

# Fasting, Purity, and Simplicity



## Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. For the Spirit to re-create in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 91

## THE ONE THING

Flight 401 was bound for Miami from New York City with a load of passengers. As the huge aircraft approached the Miami airport for its landing, a light that indicated proper deployment of the landing gear failed to come on. The plane flew in a large, looping circle over the swamps of the Everglades while the cockpit crew checked out the light failure. Their question was this: “Had the landing gear actually not deployed, or was it just the lightbulb that was defective?”

To begin with, the engineer fiddled with the bulb. He tried to remove it, but it wouldn’t budge. Another member of the crew became curious and tried to help him, and then another. By and by, if you can believe it, all eyes were on the little lightbulb that refused to be dislodged from its socket. No one noticed that the plane was losing altitude. Finally it flew right into the swamp. Many were killed in that plane crash. While an experienced crew of high-priced and seasoned pilots messed around with a 75-cent lightbulb, an entire plane and many of its passengers were lost. The crew momentarily forgot the most basic of all rules in the air: “Don’t forget to fly the airplane.”

There are so many things to think about in our Christian experience. But let us never lose sight of the basics—our relationship with the Lord.

—Adapted from Henry Feyereabend, “Flight 401,” *Slices of Life* (Oshawa, Ont.: It Is Written, 1995), pp. 41, 42.

## Sunday RESPONDING

- » Kelly loves to read, and she sometimes loses track of time. In many ways it is a way for her to escape. Her mother noticed that her time spent reading was increasing and commented, “Kelly, you have been reading a lot lately. Why don’t you try taking a break and doing something different?”
- » Kelly stiffened and replied, “Maybe later.” But she did think about how much time she was spending on her hobby and how little time she spent with God. Still, her books were more enjoyable than “quiet time with God.” That hadn’t been true in her life before, and she wondered how she might return to a more meaningful relationship with God.
- » If she came to you about “getting focused,” how would you encourage her to fast and focus her life in a way that would honor God and would bring joy to her and others?

## Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; Philippians 2:4; Titus 2:11-13; 1 John 2:6.
- » When we include Jesus in everything we think, say, and do, our lives will be changed. If we are true followers of Jesus, we will allow His transforming influence to be reflected in all aspects of life. Then it will be a joy for us to engage in those activities that promote our overall health and well-being physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

### Fill in the blanks: Texts are from the New King James Version.

1. “But you, when you \_\_\_\_\_, anoint your head and \_\_\_\_\_ your face, so that you \_\_\_\_\_ to men to be \_\_\_\_\_, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father \_\_\_\_\_ will reward you openly” (Matthew 6:17, 18).
2. “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Those who are \_\_\_\_\_ have no need of a \_\_\_\_\_, but those who are \_\_\_\_\_. I have not come to call the \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_, to repentance.’ Then they said to Him, ‘Why do the disciples of John \_\_\_\_\_ often and \_\_\_\_\_, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?’ And He said to them, ‘Can you make the friends of the bridegroom \_\_\_\_\_ while the \_\_\_\_\_ is with them?’” (Luke 5:31-34).
3. “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?” (Isaiah 58:6, 7).
4. “‘Please \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_, and let them give us \_\_\_\_\_ to eat and \_\_\_\_\_ to drink. Then let our \_\_\_\_\_ be examined before you, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the young men who \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of the king’s \_\_\_\_\_; and as you see fit, so deal with your \_\_\_\_\_.’ So he \_\_\_\_\_ with them in this matter, and \_\_\_\_\_ them ten days. And at the end of ten days their \_\_\_\_\_ appeared \_\_\_\_\_ and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s \_\_\_\_\_. Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them \_\_\_\_\_” (Daniel 1:12-16).
5. “Then Daniel said to the king, ‘O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found \_\_\_\_\_; and also, O king, I have done \_\_\_\_\_ before you.’ Now the king was \_\_\_\_\_ for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because \_\_\_\_\_” (Daniel 6:21-23).
6. What examples do you find in these Bible passages that describe Christian behavior?  
\_\_\_\_\_



Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » “Singleness of purpose, wholehearted devotion to God is the condition pointed out by the Savior’s words. Let the purpose be sincere and unwavering to discern the truth and to obey it at whatever cost, and you will receive divine enlightenment. Real piety begins when all compromise with sin is at an end. Then the language of the heart will be that of the apostle Paul: ‘This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.’ ‘I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ’ (Philippians 3:13, 14, 8)” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 91).
- » Fasting is about clearing the clutter from your spiritual life. Fast from TV if it gets in the way of your walk with God. Take a day or two away from the Internet if you spend more time chatting than you do in conversation with the Savior. Take a break from sports or shopping or junk food. Find something that is getting in the way—even if it is a good thing—and abstain from it while putting your focus on Christ. Most of all, fasting is about our hearts being bent on seeking the “one thing.”

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

Match the phrase with the text. Texts are from New King James Version.

1. “ \_\_\_\_\_, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).
2. “ \_\_\_\_\_ . Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).
3. “ \_\_\_\_\_, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).
4. “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: \_\_\_\_\_, and to keep oneself \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).
5. “ \_\_\_\_\_ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).

- A. Philippians 4:8, 9  
B. James 1:27  
C. Philippians 2:3, 4  
D. Matthew 6:16-18  
E. 1 Timothy 4:11, 12

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Review the memory text.
- » If you were to think about the “one thing” that Jesus delights to see in you, what would that be? Jesus was passionate about teaching, healing, serving, and spending time in prayer with the Father.
- » Paul describes beautifully the purpose-driven life of Jesus that serves as an example to each one of us: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11, NKJV).
- » Single-minded? Focused? Absolutely! Jesus came into our world as a human being, having His eyes fixed on one thing: to offer salvation to you and to each person who would believe in Him. As you think about that, Jesus will teach you step by step what it means to make Him the number-one priority in your life.

Friday

APPLYING

- » Think of one area of your life in which you could improve. Identify the “one thing” you want to focus on (prayer life with God, the ability to serve others, Bible study, quiet communion, self-control, etc.), and put it on the line under the number 1. You will also notice the other spaces around number 1—these are for the things that get in the way or that you might want to refrain from as you focus on the “one thing.”

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ The One Thing \_\_\_\_\_

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