

Introduction:

- Do you know that it is impossible to lick your elbow.
- Apt 1 starts Saturday 28th of January two sessions 9am-1pm
- This morning I will be introducing two things we will be doing in January to refocus spiritually and to prepare to follow Jesus very closely as He moves in our community, His church, and our families.
 - One, we are going to do another corporate fast. But yes, there will be doughnuts after church.
 - Two, I am encouraging you to receive communion daily for the next 31 days.
- With these in mind let us begin.

I. All Eyes On Jesus

- A. Next Sunday we will begin a 21 day fast. Fasting is a spiritual discipline, like reading your Bible, praying, serving others. It is something we all should do regularly. We do it for the purpose of encounter with God. To keep our flesh in check. To humble ourselves before God. To grow in authority.
1. January 8-28 are the days we will be fasting. This gives you a week to prepare... cut sugars, caffeine, cut back on portions, etc.
 2. Ways to fast:
 - a) Just water/liquids
 - b) Daniel fast - veggies
 - c) Partial fast - one meal a day....etc.
 3. We are calling our fast: **All Eyes On Jesus!** "Roar Lion of Judah Roar."
 - a) We are going to fix our gaze on Jesus!
 - b) We are going to prepare to move with Him as He leads us.
 - c) Do you know why lions roar?
 - (1) Lions are social animals, (relationship) and one way they communicate is through the roar.
 - (2) Lions roar to warn the intruders to stay away.
 - (3) Both male and female lions roar to show health and strength.
 - (4) They use it to communicate their location with other pride members.
 - (5) Jesus is called the Lion of Judah! He roars to communicate with us because He wants relationship. He roars to warn and frighten intruders. He roars to let the church know where He is and where He is going.
- B. Why eyes on Jesus? Jesus is on the move! In Luke chapter 4 we see Jesus on the move. He is lead by the Spirit into the wilderness (vs.1) and He comes out of the wilderness in the power of the Spirit (vs 14).
1. As was His custom he went to the synagogue on Sabbath day.

2. He was handed the scroll of Isaiah and began to read.
3. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to..."*
- C. *"And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him."* (Luke 4:20, ESV) The Lion of the tribe of Judah was on the move!
 1. Fixed on him. They were staring at Him. They were gazing at Him. We are called to fix our eyes on Jesus too! I.e. Staring Contest!
 2. If your eyes are fixed on Jesus, you will be less likely to be distracted from Jesus and less likely to get a distorted view of Jesus.
 3. "When all eyes are on someone or something, everyone is carefully watching that person or thing, often because they are expecting something to happen." Free Dictionary.
- D. Keep your eyes on Jesus! All Eyes on Jesus!
 1. *"Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God."* (Hebrews 12:2, The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language)
 2. *"We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne."* (Hebrews 12:2, NLT)
 3. *"Looking away [from all that will distract] to Jesus, Who is the Leader and the Source of our faith [giving the first incentive for our belief] and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection]. He, for the joy [of obtaining the prize] that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Hebrews 12:2, AMP)
 4. IE. Horse racing is a sport. Do you know it is customary before the race to put blinders on the horse? IE. Put your hands up by eyes as blinders. A horse with blinders on looks straight ahead. Does not get afraid. Focuses on where he is going.
 - a) As a young person going through life, you will find yourself in frustrating, discouraging, and maybe even upsetting situations.
 - b) We need to remember to keep our eyes focused on Christ in those times.
 - c) It is easy to lose sight of our Christian beliefs when we go through adversity, difficulty and grief.
 5. Mt 14:25-ff. Peter walks on water. In verse 30, he takes his eyes off of Jesus and starts to sink! We tend to focus on three other places other than Jesus.

- a) One, we tend to focus on ourselves.
 - b) Two, we tend to look, to our right and to our left, to see what others are doing.
 - c) Three, we tend to focus on the future...and worry.
 - d) Peter could walk on water by faith as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus.
- E. We are called to fix our eyes on Jesus because what we look at most we become. This is why we speak of beholding Jesus. le. Joshua Lattimore walking on tightrope. Fix your eyes on the tree not the rope. le. A dancer who spins has to fix their eyes on one point or they get dizzy.
1. One of the ways that will help us fix our eyes on Jesus is point #2 Receive communion every day. Let's read 1 Cor. 11:23-26

II. Receive Communion Every Day

- A. *"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."* (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, ESV) Jn 6:63, 35 (I'm Bread of Heaven)
- B. In a world of distractions, remembrance helps us connect.
1. le. In our family birthdays are pretty important. We celebrate one another's lives, being born, valuing. The fact that we remember connects us.
 2. This is what communion is. When we receive communion and remember His body and His blood, we are connecting ourselves with His name, His nature, and His goodness regardless of our circumstances. And when He is remembered He too connects with us!
 3. It is the act of beholding, fixing our gaze, our stare onto the Lord Jesus. We are keeping our eyes upon Him.
 4. One of the biggest battles of the Christian walk is becoming numb to Jesus. I think if we are all honest with ourselves we could say the same thing. We get distracted, we get distant from Him, we feel He doesn't care about us, and unbelief sets in. We are numb to Him.
 5. Daily receiving communion is a practice of remembrance. It will cause you to connect with His love, your priesthood as believers, His sacrifice, His passion for you, that you are significant. My hope is that daily you will be spiritually nourished by gazing at the One who gazes at you.

- C. I will be writing a daily devotional for you if you choose to use them. Remember, we are wanting to awaken our hearts to His presence and His love. We desire to draw near.
1. Bread - body. Represents his body. (Matzah, Panera, etc)
 2. Juice - His blood of the New Covenant. (Welches)
 3. Don't rush through it. Take time to remember. Think about the scripture. Connect your heart to the reality of the cross.
 4. Journal your thoughts. Journal what Holy Spirit speaks to you over these next 30 days. If you feel like you are just going through the motions. Keep going! IE. You did not loose 5 pounds the first time you exercised, right?

Conclusion:

- Give an invitation