessing to rest on your house.” You will recall that Cain and Able gave offerings to the Lord. Able gave the firstborn of his flock and it pleased the Lord. But Cain's heart was not right before the Lord. Scholars conclude that his offering was not the best he had to offer, but rather leftovers. God rejected this offering.

The Lord doesn't want our leftover time or our spare efforts. He wants to be first in our lives. He wants the best of us. Throughout Scripture we learn to put God first. Exodus 20:5 says, “*You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God.*” And in Matthew 6:33 “*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*”

When we put God first in our lives, when He is the first and last Authority in all that we do, then we are pleasing to the Lord and we have access to all He has for us. Psalm 103:1, 2 says it beautifully, “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, *bles*s His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.”

Is God calling you to make adjustments in our life so that He is first in every area? This period of prayer and fasting is a perfect time to hear the Lord and how very much He desires you and your life. Open your heart to Him and seek His wisdom and council. He will show you and guide you as you draw closer to Him and His ways.

## Day 2 - You are a spirit, you have a soul, and you live in a body

*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

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The Daniel Fast is what I like to call “a whole body experience.” You are setting this time for spiritual focus. You are putting your spirit in control of your soul as you discipline it and its cravings. And you are eating healthy and wholesome foods for your body and will likely increase in health.

In the above passage from Hebrews 4:12, we see that the Word of God is able to separate our soul from our spirit. Throughout the New Testament we are called to walk in the Spirit and crucify the flesh. But putting all this into practice can seem complicated. When are we operating from the flesh? And what does it really mean to walk in the spirit?

Last October, I was on a personal spiritual retreat and the Lord showed me a very simple yet powerful tool to help me understand more fully what it is to “divide the soul from the spirit.” In Greek, the word for division is “merismos.” And my understanding of this was supported by a book by Randy Shankle titled, “Merismos.”

As I was reading this book, I wanted to get this truth about dividing the soul from the spirit deep into my consciousness. So I took a piece of paper and drew three little stick figures. One I titled Spirit, the next Soul and the third Body.

Then under each of these little figures, I wrote words that described the actions or attributes of my three “divisions.” It was my soul that harbored doubt and my spirit that held on to faith. And it was often my soul that had control of my body, especially when it came to eating and the care it received.

For today’s study, I’ve prepared on the next page a sheet where you can draw your own stick figures and write words under each of them. We’ll study this more in the coming days, but for today, ask the Lord to help you see your three divisions and how they affect your everyday life.

Please now go to the next page and complete the exercise.



## Day 3 - Make a Living Sacrifice

*“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.” Romans 12:1*

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My, those are powerful words. They're not preached on very much these days. In fact, do you know that there is more disease among Christians than in the rest of the population? That sure says something about how we are treating our bodies and that we need to adjust our behaviors.

The Daniel Fast Guidelines is a healthy eating plan. And now, we have an opportunity to truly present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto the Lord. Consider the exercise you completed yesterday, you are a spirit, you have a soul, and you live in a body. So what part of you, your spirit or your soul, is in control of your body most of the time?

I have to admit, this has been a weakness in my life. I'm not terribly over weight, although I could lose 20 pounds and be healthier. But there are many times when I give in to cravings or don't make healthy food choices. These are times when I allow my soul to have control of my body. That's when emotional eating comes into play or the old “those chips just taste so good” wins out over better food choices.

During the 21-Day Daniel Fast, we are presenting our physical bodies, along with our spirits and our souls, as living sacrifices unto the Lord. Hopefully we will gain new and healthier eating habits that continue long after the fasting period ends.

Take a few minutes right now and think about your body. Look at your hands, your arms, your legs, and your torso. Whose body is it? Have you offered it unto the Lord before? Use this occasion to dedicate your physical body to the Lord. In fact, go right now and stand in front of a mirror. Talk to the Lord and tell Him that on this day you are presenting your body as a living sacrifice to Him. Read the Scripture from Romans 12:1 out loud. Declare the Word of the Lord.

Even if you are not in the best shape, give your body to the Lord and as you dedicate yourself to Him, you will certainly see your health improve, your weight getting under control, and your energy level soar!

## Day 4 - Sanctified by Truth

*"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."* John 17:16-18

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One of the elements of fasting is "consecration." We are consecrating this time and our lives. It is different than or normal time of living. The definition of consecration is "setting apart." In the Roman Catholic Church, priests, nuns, and monks are "consecrated" for religious service. Church buildings are consecrated or dedicated for spiritual purposes, similar to the tabernacles in Jewish life.

As you read these words, literally tens of thousands of Christian men and women across North America are consecrating this time for prayer and fasting as they seek God and develop a more intimate relationship with Him.

Another word closely associated with consecration is sanctification, or to be set apart for spiritual or holy purposes.

When God led the captive Israelites out of Egypt, He said to them, *"I will take you as My people, and I will be your God."* Exodus 6:7. He called the Jews to separate themselves from others in the world and to focus their lives on Him. He gave them innumerable promises for a good life if they would put Him first and follow His ways.

In John 17:16-18 Jesus is praying to the Father asking that we be sanctified, set aside for a holy purpose. And how will we be sanctified? By the truth that is in the Word of God.

As you continue on your fast, think about ways the Lord is calling you to be a separate people. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you areas that could be realigned in order to be consistent with God's Word.

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## Day 5 - Alive in the Spirit

*“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” John 3:6*

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Jesus teaches us that we are to live a different life; a life unto God. When we accepted Christ into our hearts, we were born again . . . born of the Spirit.

Go back and look again at your drawing on page 5. Your spirit is new in Christ Jesus. He redeemed you and made it possible for you to live a separate life. Because of your new birth, you are in this world, but not of this world.

Meanwhile, your soul and your body have not yet been made perfectly new. That will happen. We are promised a new body when we live in glory with the Lord. But for now, when we were born again, we brought along some baggage: our soul and our body!

There are times when our soul is like a little child and our spirit must serve the parental role and tell it what to do. Perhaps you are experiencing some of that as you fast. Your soul really wants to eat something not included on the fast. But your spirit is taking control, crucifying the flesh, and continuing on with the fasting discipline.

There are other times when our soul might get out of hand. After all, it was trained by the world's way of doing things! When you feel jealousy, anger, resentment or unbelief, those are all coming from our soul.

But we are a separate people and our spirit is in control. We live by the Word of God and that's how God sanctifies us and makes us holy for His purposes.

Your soul is where your emotions, feelings, intellect and personality sit. But your spirit is led by God and His Spirit. A Spirit-led life is one that adheres to the truth as set out in Scripture. Our spirit is over our flesh (our soul) and that's how we stay in faith and live a life pleasing to the Father.

## Day 6 - Choose Life

*"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live." Deuteronomy 30:19*

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Do you know there is a best way to live? Our Creator not only designed us and everything in this world. But He also designed a way to operate so that we can live in victory and success! It's not a complicated equation, either. We just need to consistently choose LIFE! The God kind of life that brings goodness, health, abundance, and joy!

Choosing life is also living by the Spirit. Again, when we decide to live according to the Word of God, we are walking in the Spirit and living by faith.

Take a few minutes and consider the differences between life and death:

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I know these lists can go much longer, but this gives you an idea as to how you want to live. Every day we have the choice between life and death. When someone does us wrong, we can either lash out or handle the situation in a godly manner. We can gossip or we can hold our tongues. We can get in strife or we can choose to stay calm. We can worry or we can have faith.

This is choosing the spirit-led life and it's the way to happiness, peace, and joy that only the Lord can give us.

## Day 7 - The Kingdom of God

*“Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3*

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The kingdom of God is a separate place. It's available only to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as our Savior.

In this passage from John 3:3, Jesus explains that unless you are born again, you can't even see the kingdom of God. But where is the kingdom of God? Is it heaven? Do we have to wait until we pass from this world until we can see it?

Jesus answers these questions in Luke 17:20, 21 – *“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”*

Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom of God isn't a place, but rather a reality within us - a belief system or a way of thinking. It is different from the way the world thinks and can only be accessed through our faith in Christ and our belief in another realm.

When we shape our lives around God and His way of doing things, we live according to kingdom principles and kingdom laws. All those laws are clearly recorded in the Word of God and it's living by the Word that we have access to the good life God wants for us.

When Joshua was concerned about his ability to take over where Moses left off, God gave him simple instructions: *“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” Joshua 1:8*

As a people consecrated under God, living a Spirit-led life, we are members of a different kingdom, the kingdom of God. And we have different laws and standards by which we live. Those standards are all available to us in God's Word and with it we are promised prosperity and good success!

## Day 8 - Walk According to the Spirit

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” Romans 8:1*

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Oh my! Such a glorious truth. We are free from all condemnation because of Jesus! No matter what may be in our past, we are free of all guilt and shame! As we choose to live our lives within the guidelines as detailed in Scripture, we can be free from all disapproval. That is good news!

We walk according to the Spirit when we recognize our own make up. We are a spirit that has been born again and made new by the blood of Jesus. We have a soul that has been trained to live according to the world's standards, but it's in submission to our spirit. And we live in a body that is either under the authority of our soul or our spirit . . . preferably the latter!

But we must daily decide what part of us is going to lead. Will it be a spirit-led day or a flesh-led day? It's a continual choosing that we must do.

After the Daniel Fast Blog was up and running, it received a fair amount of traffic and started getting good rankings on the search engines. That's a key for getting people to your site and it's a complex process to get a high ranking.

One day I realized that a couple sites that refer searchers to the Daniel Fast were not producing. So I clicked over and found someone who had changed the link so the traffic would go to their site instead. That' sparked all kinds of fleshly response in me! But I had to step back and carefully consider how to handle the situation in a way that would please the Lord. I wanted to stay in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

Finally, I decided to switch the sites back to their original state and then I asked a friend to agree with me in prayer that this person would do the right thing. It all worked out in the end and strife was abated.

Is God calling you to examine your choices? Is He calling you to a higher place in Him? This is a perfect opportunity to repent (change and live another way) and choose the way of the Spirit over the way of the flesh.

## Day 9 - Set Your Mind for Good Things

*“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” Romans 8:5*

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Do you ever have a bad day? You know the kind. You’re giving it your all, but for some reason you just can’t shake the worry you feel or the resentment that keeps sticking around.

The truth is, these are times when our flesh is reigning and we need to pump up our spirit so it can take its rightful authority and position. I know that’s a lot easier said than done, but I wanted to give you some practical tips to help you negotiate through these stretching times.

But first let me share a little personal testimony. The year 2007 was one of the most stretching of my entire life. Due to some business shortfalls in the changing real estate market, I found myself without an income and thousands of dollars of monthly payments! There was no immediate ‘worldly’ solution. I had made a commitment to the Lord not to borrow any money and work toward debt-free living.

First off, I have to tell you, I really did experience a peace that passes all understanding. According to the world’s standards I should have been climbing the walls with worry. But every time I felt worry and fear coming on, I would turn my attention to the Lord. I would pray, read the Word, worship Him, and listen to Bible preachers or my audio Bible CDs. I would do whatever I needed to do to get the worry out of my mind.

Instead, I looked to the promises in His Word and I did my best to keep my mind and heart open to His leading. Over and over again the Lord ministered to me! He kept telling me to hang on and trust Him. And then He started giving me writing assignments! Yes, He started showing me things to write about. I had been a Christian writer for many years and through various circumstances had gotten away from it and into real estate investing.

Well, it was clear that the Lord wanted me back into writing because the doors in real estate started slamming shut at record speed! Thankfully, I had learned that in times of trouble to find refuge in the Secret Place of the Most High. I ran to the Lord and took protection in Him and He is so very faithful! He is leading me out of the darkness into His light and through it all given me my appointment and several “assignments.”

It has been a fight for faith. But I had to keep choosing to think with my spirit-man and not my flesh-man. This is walking in faith - according to the Word of God! It’s not always an easy walk, but it is fulfilling and the rewards are superior.

## Day 10 - All Over Love

*“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment.” Matthew 22:37*

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When we’re on the Daniel Fast, we truly are submitting every part of us to the Lord. I hope you are spending daily time with the Lord in prayer. I hope you are reigning in the things of the soul that need correction and submission. And I hope you are experiencing a new vitality and improved health as you eat a better diet and eliminate harmful foods from your daily consumption.

This period of Fasting is a perfect time to develop new habits for daily prayer and Bible study. You also have opportunities to take authority over the flesh and learn how you can have your spirit dominate your life and your choices. And of course, this is also an occasion to develop better eating habits and more healthful consumption.

Best of all, this is a set aside time to fall more deeply in love with the Lord and allow His love to flow more freely into your life.

Your Father loves you with a deep and abiding love. He wants to be in intimate relationship with you and commune with you always. It took me a while to really believe that the Lord loved me. When I searched my heart, I found feelings of unworthiness that I had harbored there for many years.

Finally, I spent many weeks meditating and praying and spending more time with the Lord. Then an amazing thing started to happen. The Lord started ministering to me! At least I started noticing it! I would talk to Him about something and within hours He would bless me with the very thing I had talked with Him about. Over time, I accepted His love and now I am sure of it.

Do you believe the Lord loves you? A deep and abiding love that is limitless and true? If not, ask the Holy Spirit to help you experience the precious love of God. It may take a while for you to sense it, but keep praying and opening your heart to Him. He is not withholding! But sometimes we have a hard time accepting! That was my problem. But I accept His love now and I can rest in Him and His peace.

## Day 11 - It Wasn't About the Money!

*“And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” Matthew 19:24*

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This is a verse that seems to trip up a lot of Christians . . . and it certainly fuels the argument that to be a good follower of Christ one should be poor or at best middle class.

The “eye of a needle” was likely a reference to a gate in the wall surrounding the city of Jerusalem called “Needle’s Eye.” It was so low that a camel would have to be unloaded of all that it carried and then get down on its knees to get through to the other side. So the passage was very difficult.

But it isn’t the money that keeps a rich man from entering the kingdom of God! Rather, it is where the rich man places his dependence. Jesus is saying that people with money often rely on their wealth to solve all their problems. They don’t sense a need for God or His way of living.

We see the same thing today. People are so focused on making and spending money, that they don’t even consider God! Their self-worth isn’t measured by their character or their relationship with the Father, but rather their position, their possessions, and the people they know.

The priorities of the “world” are easily observed by just flipping through a magazine, clicking on Yahoo pages, or channel surfing on television. The absence of God is very apparent!

Sadly, these values seem to be alive and thriving in the church! Too often we look to the world’s system for directions and ways of living. Consequently, God’s plan for our lives goes untapped and unmet.

But we have a choice. We can examine our hearts and present them to the Holy Spirit who will show us where we need to change. We can make Christ the Lord of our finances and the Overseer of our spending.

Open your heart to the Lord today in the area of your finances. Is the Lord your Source? Is He your Provider? Examine yourself and ask the Holy Spirit to help you draw even closer to the Lord by submitting this area of your life to Him so that you can fully partake of the Kingdom of God.

## Day 12 - Living Water

*"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."* John 7:37

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Water is a primary element in the Daniel Fast. It is the only beverage we consume (apart from pure vegetable and fruit juice). Even when we aren't fasting, the human body depends on safe water for life.

In this passage, Jesus teaches us about a different kind of water – living water from the Holy Spirit. He tells us to come to Him when we are thirsty and drink from Him.

Over this last year, which has been one of great trial and pressure, I have learned a powerful lesson about turning to Jesus to drink from His living water. It actually was Dr. Phil McGraw who helped me learn this lesson. Let me explain:

Dr. Phil teaches married couples that when they are going through hard times, they should not turn away from each other or go outside the marriage for comfort or solutions. But rather, they should turn to each other and work out their problems and face their challenges together.

This advice resonated in my soul when I felt so burdened by life's pressures that I could almost feel my knees buckle. Instead of turning to the world for solutions or getting stuck in fear and doubt, I turned to my High Priest! I cried out to Him and asked for His advice, His comfort, and His peace.

Oh, our Lord is so faithful. He hears our cries and comforts us. He ministered to me in dynamic and life-giving ways through God's Word, Christian teachers, prayer and meditation and friends. He led me out of the dark place and showed me solutions I never would have thought of on my own.

I drank from the living water Jesus serves so generously. And then, as I was restored, I was able to offer living water to others – just as He said, ". . . out of his (her) heart will flow rivers of living water."

As you proceed through the Daniel Fast, consider the source of the water you take into your heart. Is it the living water of Jesus or the contaminated water from the world? Choose life! It is safe, sweet, and truly quenches your thirst.

## Day 13 - From Provision to Assignment

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." Luke 5:1-11

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I know this is a long portion of Scripture for a daily devotional, but I had to include it because this is very much my story, too. Let me explain:

As I've mentioned before, 2007 was one of the most difficult of my life. After many years as a real estate investor, the market in my area changed (as it has in just about all areas of the country) and I was left with no income and thousands of dollars of bills to pay every month! This situation ate up every dollar of my available recourses and I was in a very dark place.

But God . . . He taught me to rely on Him as my only Source and to press into His Word like I had never done before. While I can't say there weren't many tearful nights and some wringing of hands, for the most part, I was able to find peace and refuge in the Secret Place of the Almighty One.

One day, I can see it as I write these words, the Lord directed me to get back into Christian writing, which I had not done for more than a decade. He started "downloading" ideas into my heart that I know were from Him and not my own creativity. Slow but sure, I was earning money again and able to see some light at the end of what had been a very dark tunnel.

He did for me what He did for Simon Peter – Jesus showed Peter that He could be his sole Provider . . . and then He gave him the appointment, ". . . from now on you will catch men."

The Lord uprooted me from where I had been and transplanted me to where He wanted me to be. It is my place of joy because I love to study His Word and I love to write! God is so faithful and even when we can't see the end, if we trust in Him we can get through in victory!

## Day 14 - Not by Bread Alone

*“Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ But He answered and said, ‘It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”* Matthew 4:3, 4

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Wow! You are now two weeks into your Daniel Fast. You are likely over the big hunger pangs and cravings. But bread is still out of your diet and perhaps this passage of Scripture is even more meaningful to you.

One of the benefits of the Daniel Fast is that we become more aware of what we are eating. Hopefully this awareness will create healthy habits that will improve your health for months and years to come.

We can also become more aware of what we feed our spirits and our souls. Are they well nourished? Are we feeding them wholesome food and not contaminated goods?

Jesus teaches us that we don't live only by physical bread, but even more importantly the spiritual food found in God's Word. Just as our physical body needs to be nourished each and every day, so does our spirit. The mainstay of that nutrition is the Bible and then we can have "side dishes" from Christian books, sermons, Bible studies, and Christian television. But we need to make sure we have time every day in God's Holy Word so He can speak to us and minister to us.

Likewise, we need to make sure we are feeding our soul, or our flesh, a healthy diet that brings life and not death. Our Father tells us that we have a choice between life and death and He says, "Choose life!" That includes the kinds of information that enters our minds through the media, Internet, television, books, conversations and other influences we encounter.

Do you have some "inputs" that may not be giving you the best food for your soul? Are the programs you watch on television healthy and pure? Or are they contaminated and laced with toxic information. How about the Internet? The radio? The books you read? Or the conversations you have with friends?

Just as we need to guard our bodies and make wise choices about what we eat, we must also guard our eyes and our ears as to what is allowed to enter our souls.

The more you feed your spirit with the Word of God, the better you will find that you care for your soul and your body. Make sure your spirit is well-fed then carefully choose the food you present to your soul and your body.

## Day 15 - Be Doers and Not Hearers Only

*“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” James 1:22*

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I have studied the Bible for more than 30 years. Yet, even now I feel like a neophyte when I consider all the truths that the Word of God embodies. I can spend hours in Scripture every day and it's a blessing to write about spiritual things that God's people will read and hopefully impact their lives.

With all that said, only over the last many years – and especially the last year – have I really pressed into the Word so that it would become active in my life. That isn't to say that I lived a double life. But rather, I had never before been in such a position so that God was my only help in time of trouble.

While the journey was hard, I praise God for the lessons I've learned and the experiences I've had. The circumstances I faced required that I be a “doer” of the word and not a “hearer” only.

Prayer became absolutely necessary for my daily survival. I wrote down my specific needs, found verses that issued God's promises or instruction and then I prayed and thanked God for His provision.

Standing on God's Word and resisting the enemy was essential. As the days would pass my faith and patience became companions. I kept the Scriptures in front of me, posted in several places in my home, and available so they could feed my spirit and soul at every turn.

Speaking to the mountains and rebuking the enemy was critical. As funny as I may have looked, I was determined to do exactly what Jesus told me to do. He spoke to the fig tree and He taught us to speak to the mountains of trouble in our life. I read Bible verses aloud and declared the promises of God.

My very survival in this trial period required that I lift those words from the pages of the Bible and put them into flesh and blood practice. No longer could they rest in the catalog of my mind. Instead, I was forced to activate those words and wield the sword of the Spirit and don the helmet of salvation.

You know what? It worked! Just like God promises! Do you have trials? Are there areas of your faith walk where the Word is still just sitting idle in your mind but not activated by your actions? I say, “Go for it!” Because of Christ we have power and authority, but we must activate it before it will work. Be a doer and not a hearer only! Then get ready for great results!

## Day 16 - Be Rooted and Built Up in Christ

*“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 3:6, 7*

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I think we all can agree, these are turbulent times we’re living in. Whether we look at the economy, the crime rate, societal issues, politics, world affairs, or the pressures we face day to day. By the world’s standards these are very shaky, unstable days.

That’s why this word from the Apostle Paul is so right on for us today. To find our stability, we must be rooted and established in Christ and His Ways.

And when we come up against pressures, concerns or trials, He is there to build us up and keep us strong.

How do we get rooted and built up in Christ? It’s by bringing Him into number one position in every part of our lives. That includes our marriages, parenting, friendships, careers, work, finances, entertainment, volunteerism, study, and plans for our future.

“Lord, what do You have to say about this,” should be constant on our tongue. Seeking God’s wisdom in His Word should be a normal practice for us. And when we still don’t know what to do, we need to get some godly counsel from respected and mature Christians like our pastor or good friends.

Rooted means going deep! Investing the time and energy into getting to know God and His Ways. Devoting time with Him so we can have an intimate relationship with Him. And the deeper those roots can dig down, the more stable we can be. We can stand against the trials and tribulations. We won’t be knocked off center when storms enter our lives. We know what to do and where to go.

How can you become more rooted in Christ? What are three things you can do to increase your knowledge of Him and His Ways? Take a few minutes and make some plans to grow in Christ so that when times of trouble come, you will be ready!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Day 17 - Foundation on the Rock

*“Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:47-49*

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This teaching from Jesus tells us of two men who seem to be in similar life situations, but they prepare for them differently . . . and that dramatically impacts their future.

The first man built a house and he “dug deep” and laid a foundation on the rock of Jesus’ teachings or the Word of God.

The second man had the same access to the rock, but chose not to access it. Instead he built his house, or his future, on the bare ground.

Both men experienced storms in their lives. Jesus told us that in the world there would be tribulation (storms). But that we don’t need to worry because He has overcome the world. The man who built His house – his life and future – by the Word God weathered the storm.

The other man was hit by the same storm, but suffered great ruin

We see here that both men had access to the same “building materials.” That means they both heard the teachings of Christ, but one put them into practice and dug deep into God’s Word. The other heard the words, but did nothing with them

This is an important lesson for us. It’s so easy when life is good, when we’re in our “cushy” state, to listen to God’s word, to attend church, and we might even teach Sunday School – but we don’t apply the Word to our lives. We don’t use the teachings of Christ as the building blocks for our future.

What about you? Can you see yourself in this teaching from Jesus? Have you dug deep and built a firm foundation on the Rock of the unshakable Word of God?

This is a great opportunity to repent (change) and make some quality decisions about grounding yourself in God’s Word and inviting the Lord into every area of your life. He said we will have storms. But He also provides a way for us to prepare and get through the storms. The choice is ours . . . we only need to make the quality decision to walk in the Way of the Lord.

## Day 18 - Abide in the Secret Place

*“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.””* Psalm 91:1, 2

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Psalm 91 is one of my favorite Scriptures. Our mighty and all powerful Father gives us so many promises in these verses and they have many a time been of great comfort to me.

Several years ago, I started rising very early in the morning, before anyone else in the house was awake. I made myself a cup of coffee and then nestled into a corner of the couch with my hot java and the Living Word.

This served as a precious time and I called it “my secret place.” This is where I first started to really commune with the Lord in a very intimate way. It’s where I learned to listen to Him and wait on Him as I learned to be still before Him.

The Secret Place is God’s reality. It’s not the reality of the world, but a place of peace, protection, power and love. The Lord calls us to dwell in His place and count on Him for everything in our lives.

When we do this, the rewards are great. He protects us and guides us. He sends His angels out to care for us and guard us from harm. He surrounds us with His power and might so that nothing can harm us.

But we must dwell in this place. It must be our home and our presence. Coming to live in the Secret Place isn’t a quick move. To make God’s presence our home, we must diligently seek Him and invest our time and energy in meeting with the Lord in prayer and studying His Word. The Secret Place of God must be a destination we desire and that we purpose ourselves to reside there.

As you enter a New Year, will you live in the same place as you did in 2007? Perhaps you already live in the Secret Place of the Most High and you know the benefits of this address. But maybe you are like most and can go deeper and more completely in your state of abiding with the Lord.

Make Jesus your number one in everything you do. Meet Him every day and several times a day. Talk with Him. Walk with Him. And bring your every issue to Him. That’s the life He wants with us. Make a move “up town” to the Higher Place and call the Secret Place of the Almighty your permanent home.

## Day 19 - And the Word Became Flesh . . .

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14*

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Take a few moments and meditate on that Scripture - “And the Word became flesh . . .”

I believe God is revealing to His church the importance of words. He is uprooting erroneous teaching and bringing back into our awareness the power of words.

Here, in this Scripture we learn that the Word became flesh. As long as we try to understand this with our flesh, we will never understand it nor will we have access to the amazing power of the Word of God or of the words we are to speak.

John 1:14 also says the Word that became flesh was “full of grace and truth.” Oh, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, could we not rest in these words for hours and still not gain the full impact of the grace and truth to which we have access?

My sincere hope is that each one of us has been able to tap into the amazing grace and truth of Christ during our Daniel Fast. By now we may be able to look back over the last couple weeks and see the goodness of God in tangible ways . . . or we look into the future with such expectancy that even the unseen promises of God are so convincing that we understand “the substance of things hoped for” in a more profound way than ever before.

I also hope that we each are gaining an understanding of the power of each and every syllable that escapes our mouth. In Mark 11:22-24 Jesus teaches us about the power of what we say.

So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever **says** to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he **says** will be done, he will have whatever he **says**. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you **ask** when you **pray**, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.”

The Word that became flesh is teaching us about the power of the words we use! This is not a philosophy or an interpretation. It’s a HOW TO from the One who came to us full of grace and truth!

Today, think about the words you say . . . what kinds of words are you saying to the mountains in your life? Are you speaking the Word of God over them . . . or are you speaking words of fear and unbelief?

## Day 20 - Take Every Thought Captive

*“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,” 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5*

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Throughout the Daniel Fast, I hope you have become more aware of who you are:

- ❖ You are a spirit.
- ❖ You have a soul.
- ❖ You live in a body.

In the passage above, we are reminded that our weapons and the war we fight are not of the flesh or in the physical world. Instead, they are of the Spirit and in the spiritual realm. The Word of God points us to the Kingdom of God -- a reality that surrounds us and that is in us! It's a totally new way of thinking and different than how our carnal, fleshly mind thinks.

So as we work to change our flesh and our minds into Kingdom living, we must align every thought with the Word of God. Over and over again every day, we should ask ourselves, “What does God have to say about this?”

Every thought that is contrary to God's Way must be “taken captive” and then changed so that it aligns with the Word of God. It is then these beliefs that we will use as our “activation” points.

When a fearful thought comes into our minds . . . we take that lie, turn to the Word, find the promise, and then declare the truth.

When the enemy tells us we're no good or defeated . . . we take that lie, turn to the Word, find the promise, and then declare the truth.

When all the circumstances around us scream defeat and failure . . . we take that lie, turn to the Word, find the promise, and then declare the truth.

Taking every thought captive is a discipline. We must guard our hearts and minds. We must be alert to every notion that enters our way of thinking and then measure it with God's Word which wins the contest every time!

## Day 21 - Let the God of Peace Sanctify You Always

*“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 5:23*

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Glory to God! You have reached the last day of your 21-Day Daniel Fast. I hope you know God better, know yourself better, and know better what God has for you in the future.

While we have consecrated ourselves for these 21 days, the Scripture above says that the God of Peace (Jesus the Prince of Peace) can sanctify us completely. That means He can set us apart, make us holy and preserve us as blameless for the glory of God.

Completing the Daniel Fast is a wonderful accomplishment, but it doesn't mean that we will return to our "former ways." Instead, we have a superb opportunity to incorporate the lessons we've learned, the truths we've embraced, and even the corrections we've received to be better, stronger, and healthier.

Take some time and consider what you have learned about God, yourself and your future. How will you incorporate these ways into your forever life . . . into your spiritual life . . . and move toward a more perfect (mature) life in the Lord?

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Now that we are at the end of this journey together, I say, "Shalom." That means "nothing missing, nothing broken." That's where we want to be - living the good life our Lord has given us as we rest in Him, His Word and His Ways!