

# FASTING AND FEASTING

Hi, and welcome. Today we'll talk about fasting and feasting and why Jesus chose fasting as his place of strength.

## Scripture

Matthew 4:1–4 (ESV)

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” <sup>4</sup> But he answered, “It is written,

“ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

## Devotional

After Jesus was baptized, he was led out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Before the temptation, our Savior fasted 40 days and 40 nights. Think about that. How many of us have felt weak after missing breakfast? How many of us have let our “hanger” affect the way we treat our coworkers, spouses, or children? How many of us would rather *feast* before our temptation? In the Garden of Eden, we're told that Adam (the other son of God (Luke 3:38)) was in paradise before being tempted by the devil. He had everything he needed or could desire. And despite that, when the temptation came, Adam and Eve both ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, sinned, and were cast out of God's garden and presence. Jesus on the other hand, knowing the temptation was coming, decided to *fast* instead of *feast*. Jesus, being fully man, went without food for 40 days and nights so that when the tempter came, he would be ready. Jesus wasn't coming from a place of weakness, but from a place of strength. Jesus knew that man doesn't live on bread, but on God. And so, when the devil came and tempted Jesus (and he was tempted (Heb 4:15)) Jesus was already operating from the place of the greatest spiritual strength. He had solely relied on the Father to sustain him in the wilderness. He didn't lash out in anger, he didn't doubt God's provision, and he certainly wasn't “hangry” to the point of sinning.

Fasting is the ultimate humbling of ourselves and relying on God. Fasting tells us and the world around us that it is God who will sustain us. If fasting has left you feeling empty, angry, or spiritually weak, maybe it's because you've been turning to the wrong thing to sustain you. Maybe in your fasting you turn to feast on the world. “Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and *feast on faithfulness*. (Ps 37:3, alternate translation of the ESV). When you fast from food (or anything else that sustains you), feast on God's faithfulness to you and your faithfulness to him.

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## Prayer

Lord, show me where I have feasted on the wrong things. Show me where I need to fast. And through it all, I trust you to sustain me.