

**MATTHEW: Prepare the Way**  
Testing, Identity, and Obedience

**Scriptures:**

Matthew 3:13-1  
Deuteronomy 8  
Hebrews 5:8-9  
Deuteronomy 8:1 (Deut 5:33, 6:24)  
Psalm 63:3  
Hebrews 4:14-16  
James 4:6-8

*More than any other single Discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David said, "I humbled my soul with fasting" (Ps. 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear—if they are within us, they will surface during fasting. At first we will rationalize that our anger is due to our hunger then we know that we are angry because the spirit of anger is within us. We can rejoice in this knowledge because we know that healing is available through the power of Christ. - Richard Foster*

<b>Appetite</b>	“If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”	But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”” (Deut 8:3)
<b>Approval</b>	“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you,” and “On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.””	“Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” (Deut 6:16)
<b>Ambition</b>	“All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”	“Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”” (Deut 6:13)

**RESOURCES (Links published on JICC App)**

**3DQ - 3 Discipleship questions to ask each other:**

- What is God saying to you? What are you going to do about it? How can I help?
1. See chart above. Consider the ways that Jesus was tested. Which one of these temptations are you most prone to right now? Why would you say that?
  2. Now, (1) consider the lie you may be believing that would cause you to fail in that way, (2) identify the truth in Scripture that you need to replace with that lie, and (3) begin meditating on that truth. If you have no other truth to consider, then focus on coming to Jesus in Hebrews 4:14-16.
  3. Consider how obedience is tied to life (Re-read Deuteronomy 8). How have you seen that true in your life? Share stories with each other to encourage and build faith.

**How can you participate in the church fast? Make a plan. Share it with someone else. Sign up and get resources. [www.jicc.us/fast](http://www.jicc.us/fast)**

**Brief article: The Purpose of Fasting by Richard Foster**  
<https://renovare.org/articles/the-purpose-of-fasting>