

“I WILL FAST AND PRAY”

LESSON 149 → Matthew 6:5-8, 16-18; 17:14-21

His parents had prayed for his healing since his birth, but now he felt the need to earnestly seek the Lord on his own.

Not too many years ago, on the island of Newfoundland, a young man and woman eagerly awaited the birth of their third child. The day came at last, and a baby boy was added to the family. However, rejoicing at the gift of a healthy child was not to be heard in that home. The baby had been born with a painful, disfiguring skin disease. But, oh, how they loved him.

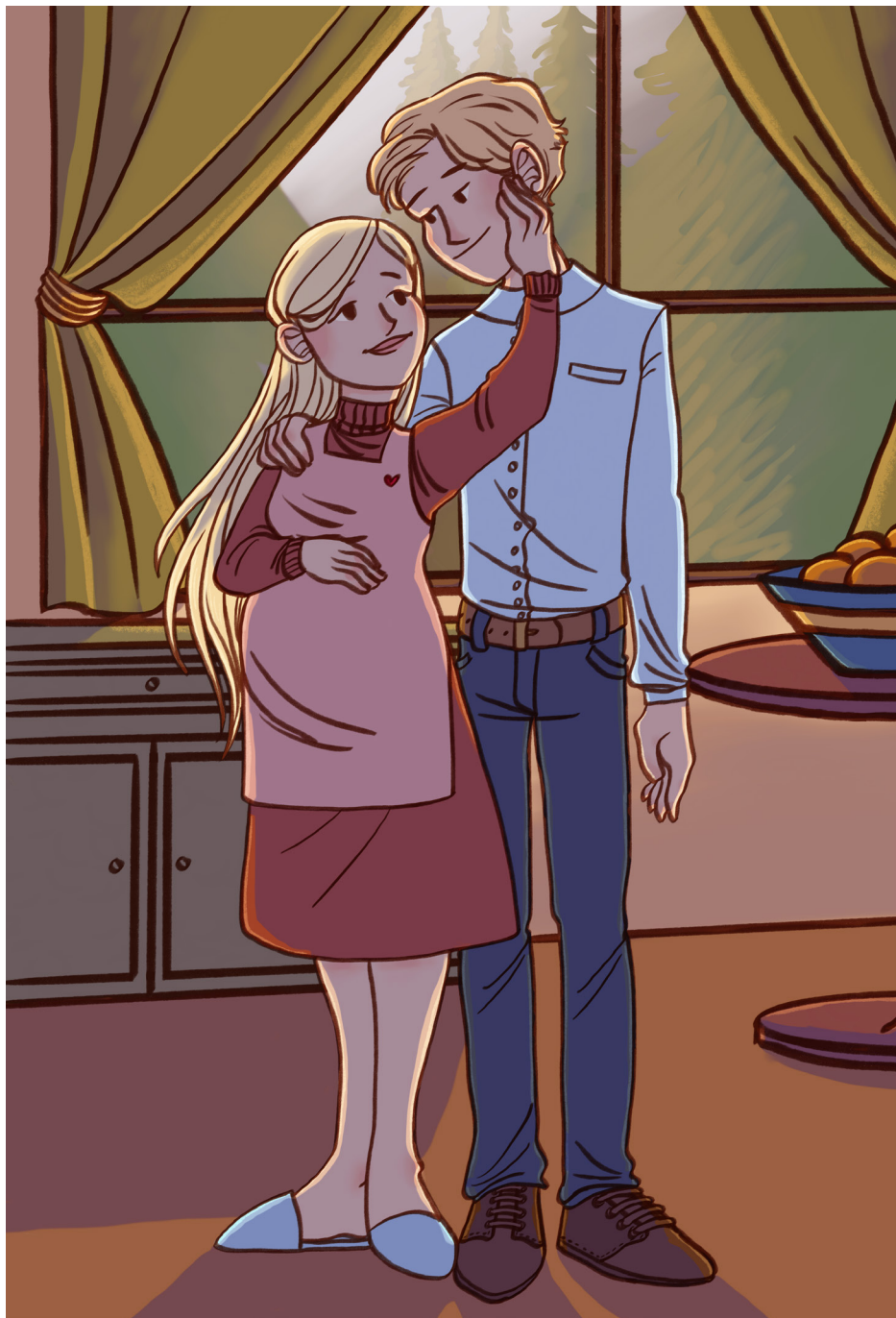
The parents hoped their son would get better in time. Instead, he grew worse. Nothing they did for him brought any improvement in his condition.

His eyes, his hands, and his feet would bleed. As his parents looked at his red and broken skin, they hurt for him, knowing they were helpless to aid him. The doctors said he would have to live with the disease for the rest of his life.

The time came for him to enter school, and as can well be imagined, it was a very difficult experience. The pain and discomfort he was in made the school day hard for him, and for his teacher also. His classmates shied away from him.

In the midst of all this trouble, there was one ray of hope—his mother was a Christian. She loved God and believed He would heal her afflicted son. Many joined with her in prayer for the boy, knowing that God was his only hope, but no healing came.

The father, though not a Christian, was so disturbed by his son’s





KEY VERSE

FASTING WITH PRAYER IS A POWERFUL TOOL.

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. — Matthew 17:21

terrible condition that one night he prayed, “God, if You will heal him, I will give You my life.” A short time later, during the Easter season, the father was wonderfully saved. His son, however, still suffered from the disease.

Not long after, the boy grew even worse. At a time like this, many people either give up hope for the answer they want, or they turn their backs on God, blaming Him for their problem. But those who read their Bibles will find that for every true need we have, God has provided a way for that need to be met.

One Sunday morning in May, the father called his son to breakfast. But this morning was different. When the son came in, he told his dad, “I don’t want any breakfast. I’m going to fast and pray for Jesus to heal me.”

The son had been thinking, Everyone has been praying for my healing, but I still have this disease. Perhaps it is part of God’s plan for my life. If so, then it is something I must bear cheerfully as a Christian. But first I will try something. I will fast and pray, asking God to either help me accept this or to heal me, if it be His will.

When a Christian has a need, he may

choose to fast, which means he decides not to eat so that he might give himself more fully to prayer. In doing this he shows that he is very serious and determined to see God’s will done in answer to his request. In our times, little is said about fasting, and yet we read in the Bible that it was encouraged by Christ himself. In giving us guidelines concerning fasting, Jesus said, “When ye fast,” not, “If ye fast.” He obviously expected Christians to follow His example and use fasting as a means of prevailing in prayer.

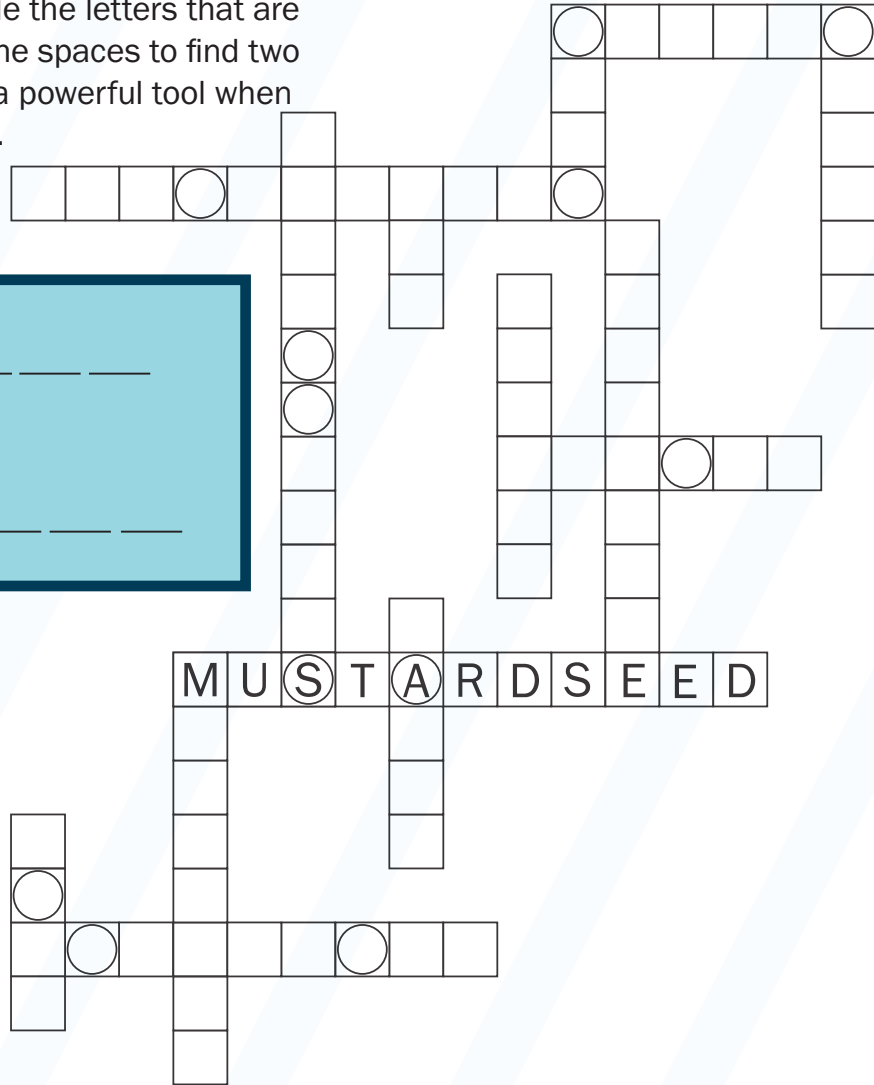
We do not fast just so we can tell those around us that we are doing so. It is something private, just between an individual and God. The Bible tells us that when we fast and pray with the right spirit before God, we can expect Him to reward us openly.

What happened to this young boy from Newfoundland? Just two days after he fasted and prayed, he was completely healed! How thankful he was for Jesus’ wonderful example of prayer and fasting. And you can be sure he is praising God today that he is now able to live a normal life without the pain and suffering he once knew.



**POWERFUL
TOOLS**

The words listed below are from our lesson. Place them where they fit in the puzzle. Unscramble the letters that are circled and fill in the spaces to find two things that make a powerful tool when seeking God's will.



_____ A _____
 AND
 _____ S _____

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| <p>ASK
 FACE
 WASH
 FAITH
 CLOSET</p> | <p>FATHER
 REWARD
 SECRET
 MOUNTAIN
 HYPOCRITE</p> | <p>SYNAGOGUE
 COUNTENANCE
 MUSTARDSEED
 REPETITIONS</p> |
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