

Erin Davis

F A S T I N G



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40 Devotions to Satisfy the Hungry Heart

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FASTING



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To my Aunt Rhonda, whose love for food inspired mine and whose love for Jesus makes me hungry for more of Him.

### *Aunt Rhonda's Perfect Pie Crust*

*In a glass bowl add 2 cups of all-purpose flour plus 1/2 tsp. salt.*

*Make a well in the center with a spoon.*

*Pour 1/2 cup plus 1 tbl. Crisco oil into the well and begin mixing with a fork.*

*After partially mixed, add 1/4 cup milk and mix with your fingers until it forms a ball.*

*Divide in half and form 2 balls.*

*Roll each ball between two sheets of wax paper.*

*Flip over into a pie pan.*

*Peel off second sheet of wax paper.*

*Fill with filling (preferably fresh peaches).*

*Take the second ball and peel off one sheet of wax paper.*

*Flip over onto filling to form second crust.*

*Crimp edge and bake.*

*Enjoy!*



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**Dear Reader**, I've thought of you every day of this project. I've imagined your trials and triumphs related to food and faith and longed for you to find lasting satisfaction. Thank you for picking up this book.



Thank you for reading it. And thank you for realizing all I have to offer you is Jesus. *He is enough.*

**Jesus**, truly You satisfy the longing soul, and the hungry soul You fill with good things (Ps. 107:9). I love You and cannot wait to feast at Your banqueting table.

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# INTRODUCTION

There are times when a warm croissant, a bright bowl of fruit, or a steaming cup of coffee feel like perfect, God-given gifts. There are other moments, perhaps more frequent, when food feels like our enemy and our relationship with it becomes a vortex of regret, frustration, and shame.

We read food labels, count calories, and keep lists of favorite recipes, but have you ever stopped to ponder: What does God's Word say about food? The answer might surprise you. It will certainly delight you.

When it comes to what the Bible says about my relationship with food, two words from Mark 9 whet my own appetite to understand. (You'll hear more about this on Day 1.) Like the first bite of chocolate cake, they left me craving more and sent me searching for:

- Other passages that call God's people to fast
- Other examples where the Bible uses food to teach us spiritual principles
- Other times when God invites His people to feast.

I found that God's Word is a smorgasbord that truly satisfies. I am so grateful we will spend the next forty days digging in together.

**This book isn't a call to fast for the next forty days, nor is it a call to strictly feast.** For now I hope you'll simply soak in God's Word and seek to understand His heart for how food and faith intersect. Sip slowly on Bible passages like a perfect cup of coffee. Really chew on the lessons God is teaching you through His Word.

Each daily devotional finishes with "Setting the Table" and "Inviting the Feast." The inspiration for those sections came from an unforgettable prayer I heard a long time ago. If I close my eyes and try to picture her, I cannot see the face of the woman I first heard offer these words to Jesus, but the memory of her prayer has stayed with me. I've repeated her prayer many times since. I hope you'll do the same.

*Lord, we've set the table. We ask you to bring the feast.*

Isn't that the Christian life in one bite? We do what we can. We bring our best intentions, our brightest devotions, our purest worship to Jesus as acts of setting the table. Then we wait with anticipation for Him to bring the feast, to fill our hearts with His truth, to fill our homes with life rhythms that truly honor Him. He always does. He always will.

You can set the table right now by opening your Bible and telling God you want to hear from Him. Abandon your ideas about what your relationship with food is "supposed to be." Lay down your guilt about what it has not been in the past. And then commit to meet with Him daily for the next forty days, expecting to be filled.

The Bible celebrates food as a gift while simultaneously inviting us to surrender every area of our lives to Christ's authority—including what we put on our plates. Rather than the yo-yo of loving food and then hating it, Scripture invites us into a different rhythm—**the rhythm of fasting and feasting.**

Hungry to Know Him More,  
Erin

DAY 1

.....  
FASTING  
.....



## THIS KIND

*And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”*

—Mark 9:28–29 NKJV

**M**y life has been changed by a footnote. Mark 9 focuses on an uncomfortable story about a daddy and his demon-possessed boy. Scratch that. The real focus of this passage, of every passage, is Jesus. This account puts His unmatched power over the things that torment us on full display.

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### **READ MARK 9:14–29.**

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As remarkable as these events are, if you’re familiar with the Gospels, you know they’re not exactly outliers. The Bible records so many examples of Jesus healing the sick, driving out the demonic, and even (more than once) raising the dead. Maybe that’s why this particular miracle didn’t arrest my heart until my eyes drifted to the footnotes.

Scan the footnotes of Mark 9 for yourself. In reference to verse 29, do you find a notation that adds “and fasting”?

Some older translations of Scripture leave these two vital words in the text, while the rest relegate Christ's mention of fasting to an afterthought at the bottom of the page. For the sake of time, I won't pull on the thread that unravels the why. But I will focus on what matters most—we all have a *"this kind."*

The boy in this passage was controlled by a dark spirit that responded to prayer and fasting and nothing else. Not fretting. Not begging. Not bargaining. No, Jesus was clear, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

Today, as we sit with our Bibles open, I wonder what "this kinds" you face. Is it a broken relationship that cannot be made right by your best efforts and deepest longings? A bruise on your heart that stays tender no matter how much time goes by? A pattern of sin you cannot break? A root of bitterness you cannot wrench free from the soil? A need you cannot meet? An enemy you cannot defeat?

Let's pause together for a moment and ask the Lord. *What are we most desperate to see driven out of our lives?*

With your "this kind" in mind, take a second look at Mark 9.

When they came to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes disputing with them. When the whole crowd saw him, they were amazed and ran to greet him. He asked them, "What are you arguing with them about?"

Someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has a spirit that makes him unable to speak. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't."  
(vv. 14–18)

Our attention is naturally drawn to the description of the boy convulsing. But look past the drama of his condition and the crowd that clamored for a miracle. Find the disciples. Can't you picture them standing sheepishly in the middle of the melee? Can't you see their eyes drop to their sandals as Jesus declared, "You unbelieving generation, how long will I be with you? How long must I put up with you?"

Can't you almost hear Him sigh as He said, "Bring him to me" (v. 19)?

Why was Jesus so uncharacteristically exasperated? Surely He was not mad at the boy who had been possessed since childhood (v. 21) or the dad who tenderly whimpered, "I do believe; help my unbelief!" (v. 24). Could it be that His disciples had tried to solve this problem in their own strength? That they'd looked for a quick solution that allowed them to bypass admitting their desperate need for His help?

Sin has put every one of us on an uphill battle with pride. Prayer is not our default. We are ever grasping for bootstraps to pull ourselves up by, solutions dependent on our elbow grease, or effortless ways out of trouble.

*Yet the "this kinds" remain.*

Fasting is not just one more way we can wiggle our way out of the trials that constrict us. **God is far too good and too sovereign to be controlled.** Fasting is a step of surrender, a way to showcase that the "this kinds" in our life are beyond us. It's an outward expression of our inner desire to see God do what we cannot. Fasting throws our hands and our eyes up to the Lord as if to say, "I am powerless here, but You are able. You are God. I cannot move another step in this thing without You."

Do you identify with the tired father today? Are you worn out from trying to solve your biggest problems in your own strength? Consider this: Have prayer and fasting been your first and most often deployed weapon, or are they relegated to the footnotes of your life?



Maybe you see yourself in the disciples. You've rubbed plenty of elbow grease into an area of woundedness or weakness only to find it still festering. Do you shake your head and wonder, "Why couldn't [I] drive it out?" (v. 28). My question remains the same: Have prayer and fasting been your first and most often deployed weapon, or are they relegated to the footnotes of your life?

We all have "this kinds." This side of heaven we always will. But Jesus will always be able to drive out what we cannot. We fast and pray to let go of our strength and to tap into His.

## SETTING THE TABLE, INVITING THE FEAST

*Use the prayer prompts below to ask the Lord  
to do an abundant work in your life.*

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### Setting the Table

*Jesus, as I consider Your Word, the “this kinds” that come to my  
mind are . . .*

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## Inviting the Feast

*Lord, I need You. I cannot fix these things on my own. I acknowledge You as God—as the only One powerful enough to loosen the grip of the strongholds that have overtaken me.*

*Rewrite your list from above using this prompt: Lord, I release my attempts to control \_\_\_\_\_ and ask for Your help.*

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