

Week One - Dedication During Distraction

Intro: What was one takeaway you had from Pastor Branden's devotional online? If you heard the sermon, how does that impact your takeaway?

Scripture Reading: Take some time to read through Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:1-13 as a group out loud. What was significant to you now that you've heard it? What similarities and differences do you notice through these passages?

Questions:

1. Why do you think the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted after His baptism? Why not go straight into ministering to others after hearing the Father say "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17)?
2. What experience do you have with fasting in your life? Did you fast from food, or something else? What are some other things you can fast from other than food?
3. How can we crave the Word of God more than we crave food itself? "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). What does it take for you to love the Word of God in your life?
4. Branden highlights three different types of temptation that Jesus experienced in this passage: physical, intellectual, and spiritual. Physical temptation is giving into "the flesh" (see Romans 8:1-17 for a deeper look if interested), our physical desires contrary to God's Word in our lives. Intellectual temptation is experienced when we choose to trust other people/sources as a higher authority than God and His Word. Spiritual temptation is similar, but on a level deeper than both the physical and intellectual. It is the temptation to doubt the character of God and seeking spiritual refuge in things other than Him. What kind of temptation do you struggle with most, and how can we keep our focus on God?

ACTION STEP

This week starts our practice of prayer and fasting. This coming Sunday, grab a booklet from the Hub that guides you through the practices. If you don't attend Christ Wesleyan, ask a friend or your leader to grab one for you. This will help you begin to practice prayer and fasting as a group, and keep these thoughts from Branden's Sermon in mind:

How to pray and fast effectively:

- A. Choose a daily habit to go without.
- B. Spend time alone with God every day
- C. Make sure you are being led by the Spirit through prayer
- D. Rely on and know Scripture

CLOSING ACTIONS

Take some time to collect **Prayer Requests** and **Praises**. Write them in a group chat (like your Church Center App messages) so that others can pray if they couldn't make it.

Take some time to announce personal and church events that are coming up! It's a great way to have fun and grow as a group together.