

Matthew 6:16-18

¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 9:14-15

¹⁴ Then John’s disciples came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁵ Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.”



Fast from What’s Eating You

Matthew 6:16-18

5/6/2018

GIVING DEFINITION

- Christian fasting is a believer’s voluntary abstinence from **FOOD** for **SPIRITUAL** purposes.
- For this to have spiritual benefit, this habit must be rooted in your **RELATIONSHIP** with Christ, and practiced with the desire to become **MORE LIKE** Christ.
- Jesus **EXPECTS** that his followers would fast. (Mt. 9:14-15)
- Christian fasting must have a biblical **PURPOSE**. But none of these purposes **EARN** God’s favor.

BIBLICAL PURPOSES FOR FASTING

1. To **STRENGTHEN** prayer. (Ezra 8:23)
2. To seek God’s **GUIDANCE**. (Acts 14:23)
3. To express **GRIEF**. (Judges 20:26, 1 Samuel 20:34)
4. To seek **DELIVERANCE** or **PROTECTION**. (2 Chr 20:3-4, Esth. 4:16)
5. To express **REPENTANCE** and turn to God. (Joel 2:12)
6. To **HUMBLE** yourself before God. (Psalm 35:13)
7. To express concern for the **WORK** of God. (Nehemiah 1:3-4)
8. To minister to the needs of **OTHERS**. (Isaiah 58)
9. To overcome **TEMPTATION** and **DEDICATE** yourself to God. (Matthew 4:1-11)
10. To express **LOVE** and **WORSHIP** to God. (Luke 2:37)

Will you let go of any fear that you have of fasting?

Will you fast as the Holy Spirit leads you?

Will you plan a time of fasting to dedicate to God this spiritual habit?



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GROWTH GROUP DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

To catch the weekend message, go to: MissionTrailsChurch.com or the [MTC App](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Parent / Child Dedication** – May 13
- **Baptism Celebration** – May 20
- **GLOCAL BBQ Sunday** – June 3
- **Amor House-building trip** – July 19-21

DIGGING DEEPER

1. **Was there anything from the sermon that stood out to you as helpful? Important? Confusing? Frustrating?**

2. Read [Matthew 6:1, 16-18](#), and [Matthew 9:9-15](#).
What is Jesus saying about fasting and its use?

3. Read [Isaiah 58:1-5](#). God speaks to the Israelites through the prophet Isaiah about their religious use of fasting. And it's not a compliment.

What are they doing wrong?

What can you learn about the right use of fasting in your life.

GETTING PERSONAL

4. Here is the definition for *fasting* we used on Sunday:

*Christian **fasting** is a believer's voluntary abstinence from **food** for **spiritual** purposes. For this to have spiritual benefit, this habit must be rooted in your **relationship** with Christ and practiced with the desire to become **more like** Christ.*

How could you see a potential positive use of this in your life?

What barriers do you have to using this spiritual habit?

BRINGING IT HOME

5. Here is the list of valuable purposes for fasting we covered during the sermon. **Are there any of these that you've used...and how did it go? Are there any that you're needing to use in your life right now?**

- To STRENGTHEN PRAYER.
 - (Ezra 8:23)
- To seek God's GUIDANCE.
 - (Acts 14:23)
- To express GRIEF.
 - (Judges 20:26, 1 Samuel 20:34)
- To seek DELIVERANCE or PROTECTION.
 - (2 Chronicles 20:3-4, Esther 4:16)
- To express REPENTANCE and turn to God.
 - (Joel 2:12)
- To HUMBLE yourself before God.
 - (Psalm 35:13)
- To express concern for the WORK OF GOD.
 - (Nehemiah 1:3-4)
- To minister to the needs of OTHERS.
 - (Isaiah 58)
- To overcome TEMPTATION and DEDICATE yourself to God.
 - (Matthew 4:1-11)
- To express LOVE and WORSHIP to God.
 - (Luke 2:37)

PRAY TOGETHER