

Series: Talking with God
Message: Fasting

November 3, 2013

Biblical fasting is refraining from food for a certain time for a spiritual purpose.

Power of fasting

Fasting feeds my spirit. Matthew 4:1-11

Fasting cleanses my body.

Fasting reveals my sin. 1 Samuel 7:6

Fasting awakens my compassion. Matthew 25:31-46

A plan for fasting

Absolute fast

Normal fast

Partial fast

When to fast

When the odds are against me. Judges 20

Need uncommon protection. Ezra 8

Beginning a new endeavor. Acts 13:3

Need a major breakthrough. Matthew 5:6

LIFE GROUP HOMEWORK

Take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow and to see God work!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

What is your favorite food?

If you had to eat the same meal 3 times a day for 30 days what would you eat?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read: Matthew 6:16-18

Does Jesus command fasting or does He only comment on how to fast properly? What should we do and how should we look when fasting? Why?

One key to fasting is motivation. What are the differences in motivation between truly seeking God and fasting to gain power or admiration?

Read: Matthew 9:14-15

Did Jesus expect His disciples to fast after He was gone?

It is said that fasting brings us closer to God. Could this be one of the reasons Jesus said His disciples would fast after He would no longer be with them? What are other reasons?

"Fasting is not an end in itself; it is a means by which we can worship the Lord and submit ourselves in humility to Him. We don't make God love us any more than He already does if we fast, or if we fast longer. Fasting invites God into the problem. Then in the strength of God, victory is possible." -Elmer L. Towns

Read: Isaiah 58:3-10 In this passage, Isaiah tells us that the Jews were fasting, but God was not answering their requests. Why not? What kind of fast does God want?

When people turn from mistreating others, to helping them with their needs, does that in itself count as fasting? Are we to obey when we fast, obey before we fast, or obey instead of fasting?

Is fasting a way to get God to answer our prayers?

Will fasting solve our problems?

What does God promise to do if His people fast in the right way?

Take it Home

The next time you feel the need to fast for any spiritual reason, please consider these benefits that fasting produces:

- 1) Spiritual examination and introspection
- 2) Spiritual confession
- 3) Spiritual intercession

"Fasting reminds us that we are sustained 'by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God' (Matthew 4:4). Food does not sustain us; God sustains us." -Richard J. Foster

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