

Series: Knowing You

Title: 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

Scripture: Matthew 6:16-18

Speaker: Pastor Ian Bonthron



Would you like to _____ God more?

Fasting is _____ something for a season to draw _____ to God. In fasting, God is primarily after our _____ heart health.

1. It's a part of our _____ life _____ with God.

Matthew 6:16-18 ESV

16 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

2. It's not _____ your spirituality.

Matthew 6:16-18 ESV

16 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Fasting is no license to be unloving. It would be sad to lack concern and care for others around us because of this expression of heightened focus on God. Love for God and for neighbor go together. Good fasting mingles horizontal concern with the vertical. If anything, others should even feel more loved and cared for when we're fasting." —David Mathis

3. It's _____ yourself before God.

Psalm 35:11b ESV

Malicious witnesses rise up; they ask me of things that I do not know.

4. Seeking God's _____.

Acts 13:2-3 ESV

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

5. Seeking God's _____.

Jonah 3: 5-10 ESV

5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. 6 The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water,⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." 10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

6. Seeking God's _____.

Ezra 8:21-23 ESV

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. 22 For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, "The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him." 23 So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

7. To deepen spiritual _____.

Matthew 4:1-2 ESV

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Over and over, we see God's pattern of fasting to draw His people closer to Himself.

In your fasting, _____ that you will draw closer to God, don't _____ that you will always receive specific answers.

21 days of Prayer and Fasting

September 1-21

Do I have to fast for all 21 days?

Do I have to fast from food?

1. Water fast: Drinking water only for a period of time.
2. Daniel Fast: Giving up "rich foods" (exp. desserts, coffee, alcohol, meat).
3. Day Fast: Fasting every other day or picking certain day(s) to fast from food.
4. Meal Fast: Skipping a meal everyday.
5. Media Fast: Fasting from media or social media.

Should I tell someone I am fasting?

No, if you are bragging. But I would challenge you to do this with someone so you can support and encourage each other.

Prayer Prompts: <https://princetownchurch.com/subscribe-to-our-weekly-email>

Gatherings: September 7, 14, and 21 at 11:20 AM

What if I mess up or forget to fast on a certain day?

How do I fast and still work/take care of my family?

How do I fast with my kids?

How do I fast and exercise?

Do I have to do the fast to attend church during our fast?

Fasting is giving up something for a season to draw closer to God.