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Weekly Encourager – 7 March 2010

(from James Stacey: scriptural advice and insight on how to be set free from schizophrenia)

HOW FASTING ADDED TO PRAYER AIDS THE BREAKTHROUGH TO FREEDOM OF SCHIZOPHRENIA

THIS WEEK'S SELECTED BIBLE READING IS MATTHEW CHAPTER 9

Key Verses:14-17 Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast. No-one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, making the tear worse. Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

Fasting is a higher level of intensity of prayer which many Christians who do not suffer from schizophrenia may never or seldom carry out. So what hope is there of a believer in Jesus with the deepest psychotic disorder of all venturing into this spiritual discipline? Every hope - though it may be a long time in coming – if you have reached the place of desperation in God in your daily fight to become free allowing the Holy Spirit to teach you about prayer and pray through you.

As more light and revelation is received from the Holy Spirit leading you into all truth, more power is given to challenge the darkness of the demonic condition of schizophrenia. This is in spite of prayer being an uphill battle in your struggle to reach the freedom in Jesus. You have a spiritual fight on maintaining your sanity.

Even though you may be unable to fast at the moment that is not to say that it will be always out of your reach. In response to moving into a living, active and conscious faith in Jesus, you are already qualified to ask, seek and knock at Heaven's door. If ever fasting was added to your prayer life, it would release a power supply of God's spirit your way which would accelerate your freedom out of schizophrenia.

Notice, there is a School of Prayer. Ruth Graham, the late wife of Billy Graham, used to say: "There is no way to learn to pray but to pray." How true!! And there is no way to advance in the school of prayer but by praying. The more you move into God's presence and meet with him, the more you grow in the ways of prayer. It's a lifetime pursuit.

I came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour at the age of 14 and entered God's School of Prayer then. By the age of 24 when schizophrenia dawned, I was used to praying, and stirred about what God could do through prayer at the time of attending Bible College. My whole survival rested on Jesus alone and what He had taught me in the realm of maintaining my spiritual life – even though assailed by mental demonic foes. I had already had opportunity to "learn Christ" and this stood me in good stead.

But for you it may be different. You may have only known Jesus as Lord for a very short time before schizophrenia invaded your life. Or you may have crowned Jesus as Lord after that devastating event. In both instances, there has not been much time to grow and advance in God's School of Prayer – never mind about discovering the power of fasting.

Never feel guilty that you are unable to fast. As God will guide you how to pray and develop your prayer life in him, so He will also show when it is the right time to fast. It took well over 23 years before I began to seriously add fasting to prayer in my pursuit of freedom. It was only at the point of knowing a surge of great confidence that my freedom was in sight, that I increased the intensity of prayer ...and hid away to fast, too.

I well remember a time when Tina, my wife, who was helping me into freedom, suggested not to go on a fast. She wrote to me a matter of weeks before God enabled me to cast out a nest of evil spirits in my life, and then healed me miraculously: "Although, you're feeling tired and even bombarded in your mind at present, in a way it's a good sign. The devil knows you are onto something great. However, it's not God's will for you to become sapped of energy and worn out even before going to Ellel (for help). So we have to defeat Satan's tactics and strategy in trying to wear you out in order to stop you receiving ministry.

"Well James, you are on the winning side. Satan is a defeated foe and he has no right to harass you like this. During these last few days, I've felt quite oppressed and worn out but tonight I feel much better. I'm waging war and taking authority over the powers of darkness trying to destroy you.... Don't fast and pray on your own at present. Please don't, no matter how tempted you are to do that. Of course, there is a time to fast and pray but not for you at the moment. If you feel an urgency or desperation to spend excessive time in prayer then just PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE (exerting your will in PRAISE)) and you will find the agitation or whatever will pass. The devil hates PRAISE." (see Homepage and "Read Three Extracts from Book, Schizophrenia Defeated Chapter 9).

Take heart, my Christian friend, as you take hold of God and His freedom for you life!!

We are continuing to insert at the bottom of the Weekly Encourager, some powerful scriptures for you to learn and commit to memory and USE in your prayer battle against the demon of schizophrenia. By so doing your confidence in the Lord will grow because the words will impart "spirit and life" into your Spirit, and so equip you in your pursuit of the freedom of Jesus.

(Jesus said) "But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house." Matthew 12 28-29

(Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say) "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death". Revelation 12:11

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6 19-20

The Weekly Encourager: 14th March: How to Resist and Defeat The Destructive Voices of Schizophrenia

You too can know the help and strength that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. If you have already received him, then keep in touch with him every day through regular prayer and bible study. By so doing, you will begin to discern his voice a lot clearer, and as sharing your life with Christ grows there will come inner and silent strength to overcome every other voice that may trouble you.

If you have never received Jesus Christ into your life, then why not do it RIGHT NOW, as we guide you in a prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ I approach you knowing I am separated from you by sin. I know I have also sinned in my thoughts, words and actions. There are so many good things I have not done and there are so many sinful things I have done. I believe that you died on the Cross in my place that I might be brought back to God the Father and know forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. I now ask you to come into my life and cancel out the sin that separates from you. Come in and cleanse me through the power of your blood. Come in as my Lord to control me. Come with the strength of your grace and the power of your Holy Spirit to defeat the evil of schizophrenia which troubles me and bring me right through into the glorious freedom of your kingdom. I ask this, giving you thanks, in your Name. Amen

You may be reading the Weekly Encourager for the very first time; or perhaps you've stumbled across our website in a desperate search to break free of schizophrenia which has just dawned on your life; or maybe you've been looking at W.E. every week for encouragement to help you overcome this "monster" of mental illnesses and have already gained HOPE that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One to open the prison door to freedom in your life once and for all.

We encourage you to keep logging into the site as often as you can for scriptural advice and help as we continue to point to the One who is well-tried and tested in the area of setting captives free from a bondage that no one else can conquer. Our website www.schizophreniadefeated.com seeks to magnify the dear Son of God who left the courts of heaven to come to our world to die for you and me on the Cross at a place called Calvary just outside Jerusalem 2,000 years. In that great sacrifice, He paid the punishment and penalty of your sin and mine by dying for us and on the third day rose from the dead as "The Resurrection and the Life". He released the power of the Holy Spirit into the life of every believer accepting his sacrifice. A life-transforming experience that you too can know!!

James Stacey
Pray Until Schizophrenia Heals

"I will proclaim your mighty acts,
O sovereign Lord" Psalm 71: 16

