

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

Denying Ourselves for Spiritual Gain

With Shannon Landriault

August 4, 2024



Matthew 6:16-18 (NLT) “And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷ But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.”

- **Fast**

^{16a} “And when you fast,”

Examples in the Bible:

1. To prepare for confession, atonement and forgiveness – Leviticus 23:27-28
2. To prepare for ministry – Matthew 4:1-17; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-14
3. To seek God’s wisdom – Exodus 24:28; Deuteronomy 9:9-10:10; Acts 14:23
4. To show grief – Nehemiah 1:1-4
5. To seek deliverance or protection – Ezra 8:21-23, Esther 4:16
6. To repent – Jonah 3:10
7. To gain victory – Judges 20:26
8. To worship God – Luke 2:37

“the natural incentive for fasting... [is for those] who are under deep affliction, overwhelmed with sorrow for sin, and filled with a strong anxiety about the wrath of God.” - John Wesley

- **Attitude**

^{16b} “don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting....¹⁷ But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face.”

“Fasting he had observed had become “a device for having people look at them, talk about them, admire them, and say in astonishment: ‘Oh, what wonderful saints these people are! They do not live like the other, ordinary people. They go around in gray coats, with their heads hanging down and a sour, pale expression on their faces. If such people do not get to heaven, what will become of the rest of us?” – Martin Luther

- **Sacrifice**

^{18a} “Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private.”

- **The reward**

^{16b} “I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ^{18b} And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.”

Big Idea: Fast in the right way, for the right reasons



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
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To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

Denying Ourselves for Spiritual Gain
#17 of 26 - August 4, 2024

- 1) What has been your experience with Fasting?
- 2) Read Matthew 6:16-18. What is the **Context** for these passages? Who is the writer and the recipients? Where does this fit in the book as a whole?
- 3) **Observation:** What “jumps out” in this passage? What interesting details do you observe? What questions does it raise for you?
- 4) **Meaning:** What was the meaning for the original recipients? What meaning is inferred in this for us?
- 5) Look up the various passages that give examples of fasting in the Bible. What do you learn? What surprises you or challenges you from these examples?
- 6) How does fasting (denying ourselves in some way) help us focus on our relationship with God?
- 7) What attitude does Jesus want us to have when we approach God in this way? Why is this important?
- 8) **Application:** What resonates with you from this message? In what ways can you apply the teachings of Jesus today?



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