

Fasting

September 20, 2020

Matthew 6:16-18, 9:14-15; Acts 13:2-3
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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

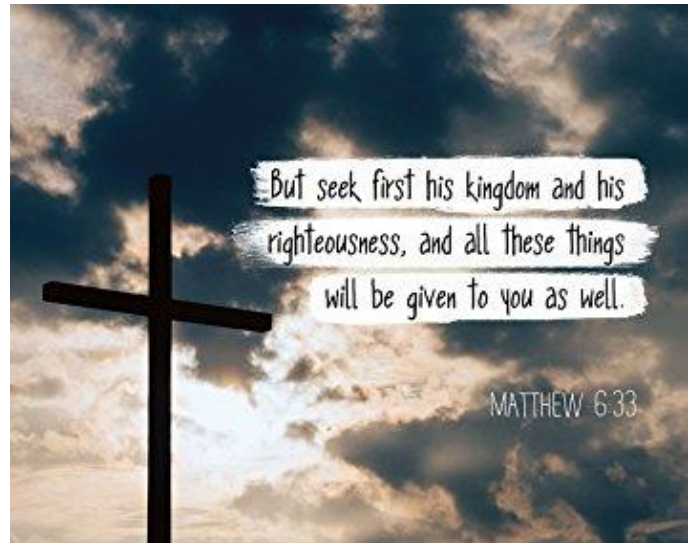
What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we will take the time to look at the discipline of fasting. There are many examples in scripture that show great men of God fasting. In the New Testament Jesus says that one day His disciples will fast. In the Sermon on the Mount we see Jesus give instruction about how we should fast. In addition to these, in Acts we see the early church practice the discipline of fasting. These are just a few examples that we will look at. Join us this week as we take a look at a biblical practice that is often neglected in today's church. It is one of the most powerful tools we have and we cannot afford to not use this tool God has given us.



Matthew 6:16-18 NASB

Fasting

¹⁶ "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites *do*, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ¹⁷ But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face ¹⁸ so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you.

Matthew 9:14-15 NASB

The Question about Fasting

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Acts 13:2-3 NASB

² While they were ministering to 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, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

o EXAMINE His Word (Observation) (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

2 EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)
What does God MEAN?

8. Does Jesus say we should fast?

9. Is there instruction about when the disciples are told to fast?

10. Why do the disciples fast in Acts but not in Matthew?

11. What are some of the guidelines given for fasting?

12. Who else in scripture do we see fast?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)
Why does this MATTER to me?

13. Should we fast regularly? Why or why not?

14. What should we look to accomplish through our fasting?

15. What have you gained from fasting in the past?

16. If you have never fasted what is your biggest concern?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to **KNOW**, to **FEEL**, and to **DO**...

Sermon Notes