

# Focus: The Journey to Easter

## Lesson 6



### The Discipline of Celebrating Prayer

**BIBLE STUDY- (THE SAINT PAUL FAST)**

St. James Baptist Church  
**Dr. Jerome Lee, Jr., Pastor**

**Fasting For Light On The Road** – Because life will present all of us with *major* decisions, they can redirect our entire lives and destinies. Marriage, Job's and etc. If we knew the future, it would be easier to make decisions. But we don't so God promises that the fast He desires will cause His "light to break forth like the morning" (Isaiah 58:8). This implies that if we focus on God's will instead of our own when we face major decisions, He will provide us with clearer perspective and the insight that we need to make crucial decisions.

**How Does God Speak To Us?** – God speaks to us through his son Jesus Christ (Heb.1: 1-2). He stands on the other side of our decisions, thus, we ought to ask the Lord to help us make our decisions.

**God has provided many other resources for decision making.**

- He directs us by counsel with friends (Prov.11: 14).
- He sovereignly Guides (Rom.8:28)
- He directs us inwardly (Acts.16:6; Rom.8:14)
- He guides through prayer.
- He directs us through opportunity (1Cor.16:9)
- He directs us through our common sense (Prov.16:9)
- He directs us when we have a yielded spirit (Rom.12: 12).
- Most of all He directs us through fasting.

What can we do to help us make the really big decisions? ---- - - *We can fast.*

The Saint Paul Fast offers help in weighty decisions such as choosing a mate, resigning a job, and other life- changing choices.

- Wrong Choices- can lead to disaster.
- Wrong emotional perceptions often lead to wrong choices.
- Tradition can cause us to make wrong decisions.
- Pride can force wrong decisions.

**The origin of the Saint Paul fast-let's read (Acts 9:1-20).**

### **Preparing For the Saint Paul Fast:**

Before you start this fast you need to have a decision-making strategy. The following strategy will be used throughout the fast and will become the basis of the decision-making process.

**Five steps to decision making.**

1. *Honestly face any problem that clouds your decision*-admit there is problem.
2. *Define your problem*-see your problem in black and white as it is.

3. *Gather information*- this will give you a handle on the problem.
4. *Make a list of the possible solutions*- list the obvious as well as the foolish.
5. *Choose the best decisions*- the best solution comes out of sifting through the facts.

### **Prescription for the Saint Paul Fast**

The Saint Paul fast began at a time when Paul needed to correct his horribly wrong idea about Christianity. **The Saint Paul fast is for gaining insight and wisdom.** There are ten principles drawn from Paul's experience.

#### **Step 1: Make time for listening for Jesus voice (Acts 9:4, Psalm 46:10)**

Paul had time to meditate on the word.

#### **Step 2: Ask and Answer Questions about Yourself (Acts 9:4, Gen. 3:9, Gen.4:6).**

Time in the presence of God will allow us to see ourselves as we really are. Second in quietness it allows God to speak to your conscience.

#### **Step 3: Recognize The Objective Truth (Acts 9:6).**

Truth will stand without us, whether or not we agree with it. When we fast, we signal our willingness to accept God's truth. Two paramount problems in decision making are.

**(1). (*Our omniscient memories*-we think that we are always right because we remember being right before).** **(2) *Our omniscient insights*- we think we must be right because we thought of the answers.** Paul began his fast by simply calling on the one who could help him.

#### **Step 4: Stop All Self- Effort and Yield To God.**

There is a time for initiative and self-effort. Fasting is not a time to labor; it's a time to plunge deep into the heart of God in yieldness to Him. Read (Col.3: 23).

#### **Step 5: Pay Attention to the Physical.**

Sometimes it is important to enter into your closet or go into your private room where no one will bother you. You are more free to express your worship/praise and prayer.

**Step 6: Pay Attention To The Spiritual (Acts 9:6).**

- A. Submit your spirit.
- B. Search with your whole heart (Jer.29:13).
- C. Allow the Lord to search you (Jer.17:10).
- D. Allow the Holy Spirit to teach you (Jhn.14:26).
- E. Study diligently (2 Tim.2:13)
- F. Pray (Ps.139:23, 24)

**Step 7: Obey What You Learn (Acts 9:6).**

Arise and go into the city (v: 6). I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision (26:19). (Pro.3: 5,6). “Two propellers”= knowing and doing.

**Step 8: Be willing to be Patient (Acts 9:6).**

Paul was only given his next assignment. How does God speak? Sometimes it's gradually.

**Step 9: Be Open To Insights From Others (Acts.9: 10, 11).**

Similarly, God may use others to give you directions. God used Ananias to pray for Paul to receive his sight and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Step 10: Be prepared to be misunderstood (Acts9: 7).**

The others did not see Jesus.

