

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

**WEDNESDAY's WORD** – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler

to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week

June 7 in the year of our Lord 2017 - #699

## Whew!!!!!!

I almost thought that I wasn't going to be able to share with you today! I've been wrestling with our Church computers all week. Nothing seemed like it wanted to run! I am amazed (and somewhat ashamed) at how dependent I can be on the technology and how stressful it is when it's not working. I suspect many of you can relate. I thought there was something wrong with the computer and so went through all the diagnostics and clean-up procedures. Even called our "computer guy" Tom. It turned out to be that we had gone over our limit of gigabytes of data used and our provider simply slowed down our data rate to a rate so slow that nothing could load. Embarrassed! Red faced!

Technology today IS wonderful! What it allows us to do in communication, study, and entertainment is simply amazing ... a wonderful blessing of living in this time! But I think most of us can acknowledge that we DO have a problem. Addiction to our technology is real. Just watch a group of young people "together" but each with their nose in their phone and not talking. Watch a family at a restaurant not talking but each on their phone. The respected Nielsen's audience and information gathering company, in their "Total Audience Report," reports that Americans 18 and older AVERAGE 11 hours a day on TV, radio, computer, smartphones.

I've been thinking for some time, that for our day, the Biblical discipline of fasting might best be applied to technology. Biblical fasting is the discipline of giving up something that is very important to you ... like eating ... as a way to express devotion to and spend time with your Lord. Jesus taught that while He was present on earth His disciples didn't fast because they were in His Divine presence! But after He was gone from earth His followers would fast, but that it would be sincere, not for show, and not take the place of hands-on ministry!

**"One day the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked him, 'Why don't your disciples fast like we do and the Pharisees do?' Jesus replied, 'Do wedding guests mourn while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.'" Matthew 9:14-15 NLT**

Fasting may occur for a long period like Jesus' 40 day fast in the wilderness, or may be for a shorter time period, for example, fasting from one meal to spend that time in prayer. Could you "fast" from computer use one day a week and spend some extra time in God's Word? Could you "fast" from your smartphone during family meals and really engage in family conversation? Could you "fast" from TV for an evening and go for a long walk with the Lord? Could you "fast" from Facebook for a day and write a few "old fashioned" letters or notes of love, appreciation, or encouragement. The "big deal" is not so much how much time you set for your "fast" (*that's a private matter between you and the Lord*) ... it's the discipline ... the heart emotion ... of saying to the Lord, *"Lord it is You ... serving You ... knowing You ... listening to You ... that is more important to me than anything else."*

Maybe you are not feeling truly “addicted” to technology. Good! But what does have a “hold” on you? Hobbies? Work? Sports? Crafts? Reading? Would you be willing to “fast” from the thing(s) you love the most to express your love & devotion to the One who loves you most?

One time when ministry was intense, Jesus said to His disciples,

***“Crowds of people were coming and going. Jesus and His followers did not even have time to eat. He said to them, ‘Come with me. We will go to a quiet place to be alone. There we will get some rest.’”*** Mark 6:31 ICB

Can you hear the Lord inviting YOU to a quiet place? Pastor Larry <><