

**Week 11**

**June 13, 2021**

**Topic: Fasting**

**Sermon Text:**

**Sermon Notes:**

## My Personal Discipleship Pathway:

What is the most important thing that I learned this week from the personal, spiritual disciplines that I chose to work through?

How will this truth impact my life? What will I do as a result?

What do I need to pray for as a result of my personal studies?

Who do I need to talk to about this for accountability?

Questions for Reflection:

Read Matthew 6. What are the major themes that Jesus dealt with in His teaching?

Matthew 6:1-4—

Matthew 6:5-15—

Matthew 6:16-18—

Matthew 6:19-24—

Matthew 6:25-34—

If Jesus spoke of fasting in the immediate context of prayer and giving, should fasting have a more prominent role in our Christian walk? Why has the giving of money and prayer been recognized as essential elements in spiritual growth while fasting has been disputed?

Read Matthew 6:16-18 again. What do we learn in these verses about how to fast?

What is the purpose of fasting?

## Scripture Meditation Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 4

**Focus Text:**

Consider using either the SOAP Journal or Lectio Divina method.

## Questions for Reflection:

**THINK ABOUT IT...** In discussing the relationship between fasting and prayer, Andrew Murray once wrote:

“Prayer needs fasting for its full growth... Prayer is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible; fasting, the other, with which we let loose and castaway the visible. In nothing is man more closely connected with the world of sense than in his need of food, and his enjoyment of it. It was the fruit, good for food, with which man was tempted and fell in Paradise. It was with bread to be made of stones that Jesus, when hungered, was tempted in the wilderness, and in fasting that He triumphed. The body has been redeemed to be a temple of the Holy Spirit; it is in body as well as spirit, it is very specially, Scripture says, in eating and drinking, we are to glorify God. It is to be feared that there are many Christians to whom this eating to the glory of God, has not yet become a spiritual reality. And the first thought suggested by Jesus’ words in regard to fasting and prayer is, that it is only in a life of moderation and temperance and self-denial that there will be the heart or the strength to pray much.” (from *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray)

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. What does this verse mean in relation to fasting?

Sit with God for a moment today. Ask Him to reveal to you what temptations you are facing that could be overcome with periods of fasting. What is He asking you to do in response to this truth?

## Scripture Meditation Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 6

**Focus Text:**

Consider using either the SOAP Journal or Lectio Divina method.

## Questions for Reflection:

**THINK ABOUT IT...** Richard Foster writes,

“How easy it is to take something like fasting and try to use it to get God to do what we want... Fasting must forever center on God. It must be God-initiated and God-ordained... Once the primary purpose of fasting is firmly fixed in our hearts, we are at liberty to understand that there are also secondary purposes in fasting. More than any other Discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us.” (*Celebration of Discipline*)

What things control you? You may not be able to answer this question today. Would you consider fasting for a period of time to explore this further? What will you do? When?

Foster continues,

“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 writes, ‘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 will realize 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.”

Read Matthew 4:1-4. What can we learn from Jesus’ experience in the wilderness? How can we apply the truth of verse 4 to our lives today?

## Scripture Meditation Journal:

**Title:**

**Date:**

**Bible Reading:** Luke 4

**Focus Text:**

Consider using either the SOAP Journal or Lectio Divina method.