



# FIRST PRINCIPLES

SCRIPTURE

GOD

FAITH

PRAYER

THE  
CHURCH

MISSION

# Fasting

Christian Foundations Class #9

What is fasting?

Why should we fast?

<sup>14</sup> Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” <sup>15</sup> And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Matthew 9:14-15

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Matthew 9:14-15

<sup>16</sup> “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. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> 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.

Matthew 6:16-18



Jesus expects His followers  
to fast.

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Matthew 6:16-18

3      'Why have we fasted, and you see it not?  
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?'  
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,  
and oppress all your workers.

4      Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day  
will not make your voice to be heard on high.

5      Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day for a person to humble himself?

Is it to bow down his head like a reed,  
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

Will you call this a fast,  
and a day acceptable to the LORD?

Isaiah 58:3-5

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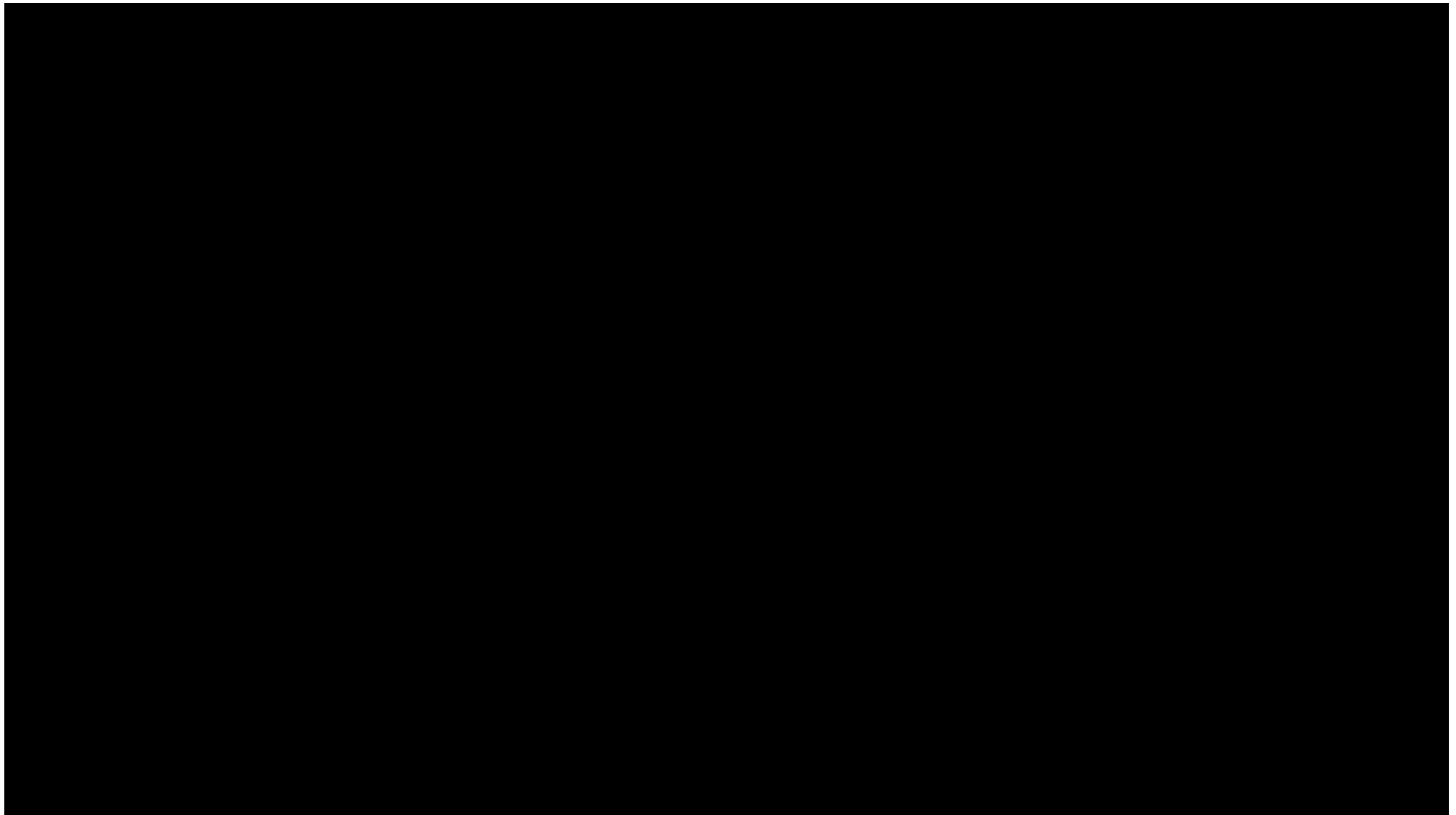
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Matthew 6:16-18

What is fasting about? What  
are the rewards of such?

“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.

<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread,  
<sup>12</sup> and forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6:9-13

## Fasting...

- Jesus expects us to (Matt. 6:17-18; 9:15)
- Teaches us to say no to our desires and yes to the desires of God (cf. Phil. 3:19)

19 Their end is destruction, **their god is their belly**, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

Philippians 3:19

*“Fasting trains our bodies to not get what they want. At least, not all the time. This is yet another reason why, in a culture so run by feelings and desire, fasting is a bizarre idea even to Christians. We assume that we must get what we want to be happy, and by want, we often mean what our flesh wants. This simply isn’t true.”*

*- John Mark Comer Live No Lies*

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- helps us mourn & repent (cf. 2 Sam. 12:16)



<sup>6</sup> The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. <sup>7</sup> 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,** <sup>8</sup> 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.** <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.” <sup>10</sup> 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.

Jonah 3:6-10

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- helps us know the will of God & prepare us for ministry (cf. Matt. 4:1-11; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23)

<sup>2</sup> 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.” <sup>3</sup> Then **after fasting and praying** they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

<sup>23</sup> And **when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting** they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 13:2-3; 14:23

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- grows our compassion for the hungry (Isa. 58:6-9)

6 “Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of wickedness,

to undo the straps of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,

and to break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;

when you see the naked, to cover him,

and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Isaiah 58:6-7

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