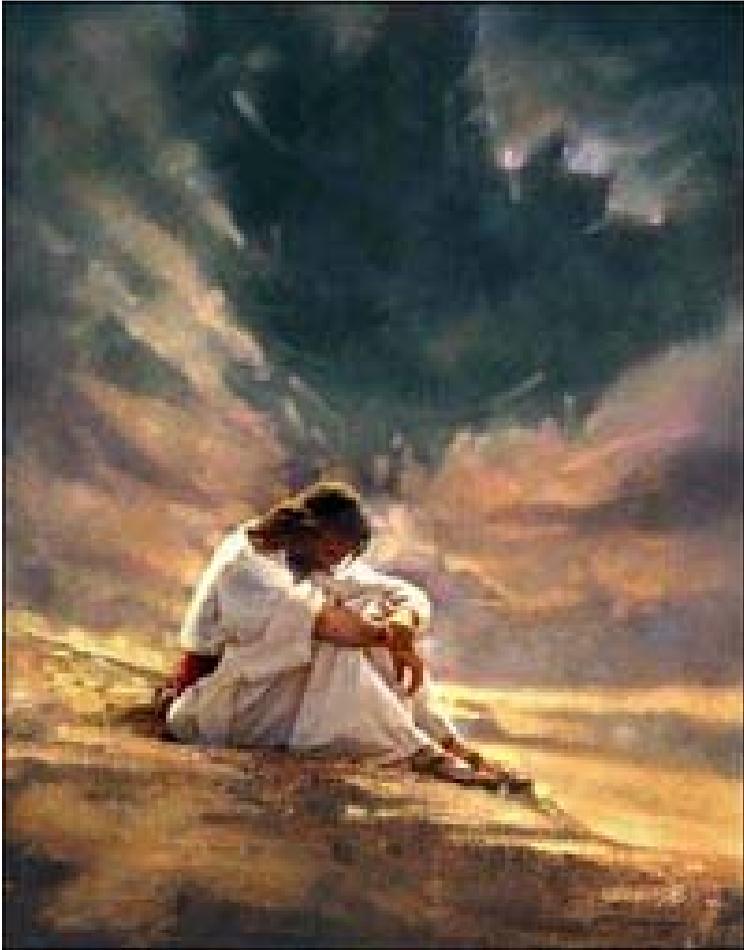




CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS
PRAYER AND FASTING

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



FEBRUARY 2009 ISSUE 9.104

Vicar's three-minute reflection

PRAYER AND FASTING



Fasting is one of the most neglected spiritual admonitions. In fact, it has been ignored for so long that it is difficult to find information on the "how-to's" of this life-changing experience. In this edition, we will provide as much information as space will allow on this important subject.

In 2 Chronicles 7:14 God declares that "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." If there is any time we Christians need to humble ourselves in prayer and fasting, it is now. Our world is upside down and our 'crops' are failing. We produce goods and there are no takers to buy them off us. Consequently, we have to lay off willing and able bodied men and women from work. Our banks are strapped of cash and credit is stifled. Yes, they open for business but you wonder what business? If Jesus were here physically with us, I guess he would have marshalled his followers to retreat into the Lord's presence and pray so that God may heal our land.

We all love to talk about "imitating Christ," but we only want to imitate whatever He did that fits our tastes. Some of us are deeply concerned about social issues, so we seek to "imitate Christ" in His concern for the poor and needy. We run homeless shelters and soup kitchens; our churches house AIDS clinics and AA meetings. We rent our building to a start-up congregation, and we have joint services with a different denomination.

Some of us are deeply concerned about moral issues, so we seek to "imitate Christ" in His confrontations with the 'Pharisees'. We picket porno shops and demonstrate about abortion; our churches work with political candidates. We hold youth rallies and family nights to build good values and we hold alternative celebrations for teens where no alcohol is served.



Those of us who are deeply concerned with doctrinal orthodoxy seek to “imitate Christ” in His teachings. We give classes in exegesis; our churches host guest speakers on archaeology and hold public seminars on prophecy. We host trips to the Holy Land and educate each member on every doctrinal point.

But how many of us retreat to a mountain to pray for a whole night just because we have important decisions to make the next morning? How many of us fast, as Jesus fasted, as an adjunct to prayer? Jesus never ran a homeless shelter; never picketed for new legislation; nor did he start study groups on end-time events. But He prayed all night on the mountain, and once He fasted for forty days. Are we truly imitating Christ, or are we rationalizing our behaviour?

When Jesus taught us how to pray, He didn't say, “If you elect to pray, do it this way...” and when He taught about fasting, He didn't say, “If you elect to fast, do it this way...” He said, when you pray, don't do it for show like the hypocrites do. It's a conversation between you and God. And He gave us the Lord's prayer as an example of what we should pray about:

Similarly, Jesus told us that when we fast (**not if**) we are not to make a show of it, like hypocrites do. A fast is different from a hunger strike: a fast is a personal act of devotion to God, while a hunger strike is a public act most often used to shine a spotlight on injustice. A fast is also different from anorexia nervosa: it is disciplined diet, not total abstention from food.

Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted for at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast. He said, “when you fast,” not *if* you fast. Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the “first love” for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ. Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, “I humble myself through fasting.”

Dele Agbelusi

STAGES OF MARRIAGE



Why does something that starts out feeling so good seem to go downhill once you take that step of commitment? One reason is that relationships go through predictable stages, although the intensity may vary from person to person and from couple to couple.

Take a look at these basic stages of marriage:

Stage I: Romantic Love: The Romantic Love stage often feels so good that you want it to last forever. In fact, you expect it to last forever! When you see things that you don't like, you might deny or at least minimize them. You feel energized, alive, and filled with new dreams. You both find many ways to show your love. When you're apart, you are thinking of one another. Everything feels right. Some people feel a sense of finally 'being home' or of being 'complete', feeling alive and connected.

Stage II: Disappointment or Distress

I like to call this stage, "The Invitation to Growth." It's also a struggle for protection.

One of the biggest illusions in our culture is that Romantic Love will last forever, if you just find the right partner. We hear that love is supposed to continue happening 'naturally' and if you have to 'work' on it, then it is not real love. These illusions are one of the reasons our divorce rate remains around 50%! When people get stuck in this stage, they begin to think they are with the wrong person.

Winning and being right becomes more important than working together and co-creating the loving, fulfilling relationship you both want. Demonstrations of love, respect, appreciation, decline and might even disappear first through neglect, and then because of hurt feelings. If enough distress builds up, you may just avoid your partner as much as you can. Or you may turn to someone else, to work, to children, or some other

Stages of Marriage

person or thing to attempt to meet your needs and avoid the distress.

For some couples this stage can get to the point of desperation where you've tried everything you know and it seems the only option is to get out --temporarily or permanently. Some stay together because of the kids, or because they are afraid people will judge them, or because of financial concerns, and end up living in the same house disconnected from one another.

GOOD NEWS! You are not meant to live in distress! That is NOT what marriage or any kind of committed relationship is meant to be! This stage can be the door to deeper connection and intimacy, and a fulfilling relationship -- if . . . you learn and use some of tools to transform it into the path to real love.

Conflict is something trying to happen to help you and your partner realize more of your potential as individuals and as a couple! Conflict can be a door to healing and personal growth. Conflict is NOT the problem. What you do or don't do with it can be a big problem. Finding a new partner does not solve the 'problem' either . . . because your journey to healing and growth needs to happen and you will for the most part recreate the same 'problems' and climate that you had before.

Stage III : Knowledge, Awareness and Transformation:

This is the stage in which you not only recognize that your relationship can be more than what it is, but also that you have the power to make real changes. You choose to become conscious and intentional, and begin a whole new chapter in co-creating the relationship you both dreamed of.

While one or both of you may continue to feel anxious, confused, afraid, and may resist making some of the changes, you take charge as partners of the direction of your happiness as a couple.

(to be continued in March 2009 issue)

FASTING

Fasting has been out of vogue for at least 150 years. In the twentieth century church, the idea seems alien to us. God's Word assumes that fasting will be a regular part of a Christian's life. Yet for most of us, it is not the case.

What Biblical Fasting is Not

Fasting is one of those religious acts which people have often misunderstood and misused. So let's be sure that we are clear on what Biblical fasting is not:

(1) **A Physical or Psychological Discipline** -- God never tells people to fast as a purely physical discipline, i.e. dieting for the purpose of making the body beautiful or for some other physical benefit. When the Bible uses the term "fasting" it has spiritual goals in mind -- something very different than Weight Watchers or Low Carb diets.

(2) **A Manipulative Tool** -- Sometimes fasting is viewed as an attempt to twist God's arm or to win His approval. But God doesn't respond to manipulative pressure. See Acts 23:12,14; Jeremiah 14:12.

(3) **A Hypocritical Religious Exercise** -- Based on Luke 18:12a, we know the Pharisees fasted twice a week - (Monday and Thursday) - And those days were market days. They would walk through the streets with their hair dishevelled; they would cover their faces with white chalk in order to look pale... ! Fasting had become a "look-at-how-spiritual-I-am" exercise. It was hypocrisy.

What then is Biblical Fasting?

The Greek word for fasting is *nesteia* -- which simply means "not to eat." But what does this "not eating" food mean? Why did people in the Bible "not eat?"

We find a clue in Leviticus 16:29. This verse says that fasting is synonymous with "afflicting one's soul." Fasting is more than just "afflicting one's body". It is a way of saying that food and my desires are secondary to something else. Biblical fasting is "not eating" with spiritual communication in mind. How do we know this? Because Biblical fasting always occurs together with prayer in the Bible-ALWAYS. **You can pray without fasting, but you cannot fast (Biblically speaking) without praying.** Biblical fasting is deliberately abstaining from food for a spiritual reason: communication and relationship with the Father. (continued on page 7)

Fasting

Why Fast?

God said, "When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you" (Jeremiah 29:13,14). We fast in order to demonstrate that we are seeking God "with all our heart." Fasting puts things in proper focus. It is a physical way of saying, "Food and the things of this life are not as important to me now as _____ (fill in the blank) ." Of course, denying yourself food to focus on God and His program shows humility. That is why fasting is also the equivalent of the phrase "to humble oneself before the Lord" (Psalm 35:13; 1 Kings 21:29; Ezra 8:21).

How Do You Know When to Pray and Fast and When to Just Pray?

That is not a question that someone else can always answer for you. But here is a principle: In God's word we always find fasting connected with a very troubled spirit or a very anxious heart before the Lord. So a reason for fasting is not something you choose on the spur of the moment. Rather the reason is a consuming one. In a sense, it's not something you choose, so much as something that chooses you, because it's that important.

Some Biblical Principles on Fasting

Fasting is assumed by the New Testament: When Jesus spoke about fasting, he didn't say if you fast, but "when you fast" (Matthew 6:16). Our Lord assumes that Christians will fast. And from the rest of the books in the New Testament we know that they did.

There once was an inappropriate time for fasting though: when our Lord was here on earth. During that time Jesus' disciples never fasted and that seemed unusual to the religious leaders and John the Baptist's friends. (Matthew 9:14-15).

Should Christians Fast Today?

YES! BECAUSE OF THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS...

He assumed his disciples would fast ("when," not "if") - Mt 6:16-17.

He said they would fast when He was gone - Mt 9:14-15.

He taught His disciples...

(a) How to fast so as to incur God's favour - Mt 6:16-18;

(b) That when done properly, fasting WOULD incur

God's favour - Mt 6:18b;

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Fasting

- (c) That fasting should be done only when the occasion properly calls for it - Mt 9:14-17;
- (d) That there would be occasions when prayer joined with fasting might be needed - Mt 17:20-21.

YES! BECAUSE WE HAVE EXAMPLES OF THE CHURCH FASTING...

1. The brethren at Antioch - Ac 13:1-3
 - (a) Fasted in their service to Lord;
 - (b) Fasted and prayed when they sent out Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey.
2. The churches in Galatia - Ac 14:21-23 practised fasting generally, and when appointing elders to watch over the flock.

YES! BECAUSE PAUL FASTED AS A MINISTER OF CHRIST.

1. He listed fasting among those things which proved him as a minister of Jesus Christ - 2Co 11:23-28.
2. Are we not commanded to imitate him, even as he imitated Christ? - 1Co 11:1 (and they both fasted in their service to God!)

At the very least, we can say that it would be appropriate for Christians to fast today. Unless there are medical reasons not to fast, we have very good examples to motivate us to utilize fasting in our service to the Lord!

The Occasion for a Fast is Voluntary

Fasting was looked upon as a very great virtue in the early church. In fact, they thought so highly of fasting that they inserted the term "fasting" into the Biblical text even though it wasn't in the original manuscripts (check various translations or margin notes for Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29; Acts 10:30; 1 Corinthians 7:5)!

We need to be careful to avoid pitfalls of legalism.

Surprisingly, a particular day for fasting was commanded in Scripture only once -- on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). Now in the New Covenant, Jesus Christ has become our atonement offering, so we no longer even need to observe the Leviticus 16 Day of Atonement! In all the rest of the Bible there are no other Scriptures which command fasting at a specific time or on a specific occasion! None!

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Fasting

So when should a Christian Fast?

When he or she feels the Spirit of God is leading them to fast. The occasion for fasting is a totally voluntary decision. Some of the specific times when people in the Bible fasted are listed below. But basically we can say a Christian may decide to fast whenever there is a spiritual concern or struggle in his or her life. Of course, there may be times when those in authority over us proclaim a fast, as was done by King Saul (1 Samuel 14:24) or Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:3). But normally and ultimately that decision is solely between us and the Lord.

Occasions for Fasting

'When is it appropriate to fast?' 'What types of situations should induce a fast?' 'What is a good Biblical reason for going without food?' The Bible has answers to those questions. We find seven occasions when the people of God fasted. God's people fasted in these situations.

Mourning someone's death: (1 Samuel 31:13; 1 Chronicles 10:12; 2 Samuel 1:12; and 2 Samuel 3:35.) In these situations fasting showed the sorrow that the people felt over the loss of someone God used in their lives.

Mourning sin, i.e. in repentance and confession: Examples of this are found in Deuteronomy 9:18; 1 Samuel 7:6; 1 Kings 21:27; Ezra 10:6; Jonah 3:5; and Acts 9:3-9.

A situation of impending danger; for protection: There are occasions when death or danger threatens us. We see from the Scripture that it is certainly appropriate to employ fasting as a means of receiving God's protection during these times. (Ezra 8:21,23,31). Other examples of fasting for protection are found in Jeremiah 36:9 and Esther 4:3. Who says we do not need to call a fast and seek the Lord's face in our present predicament of global recession.

Direction: Fasting helps us find God's will. We find an example of fasting for direction in 2 Chronicles 20:1-30. Three nations were coming against Judah to destroy them. King Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, proclaimed a fast for the whole nation and they

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Fasting

asked the Lord what they should do. God took notice of their prayer and fasting and gave the people prophetic direction through one of the choir members! God told them what to do.

Acts 13:2 is another example of direction being given by God during a fast. The Holy Spirit used this occasion to tell the church leaders to choose Paul and Barnabas from among their group and send them out to spread the gospel among the Gentiles.

Sickness: There are two examples in Scripture of fasting on behalf of those who are sick: 2 Samuel 12:15-23; Psalm 35:13.

The ordination of missionaries or church leaders: Fasting appears to have been a regular part of the ordination of church leaders and missionaries (Acts 13, 14:23).

Special revelation: Exceptional insights from God were sometimes given to the prophets and others during periods of fasting. Daniel sought God with fasting to ask God to fulfil His promise to restore Jerusalem (see Daniel 9:9,18).

The Length of a Fast is Voluntary

The length of a "normal fast" is usually for one day, e.g. the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:32). Other examples of one day fasts are in Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 14:24; 2 Samuel 1:12; and 2 Samuel 3:35. However, some fasts were longer. The fast of Esther continued 3 days, both day and night. At the burial of Saul the fast was seven days (1 Samuel 31:13) and David also fasted seven days when his child was ill (2 Samuel 12:16-18). The longest fasts we find in the Bible are for forty days: Moses (3 times -- Deuteronomy 9:9,18; Exodus 34:28), Elijah (once -- 1 Kings 19:8), and Jesus (once -- Matthew 4:2). The Biblical principle here is that the length of time you fast is determined by your own desires and the occasion or purpose of the fast.

How You Spend Your Time While Fasting is a Personal Decision Too.

In the Bible, fasting often occurs as something you do while carrying on your everyday activities! (Matthew 6:16-18). What a marvellous freedom God gives us in the area of fasting. Jesus assumes that we will fast, yet he leaves the choice of when to fast, the

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Fasting

length of our fast, and the decision of how we will spend our time while fasting completely up to us!

What Will Be Your Response?

As we look at the Bible it becomes evident that fasting was practiced more often than Christians usually practice it today. I want to challenge you to begin the practice of fasting. If you accept the challenge of God's Word to fast, I would like to provide some guidelines for you as you begin to make this a more regular part of your Christian life. The Lord will reward your efforts at fasting. Here are some individual guidelines for fasting:

- (1) Reach a personal conviction on the subject through careful Bible study. -- Get into the Word on your own. See what the Bible really says about fasting. Check the things that have been said here, read the Scripture references listed in this article and the ones listed below, and go deeper.
- (2) A doctor's comment: Make sure you are medically able to fast before attempting it.
- (3) Begin with short fasts and gradually move to larger periods of time if you desire.
- (4) Be prepared for some dizziness, headache, or nausea when you commence the discipline of fasting. Most of our bodies have never gone without food for longer than a few hours.
- (5) Break a prolonged fast gradually with meals that are light and easy to digest.
- (6) Enter with a positive faith that God will reward those who fast with the right motives. - Jesus gave this promise: "When you fast, your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:18).
- (7) Sometime during your fast, mix your fast with prayer, time in Scripture reading, singing, or devotional reading. Remember: fasting is not an end in itself. Seek the Lord, not the experience of fasting.
- (8) Keep checking your motives concerning your fasts.



NEWS AND EVENTS

Update on Church Renovation Appeal

Work on the chancel is almost completed and the workers have moved on to the nave. The chancel is really looking very beautiful. There is scaffolding extending from the chancel to the western wall of the church. This has compelled us to move the main Sunday worship to the parish hall. 8 am Holy Communion Service and 5 pm Evening Worship take place in the West Chapel.

We still require your financial support in order to complete the works.

Is God calling you to Youth work in Christ Church?

Do you love the Lord Jesus and are interested in working with Young people; can spare Sundays and possibly one week-day? Let us meet and discuss the terms. Please contact the vicar on 02083401566 for a brief chat.

Congratulations on your 30 years wedding anniversary

Congratulations to Dele and Iyabo Agbelusi (our vicar and his wife) who celebrated their 30 years wedding anniversary on 23rd December 2008. Dele presented his wife with a rare gift! A hair cut and a new look Dele. You may wonder why this is a rare gift. The last time Dele had a hair cut was 1968 - 40 years ago! What an ingenious gift and for just £6.00!!!

Sermon Themes for the 1st Quarter

During our morning worship at 10.30 we are exploring the theme "God with us" and this will take us to the 29th of March. At the evening worship at 5 o'clock our theme is "Building intimacy with God" which we are exploring through books in both the Old and New Testaments.

We will be glad if you can join us in any of these worship times.

Healing and Anointing Service

Our next Healing and Anointing Service will take place on 15th March at the 10.30 service. The theme is "Trusting God against all odds."

NEWS AND EVENTS

Stewardship Boxes 2009/2010

Envelope boxes for 2009/2010 stewardship giving will be available from Sunday 8th March 2009. Members of the congregation who wishes to join the stewardship scheme should please contact Vera Freeburne our Stewardship Secretary.

We encourage every tax paying member to join the Gift Aid scheme which enables the church to claim additional 28p for every pound donated to the church at no extra cost to you.

Friday 6th March 2009

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service prepared by Christian Women of Papua New Guinea

Theme: In Christ there are many members yet one body

Hornsey Moravian Church, Priory Road, N8, at 11 am.

All are welcome - men, women and young people.

Annual General Meeting

29th March after the 10.30am worship.

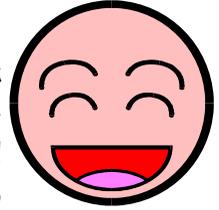
THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with M, N, O, P, Q.

Macauley Grace; Madada William; Mamas Helen; McFarlane Su, Mercer Richard & Mary; Miller Lisa; Mole Andrew, Mucha Joanna; Murphy Charles; Musolo Bright, Mutyaba Joy; Myers-Nobbs Andrew; Nabirye Rose; Nobadula Thembekile, Ogilvie-Arendse Adrian; Oshodi Funmi & Christabel, Osibona Ade; Owusu Jennifer; Pancham-Bessessar Cynthia; Perrin David; Quintyne Angela.

LAUGHTER LINES

Communication Gaffe



There was a nice lady, a minister's widow, who was a little old fashioned. She was planning a week's vacation in California at Skylake Yosemite campground (Bass Lake, to the uninitiated), but she wanted to make sure of the accommodation first. Uppermost in her mind were bathroom facilities, but she couldn't bring herself to write "toilet" in a letter. After considerable deliberation, she settled on "bathroom commode," but when she wrote that down, it still sounded too forward, so, after the first page of her letter, she referred to the bathroom commode as "BC." "Does the cabin where I will be staying have its own 'BC'? If not, where is the 'BC' located?" is what she actually wrote.

The campground owner took the first page of the letter and the lady's check and gave it to his secretary. He put the remainder of the letter on the desk of the senior member of his staff without noticing that the staffer would have no way of knowing what "BC" meant. Then the owner went off to town to run some errands.

The staff member came in after lunch, found the letter, and was baffled by the euphemism, so he showed the letter around to several counselors, but they couldn't decipher it either. The staff member's wife, who knew that the lady was the widow of a famous Baptist preacher, was sure that it must be a question about the local Baptist Church. "Of course," the first staffer exclaimed, "'BC' stands for 'Baptist Church.'" And he sat down and wrote:

Dear Madam,

I regret very much the delay in answering your letter, but I now take the pleasure in informing you that the BC is located nine miles north of the campground and is capable of seating 250 people at one time. I admit it is quite a distance away if you are in the

LAUGHTER LINES

habit of going regularly, but no doubt you will be pleased to know that a great number of people take their lunches along and make a day of it. They usually arrive early and stay late.

The last time my wife and I went was six years ago, and it was so crowded we had to stand up the whole time we were there. It may interest you to know that right now there is a supper planned to raise money to buy more seats. They are going to hold it in the basement of the 'BC.'

I would like to say that it pains me very much not to be able to go more regularly, but it is surely no lack of desire on my part. As we grow older, it seems to be more of an effort, particularly in cold weather.

If you decide to come down to our campground, perhaps I could go with you the first time, sit with you, and introduce you to all the folks. Remember, this is a friendly community."

Father Murphy

Father Murphy walked into a pub and said to the first man he met, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

The man replied, "I do Father."

The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall."

Then the priest asked a second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?" "Certainly, Father," was the man's reply.

The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall."

Then Father Murphy walked up to O'Toole and said, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

O'Toole said, "No, I don't Father."

The priest said, "I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?"

O'Toole said, "Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."

SONGS INSPIRED BY SORROW

Master, the Tempest is Raging

President James A. Garfield had been in office only four months when he was shot in a train station in Washington, D.C., enroute to a class reunion. For weeks as he hovered between life and death, the worried nation discovered an old hymn titled, "Master, the Tempest is Raging." It was sung from coast to coast, over and over, and it gave comfort to America.

The hymn had been written by a woman at the end of her rope. Mary Ann Baker's family had been devastated by a certain disease. Her father and mother had died from it, she herself was bedridden, then her beloved brother fell ill. Hoping to find a cure, he left Chicago and travelled to a warmer climate. For weeks, the telegrams flew back and forth between brother and sister, until the last telegram came, telling her of his death.

"I have always tried to believe on Christ," she said, "and give the Master a consecrated life, but this is more than I can bear. What have I done to deserve this? God does not care for me or mine."

But gradually, the Lord brought relief and understanding into Mary Ann's heart, and she acquiesced to His will. A great peace filled her soul, one she could hardly describe. Shortly afterward, in 1874, a friend, Rev. H.R. Palmer, asked Mary Ann to write a song to go along with a Sunday school lesson from Mark 4:37-39, about Christ calming the sea.

Mary Ann hesitated at first, for she was familiar with the superb fourteenth-century hymn on this text, the words of which were still popular in her day: "Fierce was the wild billow, Dark was the night; Oars laboured heavily, Foam glimmered white. Trembled the mariners, Peril was nigh; Then saith the God of God, "Peace! It is I!"

Songs Inspired by Sorrow

But she very much sought an opportunity to express the inner peace that God had given her. She learned that sometimes God stills the frightened disciple even more than He stills the raging elements. And so out of her own experience and from her study of Mark 4 came the words which, a few years later, comforted a nation:

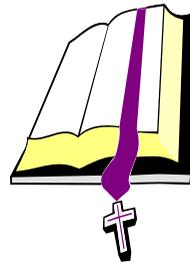
*Master, the tempest is raging,
The billows are tossing high;
The sky is o'ershadowed with blackness,
No shelter or help is nigh.
Carest thou not that we perish?
How canst thou lie asleep,
When each moment so madly
is threat'ning,
A grave in the angry deep?*



*The winds and the waves shall obey Thy will:
Peace, be still.
Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea
Or demons or men or whatever it be,
No waters can swallow the ship where lies
The Master of ocean and earth and skies.
They all shall sweetly obey thy will:
Peace, be still; peace, be still.*

Memory Verse

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."
Matthew 6: 16,17,18



WHAT TO GIVE UP FOR LENT

GIVE UP grumbling! Instead, "In everything give thanks." Constructive criticism is OK, but "moaning, groaning, and complaining" are not Christian disciplines.

GIVE UP 10 to 15 minutes in bed! Instead, use that time in prayer, Bible study and personal devotion.

GIVE UP looking at other people's worst points. Instead concentrate on their best points. We all have faults. It is a lot easier to have people overlook our shortcomings when we overlook theirs first.

GIVE UP speaking unkindly. Instead, let your speech be generous and understanding. It costs so little to say something kind and uplifting. Why not check that sharp tongue at the door?

GIVE UP your hatred of anyone or anything! Instead, learn the discipline of love. "Love covers a multitude of sins."

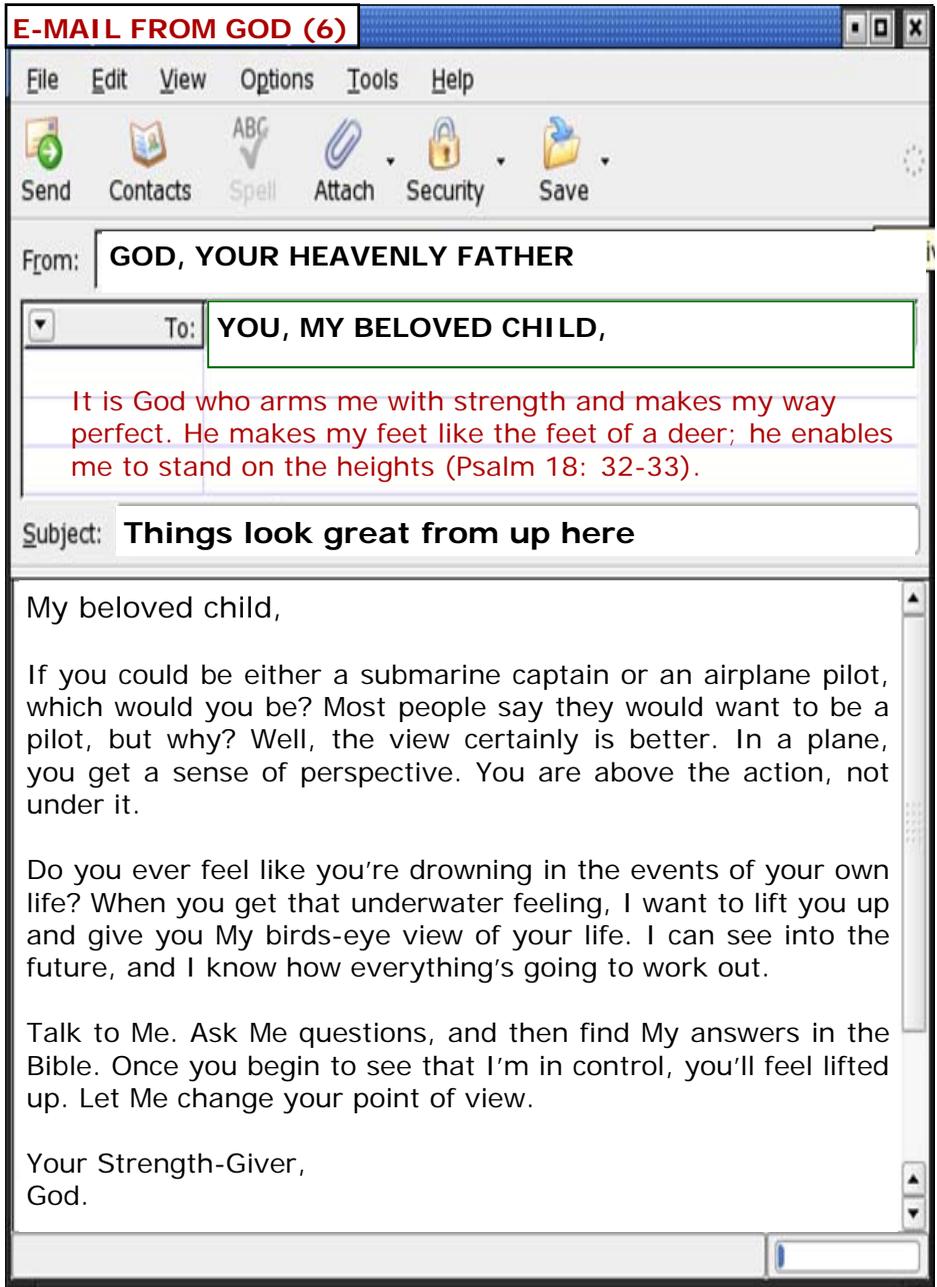
GIVE UP your worries and anxieties! Instead, trust God with them. Anxiety is spending emotional energy on something we can do nothing about: like tomorrow! Live today and let God's grace be sufficient.

GIVE UP TV one evening a week! Instead, visit some lonely or sick person. There are those who are isolated by illness or age. Why isolate yourself in front of the "tube?" Give someone a precious gift: your time!

GIVE UP buying anything but essentials for yourself! Instead, give the money to God. The money you would spend on the luxuries could help someone meet basic needs. We are called to be stewards of God's riches, not consumers.

GIVE UP judging by appearances and by the standard of the world! Instead, learn to give up yourself to God. There is only one who has the right to judge, Jesus Christ.

HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE



Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens'-Clonigers

MOTTO/TEXT FOR THE YEAR

“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH” PHILIPPIANS 4:13

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are trying to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ.

As a body of believers, we offer to all who come regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday**
- **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
 - **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities
- There is family/parade service once every month– usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.
- **5.00pm.** Evening worship

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)
- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group and Brownies *meetings in church suspended due to renovation works.*
- Prayer meetings -16th February; 2nd,16th March-West Chapel(**8 pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**7:45 pm for 8.00pm start**)
- Friday - Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in hall (**6.30 pm**) - *Scout meetings in church suspended due to renovation works.*
 - Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.30 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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