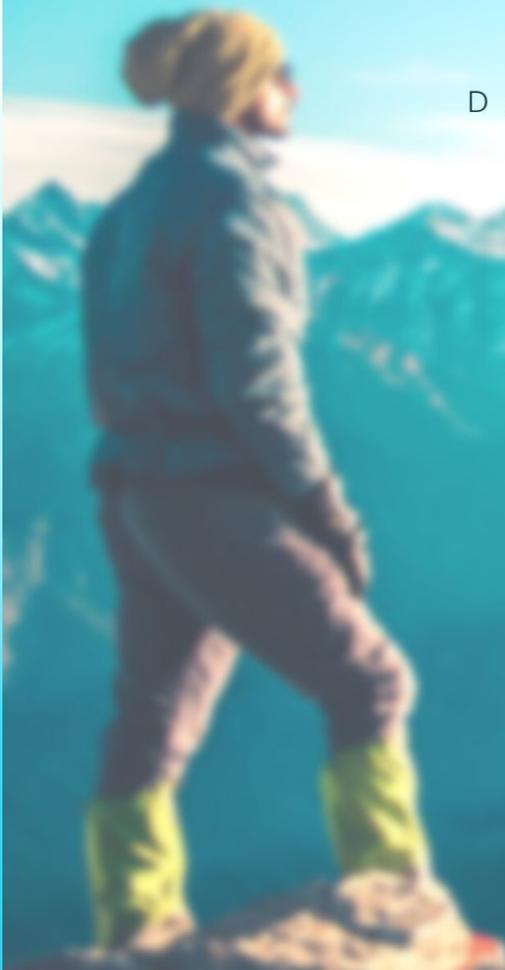




ENDURE TO OVERCOME

PRAYER GUIDE

DANIEL FAST 2022



Introduction to the Daniel Fast 2022

ENDURE TO OVERCOME

Genesis 32:28 - *Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.* (NIV)

On behalf of the leadership of the Bon Berger Church in Paris, I want to welcome you to the Daniel Fast of 2022. Since September of 2003 our church has observed a three-week « partial fast » fashioned after the model found in the book of the prophet Daniel.

In 2003, the nation of France was horribly hit by the worst heat wave since 1873, resulting in thousands of deaths. Sensing that this was more than just a natural phenomenon, we were led to humble ourselves before the Lord, repent on behalf of the sins of the nation, and ask for mercy.

Every year since, we have conducted a time of prayer and fasting at the start of the school year. The results in our spiritual family, as well as in the lives of each individual, have been amazing. This year will not be an exception. We have a deep conviction that God will meet us all in a very powerful way.

Our fast is based on two texts in the book of the prophet Daniel. Early on, young Daniel and his friends ask their captors to exempt them from the king's food and give them only vegetables to eat and water to drink. (Dan.1:12) Towards the end, Daniel relates how he mourned for three weeks, eating no choice food, no meat, and drinking no wine. (Dan.10:3)

Using these verses, we've conceived a partial fast where we abstain from any food product whose origin is an animal (including eggs, cheese and all milk products), alcohol, and food with refined sugar (sweeteners, corn syrup, etc). In addition, we encourage people to do a « soul fast » of all forms of entertainment. Our Fast begins on Sunday, September 4th at 12 noon and ends on September 25th at 12 noon.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in the fast. Our objective is to provide the members of the church with common guidelines, but each person should decide how he or she will observe these three weeks. Some people may choose to do more of a classic fast consisting of consuming only water. Others may decide, based on medical advice, to do a fast even less stringent than what we are suggesting. All should do according to what they determine in their heart.

This year's theme is: *Endure to Overcome*, based on the experience of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. All of his life Jacob struggled. He struggled with his brother, with his father, with his uncle; and he even struggled with God! In the end God said to Jacob, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with men and with God and have overcome."

This theme is developed throughout this Prayer Guide, written by the elders of the church to encourage you during the fast. Certainly, you've had your struggles, especially during these two and a half years of pandemic. Our hopes and prayers for you are that these 3 weeks will help you overcome so that God can release to you the inheritance that has been promised.

Daniel Fast 2022 : ENDURE TO OVERCOME 10C EUROPE CONFERENCE

We are so blessed this year to welcome, at the start of our Daniel Fast, pastors Randy and Lucy Needham from Houston, Texas, their team, and our precious 10C worldwide family.

The 10C family is an organic network of spiritual fathers and mothers across the nations that the Holy Spirit has sovereignly brought together to advance the kingdom of light in the face of darkness. We value the presence of God, the Word of truth, and the power of revival that produces the transformation of society.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus told a parable about a man who was to receive a kingdom. He left three servants in charge of his affairs, and gave to each a certain amount of money. After receiving his kingdom he returned and called the three servants. The first servant gave back to his master the original capital plus ten times more! The master said to him, « Well done good and faithful servant. *I will give you ten cities as your reward.* » (Luke 19:17)

This fellowship of leaders is called 10 Cities (or 10C) not because once we are present in 10 Cities we will stop our ministry, but because of the principle of being faithful in little will lead to influence over much. The vision of this network is that is by supporting the spiritual fathers and mothers, equipping them, serving them, and encouraging them, God will multiply to them influence in their city and eventually in their nation.

Kathryn and I are so honored to walk and build with these precious leaders around the world. The entire eldership of the church is completely in sync with the vision of 10 C; and together, our hope is that by starting our Daniel Fast with the 10C Europe Conference, it will give each of you the opportunity to connect with these leaders, taste of the vision, and find your place in the mission.

Robert Baxter

Because you have struggled

Sunday, September 4

Genesis 32:28 - *Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.* (NIV)

The Hebrew word translated here as « to struggle » literally means to persist, exert oneself, persevere. It is used only twice in the entire Bible and both times refers to Jacob's relationship with God. (See also Hosea 12:3)

Jacob knew about persevering through trials. It seemed for him that since his birth, life was only one big struggle. He struggled against his brother, his parents, his uncle who also became his father-in-law; he even at times struggled with his own wife. And after 20 years of struggling against his uncle, Jacob had left the land of Haran and was heading back to his inheritance, back to the Land of Promise.

Just before crossing over the Jordan River he encountered a man and wrestled with him all night long. In the morning, Jacob grabbed hold of his garment and said, Unless you bless me I will not let you go.

So, this person, who was none other than the Lord, Himself, said to him: You have been called Jacob until now. But from now on you will be called Israel for you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.

Struggling with God is not the same thing as struggling against God. When we struggle with God we eventually break through into God's blessings, accompanied by an identity change. Struggling against God opens our heart to a spirit of rebellion which ultimately takes us away from His purposes.

All of our struggles may be rooted in doubts, fears, disappointments, discouragements, and profound fatigue. Every single Christian, sooner or later in his life, will have these struggles. It is part of learning how to grow and develop maturity in the Lord.

The questions we must ask ourselves are: What is it that I really want in this life? Do I truly want to live for myself; or do I want to live for God?

On this first day of the 2022 Daniel Fast, I encourage you to write down in your journal or in the space provided what you really want in life. What do you want God to do IN you and THROUGH you? What are you willing to give your life for? What price are you willing to pay to get there?

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, here I am. I dedicate my life to you afresh. I entrust myself entirely to You during these next three weeks because I want to know Your heart and experience a genuine breakthrough in my life. Thank you for leading me, instructing me, and strengthening me during this fast, and especially for making me more than a conqueror in Christ. Amen.

Cutting off from the past!

WEEK 1

DANIEL FAST 2022



Detached from the past

Monday, September 5

Philippians 3:13-15 - *Brothers, I do not consider that I have taken hold of it yet. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.*

In this short passage, the Holy Spirit reveals through the apostle Paul three steps necessary for winning the prize. None of them should be skipped: 1) Detach from the past; 2) Target the objective in front of us; 3) Associate with each for the cause of unity. Steps 2 and 3 are possible only if each of us takes the first step. Therefore, how do we detach from the past?

1. Revelation: Ask the Lord to unveil to you things from the past, even recent ones, that weigh on your soul, that keep you trapped in a victim mentality, that have created for you a false image of God, others, and yourself. Following this revelation, present the incident or memory to God...and leave the matter in His capable hands. Then ask Him for the revelation of His truth. You will receive a verse, a phrase, an image, a vision that will fuel your faith. Then very deliberately receive that truth and let it flood your soul to cleanse and heal and set you free.

2. Renunciation: An act of your will, in accordance with the will of God, is very powerful. So firmly renounce believing the lies that have bound your soul to the past. Refuse to accept the idea that « it will always be like that » and other false notions. Your God is greater than your past. Your God is more powerful than the enemy of your soul who tries to make you his slave! The minute you renounce believing a lie, it loses its power over your life.

3. Restoration: The devil wants to rob you, to hold you back, to discourage you, but the Lord restores your soul in order to redirect you to the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. (Ps 23:3) In prayer, therefore, recover all that was lost, stolen or abandoned: your identity, your peace, your joy, your well-being, your calling, your intimacy with God, etc.

Prayer: Thank you Father for your promises to me. Thank you Lord for your work of the cross. Thank you Holy Spirit for a new understanding of truth that freed me from the past. I entrust you with everything I have experienced so far and I let you do as you want. I now receive the grace to move forward, casting aside all burdens and painful memories of the past. I align myself with your will and associate myself with my church in its divine call and mandate, to be of one heart, one vision, and one mind. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Enduring commitment in my local church

Tuesday, September 6

Philippians 3:12-14 - ...Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

We are all in the same race to win the prize of heavenly calling. But without a sincere and deep commitment to our local church and our spiritual family, our race is doomed. If there is a time in the history of the Church when the people of God must be rooted and planted in a local church, it is now.

The enemy's favorite weapon is isolation. The devil will use all kinds of lies and deceptions to convince you that you are right to isolate yourself, because you do not need to commit yourself to a church which will be your spiritual family, where you will be able to grow, develop and bear fruit for the glory of our God...not to mention the importance of a spiritual covering that you will never be able to find outside of your membership in a local church.

One of the most common reasons that undermine our enduring commitment to a local church is this: Past wounds (near or distant).

I myself experienced this voluntary isolation many years ago, following a huge disappointment in my church at the time. I thought then that it was the best decision I had made as a Christian, and that this way I would never again be hurt or betrayed by leaders or by brothers or sisters of the church. I even had a very nice quote to justify my position: « Me and God are the majority! Hallelujah!!! »

Ultimately this pretty « spiritual » phrase has no biblical basis, and had the first effect of stunting my growth as a member of the body of Christ (the result is always death for a member separated from his body) and second effect of depriving the body of Christ of what God was doing in me. I thank the Lord for shaking me up and opening my eyes to the importance of church commitment. There is nothing more damaging than leaving your family and isolating yourself permanently.

There is no perfect church, because none of us are perfect, but the good news is that God places us in a family so that we learn to love each other as He loved us, to forgive each other as He has forgiven us, to encourage and strengthen one another, to watch over one another, and to lay down our lives for the growth of each member, so that the whole body may grow and develop and bear fruit that remains.

Prayer: Most Holy Father, I renounce the lies linked to the wounds of the past, which have created in my mind a negative image of the Church, to the point where I have criticized it instead of blessing it, and condemned it instead of forgiving it. I pledge as a member of my church to make every effort to contribute to the growth and proper functioning of the spiritual family in which you have placed me. I believe this is where you have destined me to be... to bless me and be a blessing. Amen.

Monument or Memorial?

Wednesday, September 7

Joshua 4:7 - *Then you shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel for ever.*

Almost all of my life I have lived near a capital city. You can usually find in these places great monuments to various events in history. However, there is a great difference between a monument and a memorial. A memorial can be anything that causes one to reflect on what was done in the past that helps them better prepare for what is yet to come. A monument is generally a large object that is built to boast of one's own greatness.

The Tower of Babel was a monument, the first of its kind. It was built by men who wanted to display to the world their own glory. The carnal nature of man always seeks to appropriate things that stand as a monument to his own pride. However, just as in the case of the Tower of Babel, God takes great pleasure in destroying the monuments of men.

The God of the Bible, however, is a God of the memorial. God gave to His people the seven Biblical Feasts of the Lord, which stood, each one, as a memorial to God. In the case of Joshua, the erection of the 12 stones in the Jordan River served as a memorial. For many Christians today, the cross is a memorial that allows us to reflect regularly on what Christ did for us.

One of the greatest tragedies for Christians is to forget the miracles that God has already done in their lives. When we forget His accomplishments, our faith grows weak, and we become ungrateful. So we need to create a mechanism that forces us to remember on a regular basis all that God has done. This will encourage us as we step into the next season of struggles.

Just a few days ago, we experienced a wonderful move of the Holy Spirit during the 10C Conference. And we do not want to allow these things to gradually slip into the oblivion of forgetfulness. So today we are going to create a memorial. We are going to find the equivalent of the 12 stones, set one on top of the other, so that every time we consider them in the future, we can take a moment to remember and thank God for the wonderful things He did in our lives.

Now, you may not yet have 12 stones; you may only have 3 or 4. However, what is important is that you make a note of these in the space provided below. As you recall what God has done you will strengthen your faith and boost your courage. The time will come during the next 11 months when you will need this.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for Your great faithfulness and Your amazing work in my life. Your love is unconditional and Your grace is undeserved. I have been overwhelmed by Your goodness, and profoundly touched by Your lovingkindness. Forgive me for the times when I have lacked thankfulness. Inspire me frequently to come back to this memorial and realize how great You are. May they cause praises to spring forth from my heart and through my lips to honor You and worship You in a fresh new way. Amen.

No victory without a fight

Thursday, September 8

Psalm 144:1 (ESV) - *Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.*

One of the things I realized by becoming a Christian is that warfare is a part of life. I accepted it the day the Lord showed me that even our coming to this earth is the result of a fight: our mothers had to fight, during childbirth, so that we would be born (a small tribute to all our moms!) Remember, there is no testimony without a test, and there is no victory without a fight.

Jesus Christ fought the ultimate battle two thousand years ago on the cross, to give us victory. But we see that the Bible tells us about the fight of faith (2 Tim 6:12), which indicates that there are going to be enemies to our faith. We must fight them in order to be able to endure and to hold fast to the promises of God.

The opening verse will help you come to terms with the fact that we are in a perpetual battle. But God is in charge of teaching us to fight! We won't win all of life's battles the same way. We must remain in His presence so that God, by His Word and His Spirit, can equip us and give us the strategies to overcome.

One thing is certain: we are born to win...but (there is a but!) only if we follow God's strategies. We see time and time again battles have been won by God's people, but not all in the same way. Three examples of victory that were won in different ways:

1. Moses in front of the red sea
2. Joshua before the wall of Jericho
3. Paul and Silas in the prison

You may be in the midst of a fight for your life and even for your family, whether it be on a spiritual level, on a financial level, on a material level, on a marital level, on a family level, on a ministry level or on a personal level for your health. But I strongly encourage you today to dwell in His presence to receive the strategy for your victory. Tell yourself that you will emerge victorious.

Prayer: Father, in the name of Jesus, I renounce my fear and reluctance in spiritual warfare. I thank you for the victory in the fights. I thank you for giving me the strategies to emerge victorious from any situation. Thank you for teaching me how to fight; and that you make me more than a winner. I declare that no matter the struggle and no matter the fight, I will get through this and victory is at the end of the tunnel. Thank you for victory in every area of my life, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Spiritual Crossfit

Friday, September 9

Perhaps you've heard of the work-out called CrossFit. The advantages of CrossFit are numerous, since it is a complete sport; you gain strength, power, endurance, cardiovascular level, agility, balance, precision, flexibility and also you develop mental strength.

We could say that the same principles apply in our Spiritual « CrossFit »:

1. Muscle building

Learn to work your faith like a muscle. If you don't develop muscles, they become weak and flaccid, and for your spiritual life it is the same.

What the Lord encourages you to do is to exercise faith for all your daily needs.

Matthew 17:20 - He said to them, « Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you. »

2. Repetition of exercises to maintain form: CONFESSION.

Developing good daily habits is essential for endurance. What if every day you were to take 2 minutes to confess the Word of God and its benefits.

For example, greeting the Lord every morning: « Hello Heavenly Father, Hello Jesus, and Hello, Holy Spirit. I thank you that I remain under your wing and under shelter. Thank you, Lord that you supply all my needs according to your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. » (Phil 4:19)

Remember that the spoken word has the power to create.

Proverbs 18:21 - Death and life are in the power of the tongue

3. Add weights to your workouts

When we work out, we want to add weights in order to obtain an optimal result. In the same way, in order to incorporate God's power and authority and see results from our prayers, we can accompany our prayers with Bible scriptures.

The best way to do so is to search out a specific Bible verse and claim it in our prayers. By doing this combo, we will activate the angels in our service..and to do this...it is essential to use the scriptures.

Psalms 103:20 - Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!

Trial that transform

Saturday, September 10

James 1:12 - *Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.*

How can anyone describe as « Blessed » the one who endures for an extended period of time a painful and difficult situation! At first sight, we will rather pity this person, and even pray that this « attack of the enemy » will stop as soon as possible, in Jesus' Name! However, the Word of God calls this man « happy » (or « blessed »), because it is by this path that he will be able to access the reward that God has reserved for him in eternity: the crown of life.

Joseph, son of Jacob, perfectly illustrates this verse. We read his story in Genesis 37:39 and following. Favorite son of his father Jacob, his life began auspiciously. However, his brothers became jealous and hated him to the point of wanting to kill him but eventually they sold him as a slave. Then, unjustly accused, he was put in prison and remained there for 12 years!! What a test! Just imagine how many times he must have asked God, « Why Lord? »

But after all those years of suffering, he was elevated to the rank of the 2nd most important position in Egypt, which was the greatest power in the world of that time.

Could he have achieved this function if he had stayed the way he was and thought before he was sold? No. At that point, he was full of himself, proud of his privilege, stirring up the hatred of his brothers.

Those 12 painful years in prison served to purify his heart of all pride and self-interest and transform him into a humble, God-loving man. Thus, he was able to discern God's plan: God used the rejection and injustices he suffered, to save his entire family from starvation by bringing them to Egypt, where they would multiply until they became a strong, numerous people, in accordance with the promises made to Abraham. When we overcome in trials, we are transformed. And our transformation can lead to the salvation of many.

Genesis 45:5, 7 and 8 - « Now do not grieve, nor be sorry that you have sold me to be brought here, for it is to save your life that God has sent me ahead of you... So it wasn't you who sent me here, but it was God. »

Prayer: My God, You know better than anyone what I am going through right now. Use this time to speak to me, transform me, and instruct me as to how to participate fully in Your plan, that goes far beyond my own life, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Properly placed

Sunday, September 11

Acts 2:47 - *Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Acts chapter two recounts the first few months of the brand new Church of the Lord Jesus. What an exciting time it was. After the fear and confusion surrounding the crucifixion, and the 40 days of joy and revelation at each appearing of the Lord after the resurrection, the 10 days of prayer and worship leading up to the feast of Shavuot culminated in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. What began as a prayer meeting in an isolated house in Jerusalem, moved eventually to the Temple where thousands heard the very first sermon ever given in the name of Jesus. Three thousand people received water baptism in one day!

Every person who came to Christ in those days of the feast decided to stay in Jerusalem to receive training, some for many years, before returning to their respective homes. The apostles were preaching in the Temple every day, performing many miracles and healings, and even many priests believed in the Messiah at that time. The passage ends with this amazing declaration: *and the Lord was adding to the church, every day, those who were being saved.*

The objective of the prayers, the preaching and the prophesying was that the Lord would add to His church. The goal wasn't to promote the ministry of the apostles, or to construct an immense building, or even to make political or social changes. The goal was simple: add to the church those who were being saved. The Lord has never changed His objective. He still seeks to add souls to His church.

The Greek word that is translated here as « to add » is the word *prostithemi* which literally means « to place next to something. » It would be like a librarian placing a book on a shelf in the right order, in between two other books.

Have you been « added to the church? » Have you allowed the Holy Spirit to place you on the shelf of God's church, in the right order, in between two other books?

It is not always easy to enjoy one's place on God's bookshelf. Just like books, we enjoy being picked up, opened and read. But when someone is done reading we must allow the Lord to put us back into our proper place on His bookshelf. The shelf may feel like it constricts the books; but it actually protects them from unnecessary damage. A book may prefer to always be in the hands of a reader, but the librarian knows he must maintain order in the library if there are going to be enough books for every who wants to read.

God is our Librarian. We are His books. He chooses where to place us in His library so that the world easily finding the right book for the right moment.

I encourage you to do these four things in order to insure your success in the library of God:

1. Love His church, even when you see its many faults.
2. Love to serve the other brothers and sisters in the church.
3. Love the spiritual authority that God has given to the leaders who care for your soul.
4. Love to show your church to the lost souls around you.

How to endure ?

WEEK 2

DANIEL FAST 2022



Reaching the goal

Monday, September 12

Hebrews 10:35-36 - *Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.*

We all have something in our life that we regret, where we failed to achieve our dreams or our goals.

I took piano, Hebrew language, and ju-jitsu (self-defense) lessons, but did not continue.

I started to get in shape through sports, but today I don't do it regularly.

WHY ? Lack of motivation, lack of energy, lack of stimulation and especially lack of endurance... or even ignorance of the importance of endurance.

My biggest mistake is stopping and giving up, whereas the Lord calls us to persevere and keep going. We must persevere until victory is achieved. If your goal is really important to you, you will find a way to achieve it. Otherwise you will find excuses like « it's not the time », « it's too far », « I'm not ready », etc.

I trained as a professional coach in order to understand how human beings work. This training was important to me. It lasted a year and was about a hundred kilometers from my home. Despite the distance I was determined, I was motivated, I was stimulated to achieve my goal. The end result of this motivation was graduation with a certificate.

The essential element of victory is a quality that is increasingly being lost these days: endurance. And endurance requires discipline.

- Endurance is a sign of wisdom, but we want everything right away.
- Endurance is necessary to succeed, because endurance allows you to maintain a sustained effort over time
- Endurance is daily work and those who practice it reap the rewards.
- Endurance through hardship builds character

A remarkable example to follow is that of Noah, who not only obeyed God but persevered for many decades despite ridicule, mockery, and persecution. Jesus does not say, « IF tribulations or persecutions come... » He says « WHEN tribulations or persecutions come... » because they will come.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for your life-giving Word. May it touch hearts today. You are a wonderful God and your plans for our life are good. We know that the path is difficult and that it requires a lot of endurance and perseverance. Endurance is a key to success. Lord, Give us the desire to fight and to succeed. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

How to endure in my church commitment?

Tuesday, September 13

Matthew 20: 27-28 -...and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

To properly answer the question How, we must first answer the question Why. Why is my commitment as a member of the local church important? Because like our Lord Jesus, we too are called to serve. And in the eyes of God, serving is among the most praiseworthy, priceless and honorable things one can do.

Serving is part of the culture of Heaven, for in the kingdom of God no one lives for himself. Only when I realize the importance and the value of my service in the eyes of God will I find the answer to the question How, in order to always aim for excellence, in everything I do, without ever giving up. Thus I will strive to make every effort to reach a level of service which highly honors my God and which at the same time blesses my entire spiritual family.

When we consider our physical body, we find that no part of the body lives for itself, but on the contrary, each of its parts lives in the service and for the benefit of the whole body. No member lives and functions for its own benefit.

At the time of his election, JFK said to his people, « Ask not what America can do for you, but what you can do for America. » In the same way, let us have this servant's heart, a mentality of a disciple of Christ and not of a Christian baby who only comes to be served.

Knowing also that God has placed everyone in a spiritual family according to His will, the questions to ask ourselves are the following:

- What do I really want in my service for my church?
- What price am I willing to pay to develop, to build with the other members of the church, whatever God wants?
- Am I satisfied with the quality of the fruit?
- Am I ready to persevere and to grow by aiming for excellence for the benefit of all members of the body?
- What can I do better or differently to serve and to produce fruit of a better quality that will bless the Lord and the church?

Prayer: God my Father, I pray that You will reveal to me all the riches and all the power that there is in the service for your house. When I see a lack in the church I decide to stand in the breach, for the answer to this need and without blaming anyone. Transform me so that through my service the world sees you and gives you the glory that is due to you. Amen.

Finding the joy

Wednesday, September 14

Hebrews 12:2 - *Looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

The Lord often calls us to do things we're not fully trained to do, have no qualifications for, and no idea how to execute. Yet, through faith and obedience, God does miracles, things come together, and He receives the glory.

Perhaps the most heart-wrenching thing to witness is ministers who we admire fall into sin, or grow so tired they leave the ministry. It seems that it's becoming rare to find faithful men and women who go the full distance with the Lord.

The book of Hebrews was originally written to the Jews of the first century who were following Jesus. However, the persecution from the traditional Jews was making life so hard, many of these believers stopped following the Lord and returned to faith without a Messiah. This is why the writer of Hebrews makes so many references to the « faded » glory of the covenant of Moses compared to the surpassing glory of the new covenant. Then in chapter 12, as he begins to close out the book, the author refers to how Jesus was able to endure the cross. The writer speaks of a joy that was set before him that gave him the strength to endure until the very end. Regardless of what this joy was, the important thing is that without it Jesus might not have been able to endure the shame, the pain, and eventually the wrath of God.

We all have those things in life that become a cross for us. The key to endure is to find the joy that God has set in front of you. For each person that joy may be different. But one example could apply to everyone: personal transformation. Obviously, Jesus didn't need to be transformed on the cross. But you and I do need personal transformation. It is only as God transforms us that He is truly glorified through us. If we will focus on that joy, then we will most certainly be able to drink from the joy that gives us the strength to endure.

So the great question we must answer is this: what kind of a person do you want to become? Even if you're young in the Lord, deep in your heart you already know the answer to this question. You just need to spend time in His presence, quiet your mind, and get in touch with the vision of the person God is calling you to be.

Today we are half way through the Daniel Fast of 2022. I encourage you to write down just two sentences in the space below about the person that God is calling you to be. The clearer the vision, the easier it is to set that joy in front of your eyes the next time you must endure the cross. Trials and difficulties are sure to come. This is part of the cross that you are called to endure. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the person God is calling you to be. This will become your joy that gives you the ability to endure.

In this space write down the vision of the person God is calling you to be :

Giving up is not an option

Thursday, September 15

Ephesians 6:10 - *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.*

One way to endure is to decide never to give up. Once you know how important it is to prevail in life's trials, you make a choice to go all the way. It's true that it would be simpler and easier to give up and throw in the towel, but if you are ready to persevere until the end, you will see that victory is not really so far away. Oftentimes, the moment when the pressure becomes the most intense signifies that the breakthrough is not that far off. This is why the enemy of your soul will do everything he can to discourage you and persuade you to throw in the towel.

But your will, aligned with God's will, enables you to make a firm decision and say to yourself, « No matter what, I won't give up. » Choose daily to persevere. One thing the enemy tries to hide from you is that you don't have to depend on your own strength in order to hold on until the end. Along with the opening verse, the following will inspire God's strength in you.

Phil 4:13 - « *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.* »

1 Jn 4:4 - « *Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.* »

It doesn't matter if you are at the beginning, in the middle, or even towards the end of your fight. Decide today to hold on until the end and not give up. Your perseverance will pay off!

Three important points:

1. You don't fight in your own strength
2. You are able to face all difficulties through the Christ who is in you
3. He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world

So you can rejoice in the God of your salvation and fully trust Him to help you endure. You can do it! Use what you have been given. Take up all the weapons of God in order to resist until the end. The God of all strength knows no limits.

Eph 6:13 - « *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.* »

Prayer: Lord, I thank you that you are my strength, my shield and my protector. I thank you for renewing my strength like that of the eagle to stand firm and not give up. Thank you Lord that you give me courage so that I can face these difficulties through the Christ who is in me. And thank you that He who is in me is greater than he who is in the world. So I decide today to never give up and to never throw in the towel. Amen.

Robust faith

Friday, September 16

1 Peter 5:10 - *And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.*

Several years ago, a famous Swedish furniture and decoration brand had window displays installed in its stores. Inside one of them, a mechanism continuously opened and closed the drawers of a chest of drawers. A poster explained that it was a test to guarantee a very high degree of robustness of the mechanism for opening and closing the drawers.

In another case, there was an armchair upon which a weight constantly pressed on the seat and on the backrest, simulating someone who sat down and stood up hundreds of times.

The goal: You could buy these two items without hesitation, knowing that they came with a guarantee of excellent quality.

Yet if this chest of drawers and this chair could talk, wouldn't they have moaned, « Stop, I can't take it anymore! » But when they had been given the label that guarantees reinforced solidity, they would certainly have been very proud...

Therefore, when you want to make sure something is reliable, you « test » it first. So why are we amazed that our words and songs that say « I will follow You no matter what, no matter which storms rise up against me », or else « Break me, shape me » are frequently put to the test?

It is in adversity that we become aware of our shortcomings and our weaknesses, and that we realize we can draw from God all the strength, faith and courage necessary to overcome it.

And after the trial, we suddenly become aware that our faith has become stronger and our spiritual understanding has deepened. In short, we have grown. Such is the benefit of trial in the life of the disciple of Christ. Thank you, Lord ! The rewards greatly surpass the difficulties!

Prayer: Lord, open my eyes to what I do not see when I go through a trial: Your hand that sustains me, Your strength that dwells in me through your Spirit, and the hope of victory. I can then walk through this moment with confidence, and even rejoicing, for « the joy of the Lord is my strength. » Use these trials to make my faith strong and unshakable. Amen.

The Feasts of the Lord

Saturday, September 17

Zechariah 14:16 - *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

In three weeks some of us from the church will be joining thousands of other Christians from around the world to worship the Lord in Jerusalem. Our presence at the Feast of Tabernacles is the beginning of the fulfillment of Zachariah's prophecy. It is a specific call to all those who are NOT Jewish, to come up to Jerusalem and worship the Lord at the time of the Feast.

For most of my Christian life I tried to be neutral concerning Israel and all things « Jewish » : not against it; but not for it. Since my first trip to Israel in 2004, my understanding of what the Bible teaches regarding Israel has never been the same.

God spoke to the prophet Isaiah, saying that Zion would bring forth a son, in just a day (66:8). That day came in May 1948 when the United Nations voted to allow the Jews to create their own homeland. Nearly 1800 years of bad theology in the church came crashing down. Many Christians and Jews alike still refuse to acknowledge the hand of God in bringing the land back into the hands of Abraham's descendants. For me, however, the Scriptures are clear. God has not forsaken His people. A time is quick approaching when all Israel will be saved. (Romans chapter 11) But even this belief is only half of what God is doing today in the Church of Jesus Christ.

God is also revealing that those who are in Christ Jesus are adopted into the spiritual promises given to Abraham. In fact, the apostle Paul refers to us as the « true circumcision. » (Philippians 3:3) In other words, all that God did through the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant are for us as well.

Brothers and sisters, that means that the roots of our faith don't go back only to Jesus and his apostles; our faith goes all the way back to our father Abraham. (Romans 4:16) The day is coming when we will understand so well the roots of our faith that we will make even the Jews jealous of what we have in Christ Jesus.

One of the ways in which we can render the Jews jealous is to honor the three major feasts of the Lord: Pessa'h, Shavuot, and Succot. We should keep these feasts not as Jews, but as those who believe in the Messiah sent to the lost sheep of Israel. We should learn all of the Scriptures, and not just those of the New Testament. And we should love the plan of God that will bring salvation to the nation of Israel.

Let me encourage to do three things:

1. Learn what the Bible teaches about the three major feasts of the Lord, and purpose your heart to honor the Lord of the Feast.
2. Pray for Israel today. Pray for the salvation of all those who live there. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
3. Pray for the Jewish people. As it was in the time of Babylon, so it is today. There are more Jews NOT walking in the ways of the Lord than those who are.

Disciplined to overcome

Sunday, September 18

Daniel 1:8 - *But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.*

Endurance and discipline will bring you victory. Without discipline, success is impossible.

My daughter participated in the Paris marathon. Her goal was to have done it at least once in her life. She trained and disciplined herself regularly to run. Every day she increased duration and distance. At the end of this marathon (about 42km) when she crossed the finish line, she could hardly walk because her legs no longer responded. BUT she had reached the goal she had set for herself and achieved victory through self-imposed discipline.

Following God's standards takes discipline because it's easier to live like the world. It would have been easier for Daniel to eat the same food as the king, without having any of the restrictions.

Discipline is a fight between what we want to do and what we have to do. For instance :

- I have to go to work but I want to stay in bed
- I have to go to visit someone but I prefer to watch TV.

Let's stop looking for excuses to explain our shortcomings: many could be avoided if we were more disciplined. Do not be afraid to question your behavior, or your attitude. There is no shame with God. In the face of failure, don't be afraid to say, « It's my fault! Certainly if I had gone to bed earlier, I would have been less tired and I would have been able to come to the service ! » To live a successful life and please God, we must learn to discipline ourselves. Everything is a matter of decision: YOU are the decision maker.

One of the secrets of a disciplined life is to plan ahead what we need to do, to get organized. We cannot build a solid life if we walk blindly. Every morning I plan my activities and commitments for the day and I take the opportunity to proclaim that it will be a blessed and productive day. That's exactly what happens.

How to be disciplined:

Identify any barriers and wrong motivations

Define what you want

Set goals called SMART

Specific/simple - **M**easurable - **A**chievable - **R**ealistic - **T**emporal.

Prayer: Thank you, Father, for giving me the desire to pursue my goals and for helping me to discipline myself in order to do your will in all areas of this life that you have given me.

How to overcome ?

WEEK 3

DANIEL FAST 2022



Rejoice

Monday, September 19

Romans 5:2-5 - *Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

It is time to discover the power of rejoicing. The origin of the word in English, meaning « cause joy » actually comes from Old French **rejoiss-**, the prefix **re-** expressing intensive force, + **joir meaning 'experience joy'**. To rejoice then means to intentionally and outwardly express the joy that one experiences inwardly. That is why the joy of the Lord is our strength.

So how do we experience that joy? The above passage reveals the key : « we rejoice in our sufferings, KNOWING.... » There is a level of faith that comes of being fully convinced of the promised outcome. This conviction is formed « because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. » We desperately need to connect with the Holy Spirit more than ever before! He is the one who makes God's love for us a reality, not just a nice, poetic idea.

When we are fully persuaded that everything that God does and allows is because of His love, we can rejoice in any circumstance, even in suffering. God doesn't delight in our suffering, He delights in what it produces : endurance. And the result of endurance is character. Realizing this will banish that tendency to slip into complaining, whining and self-pity when we go through trials.

You see, it's not about you. It's about Him, His grace, His work in your heart. If you truly want to see the Lord magnified and glorified in every area of your life, you choose to rejoice and you renounce murmuring. Faith causes you to express joy even when your emotions want to say the contrary. Faith lifts up your eyes and detaches your attention from the discomfort in order to see the triumph beyond your suffering. God's grace allows you to step out of frustration and into joyfulness.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, thank you for your amazing work in my life. You ignite within my soul the power to rejoice. You are opening my eyes to see the immeasurable greatness of God's power in my circumstances. I reach out and receive now the « strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, in order to be filled with all the fullness of God, » according to Eph. 1:18-19. Amen.

Prevailing in prayer

Tuesday, September 20

Acts 4:29-31 - *And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*

This evening is our last prayer meeting where we gather together at the church. I strongly invite at least one member per household to be present and not to miss this divine appointment.

I encourage you all to participate in all of our corporate prayer meetings. The Lord has given us a solid structure through the different prayer meetings within our church: in cell groups or weekly meetings on Saturday by zoom; 2 Sundays per month with « La Brèche » (the Gap) or our prayer time for Israel; morning prayer one week a month. We can thank the Lord for making us a praying church.

But our God wants to take us to a higher level of corporate prayer and faith, so that we can face all that we encounter to fulfill God's will and increase our influence as a local church. We still have territory to win in the spirit, and this will require a higher level of commitment and active participation on the part of each of us during the various prayer meetings throughout the year.

The challenges facing our generation are significant. The greater the challenges, the higher my level of prayer should be. God calls churches to become houses of prayer like in the book of Acts. Our nation needs to see a church that shakes the place where God's people gather to pray, a church that pushes back the darkness through its intercession, a church that experiences an outpouring of God's power and presence to free the captives, open blind eyes and break the chains of all kinds of bondage.

To see this would not take much, it would be enough for each of us to realize that our intercession, our hands lifted with a heart that cries out to God to save the lost and free the captives, is of great value before our Heavenly Father. It would be enough for every man, every woman to really take it to heart and commit to raising their level of commitment for the times when we gather to pray. Will you be that man, will you be that woman?

Prayer: Lord, I realize that the times we are living in are times when the level of intercession is crucial. I also have this conviction that you have made us priests for our generation, and I really take this to heart. So today I commit myself for the duration of this year to participate actively and regularly in the various times of collective prayer. I have faith that we will see more of your glory in our gatherings with lives changed and cities transformed by the manifestation of your power and of the prophetic. Amen.

Remarkable Endurance

Wednesday, September 21

Revelation 2:2,19 et 3:10 - *I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil ... I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first... Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world,...*

Three times in his letters to the seven churches, the Lord emphasized the fact that he noticed the endurance of his people: those of Ephesus, those of Thyatira, and those of Philadelphia. What a testimony! These churches had to face all kinds of opposition. For example, Ephesus was known as a city of size, wealth, and power whose main economies were rooted in trade and idol worship. The Temple of Artemis was located in the heart of the city. The Apostle Paul had spent 3 years there, but was eventually expelled from the city when the silversmiths' union staged a riot (Acts 19:26-41). The reason is that the gospel impacted the sale of trinkets dedicated to the goddess Diana. But that didn't stop the church from growing and expanding its influence.

I want my endurance to be noticed in heaven! How about you? Perhaps you face opposition because you preach the gospel to those around you in word and deed. (*Be careful, don't think your boss is persecuting you if you spend your time at work reading the Bible instead of doing a good job!*) Perhaps you encounter spiritual opposition when you intercede for your family, your neighborhood, your region. Perhaps you are being criticized for taking a stand against unrighteous laws. Whatever is the source of opposition, it's a great opportunity to get noticed for your endurance.

Let us follow the example of the blind man who refused to be silent when Jesus passed by: He cried out, « Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me! » And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, « Son of David, have mercy on me! » And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him, « What do you want me to do for you? » He said, « Lord, let me recover my sight. » Jesus said to him, « Recover your sight; your faith has made you well. » (Luke 18:38-42) Jesus always notices someone who is willing to persevere and not yield to opposition.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your concern and loving attention. You never forget me, you never neglect me. I want my perseverance to touch your heart and make you proud of me. I do not seek your approval, and I can do nothing to win more of your love, but I want my endurance to please and glorify you. Strengthen me in my resolution, I pray. Amen.

How to overcome in my commitment to church

Thursday, September 22

Luke 10:19-20 - *Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*

We have an enemy who has only one objective to divert our eyes from the essential and the plan of God by all possible means in order to rob us, kill us and destroy us. But Our Lord has given us power over all the power of the enemy, with this promise: that nothing can harm us.

As we all know, we are in a war that includes several battles throughout our life on Earth. The good news is that whatever the outcome of the battles we face in life (lost or won), we have this assurance that in the end we win the war if we remain committed to Christ.

There are several categories of life's battles, but let's look at two of them:

1) The battles you win: These are the ones which, like for the disciples of Luke 10 : 18, will fill us with joy, inspire us to praise and worship God for all that He has done in a situation. They have the effect of strengthening our faith and showing us that God is with us.

2) The battles you lose: These are the ones for which you have no desire to rejoice, to praise or to worship God. But they are often crucial for our growth and development if we know how to learn from our mistakes. The ultimate goal is that we become like Christ.

These battles show us the strength and depth within us, or what needs to be treated and healed in relation to our love and our attachment to the Lord and to His work (the quality of fruit that we produce). What we call failures allows us to get up and sometimes reposition ourselves to continue our race with perseverance and tenfold determination.

One of the conditions is to keep our eyes fixed on the essential which is at the end of verse 20, because even in battles that seem difficult or lost, I will get up and continue my race because what delights me more than anything else is that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life and in this I have more than conquered. « *I never lose. Either I win or I learn.* » (Nelson Mandela)

Prayer: Lord, I want to thank you and express my gratitude to you because I have this joy and this conviction that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And it is because of this reality that I want my whole life to honor you. Whatever battles or opposition I face, I decide to continue and complete my race for the glory of Name. Amen.

Praying with perseverance

Friday, September 23

Acts 4:33 - *And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.*

We see in this verse the power of God flowing through the apostles. We too, you and I, have that faith potential to see the blessings of our Lord fulfilled on this earth.

But in order to do so, we must first endure the good fight of faith and persevere by renewing times of prayer to see our prayer bowls filled and ascending to God where they are stored:

Revelation 5:8: « *And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.* »

Our prayers accumulate and release the power of the Spirit. Knowing this, we find the perseverance to continue to pray without ceasing!

Daniel had to persevere 21 days to obtain the answer to his prayer and allow the angel to visit him. (Daniel 10:12-14).

Likewise on Mount Carmel, Elijah persevered in prayer for the rain to fall: he had to ask his servant 7 times to go and look at the top if the rain was coming, before seeing the answer to his prayer. (1 Kings 18:42-44.)

Notice that for every battle, we must persevere and even sometimes struggle in prayer to release the power of the Spirit for God's work to be done.

God has decided to work on earth through Man. So work with Him for the advancement of His Kingdom. He reveals His will and we call it into existence when we pray and declare what He has revealed. This sometimes requires consistent, insistent prayer until it comes to pass.

Have you stopped praying for a matter because the answer was slow in coming? Stir yourself up once again in prayer with perseverance, until you see the fulfillment of the promise.

Prayer: Lord, help us to pray with faith. Fill us again with the Holy Spirit so that we will win the battles we will have to fight. Strengthen us and inspire us in prayer day by day. With You we will be more than conquerors, according to Your promise. Amen.

Study in order to endure

Saturday September 24

2 Timothy 2:15 - *Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Just one more day and we will have come to the end of the Daniel Fast 2022. But it is far from being the end of the work of God in our lives. We've been talking about enduring in order to succeed. There is one last way you can be sure that your ability to endure is intact: training!

The word « study » in our text is translated from the Greek word *spoudazo* (spoo-dad'-zo) which literally means to use speed. In other words: make effort, be earnest, use diligence, work hard, or in this case, study well. We could also use the negative of the word: don't be lazy, don't procrastinate, don't neglect, and especially, don't be indifferent.

Paul's exhortation to his son in the faith was crucial to Timothy's success in the ministry. Paul had mentored Timothy and taught him the Scriptures. But now it was up to Timothy to learn how to trust in the Lord and believe for the miracles himself.

It is a good thing to be a part of a good church, have close friends, and well-trained pastors who will take of you. But if you need these things after being in Christ after a few years, then you are still a babe in Christ. As long as you are dependent on these things for your faith, then you will not endure hardship for very long before crumbing and losing your faith.

Take your training seriously. Take seriously the need to grow yourself, push yourself, and better yourself. That might mean joining the Discipleship School this year. It may mean doing an on-line course. But whatever it means for you, do it! Don't hesitate, don't make excuses.

In the space provided I encourage to write down at least three things you can do in the next several months to further your training as a disciple of Jesus.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Prayer : Dear Heavenly Father, forgive me for my indifference and my excuses for not pursuing further training. I want to be earnest and diligent as a disciple of Christ. I trust you to provide the means and by your grace, I commit myself to developing better habits and going deeper in the Word of God this year. I desire to grow and increase and bring you glory, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Staying focused

Sunday September 25

Ephesians 6:18 - *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

One of the first things you learn in marriage is that it is not the one huge « gift of a lifetime » that makes for a meaningful relationship. Rather it is the small things of value that are done every day that bring success. Any farmer will tell you that a nice steady light rain is far better for the crops than one huge downpour in the midst of a drought.

People are looking for an experience that will change them forever. Though being born-again by the Spirit is such an experience, it is only the starting point in a wonderful spiritual journey. The thing that will improve your life the most is NOT the « once-in-a-lifetime » conference - as great and as helpful as those are. Rather, it is the daily discipline, the consistent prayer and Bible study, the regular attending of worship services, the faithful giving of the tithe, the determination to always say « No » to temptation while pressing in to know God more. It is the small things done daily, over and over and over, that will make the biggest difference in your life.

Throughout my 40 years of pastoral ministry, and my more than 60 years on this planet, I've seen the lives of people who have gone through the same experiences as me and have had similar training as me, but haven't advanced much at all in the life with the Lord. Why? They lack daily, persistent, determined discipline.

In Paul's passage to the Ephesians about spiritual warfare, he finishes by exhorting them to pray regularly for all the saints. But he tells them to pray with « all perseverance. » The Greek word is *proskarteresis*, which comes from the root word *kartereo*, meaning to be strong, or to endure. The prefix « pro » signifies towards something.

In other words Paul encourages the people to pray with all endurance towards something, or in view of some kind of reward or answer. We must always be focused on what is in front of us, not what is behind us.

The word *proskarteresis* can also be understood as being persistent in the small things. It is when we are persistent in the small things that the big rewards will eventually come.

So, as we bring the Daniel Fast 2022 to a close, let me encourage you to stay focused this year on what is before you. Don't allow yourself to get bogged down by things in the past, and things you have no control over. Be persistent in the small daily disciplines that, over time, will make the biggest difference in your life.

Thank you for doing the fast with us. I am so proud of you for staying true until the end. May God bless you and keep you. May He make His face shine on you and give you peace. May He turn His gaze towards you and give you peace. In the highest name, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The autumn feasts

ANNEX

Leviticus 23:1 - *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.*

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and led them through the wilderness He gave them 7 feasts which they were to honor every year. In addition to the seven feasts, God also gave them the weekly sabbath day during which they were to also honor Him through ceasing from their professional activities.

The seven feasts are all mentioned in Leviticus chapter 23: Passover (v 5), Unleavened bread (v 6), First Fruits (v 10), Pentecost (v16), Trumpets (v 24), Repentance or Atonement (v 27), Tabernacles (v 39). The ones that are called the « major » feasts are: Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. They are considered « major » because every man of Israel was required to go to Jerusalem and present himself before the Lord on each of the major feasts.

Over time the « minor » feasts became interwoven with the major feasts. Hence, the feast of Unleavened Bread is incorporated into Passover. First Fruits is incorporated into Pentecost. The feasts of Trumpets and Atonement are incorporated into Tabernacles.

Because the feast of Trumpets begins on September 25th this year, I wanted to give you a brief description of the three autumn feasts of the Lord. The Feast of Trumpets, or Rosh Hashana in Hebrew, signifies the beginning of the New Year. It is a time the trumpets (made of a ram's horn) are blown throughout the land. The trumpet is a prophetic instrument mentioned throughout the Bible, and it always signifies the beginning of something new. It is the only instrument specifically mentioned among the angels. The archangel Michael will blow the Trumpet at the coming again of the Lord. And many believe that the Lord was born on the feast of Trumpets.

The feast of Atonement occurs this year on October 5th and is considered to be the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. This is the time when the high priest would have gone into the Holy of Holies with the blood of an animal to atone for the sins of Israel. There are no sacrifices today in Judaism, so the Jews fast and repent of their sin. It is a wonderful time for us to pray that Yeshua would reveal Himself once again to the physical descendants of Abraham.

The Feast of Tabernacles lasts 8 days beginning on October 9th this year. It is first a commemoration of the 40 years during which Israel lived in tents in the desert. However, for those of us who are in Jesus, it is a celebration of the fact that He has made us to be His Tabernacle on the earth. Ultimately, it is a celebration that He will soon come again and will Tabernacle, Himself, here on the earth!

It is important for Christians to remember that God justified Abraham by his faith before circumcision, before the sabbath, and centuries before the creation of the feasts. Nevertheless, the Feasts do belong to the Lord. And if He is my Lord, then these are my feasts as well! I will not celebrate them like the Jews, but I will celebrate them. I encourage you today to seek the Lord in His feasts. Mark the moment; remember what He has done; and reflect of how each of these feasts prophesy of what He will yet do.