

The Sermon on the Mount: *How the Christian Fast*s

Text: Matthew 6:1-18

I. Introduction

Whereas *Matt. 5:21-48* focused on the inner righteousness in how to think towards God, *Matt. 6:1-18* focuses on the practices of righteousness, shown in three examples of religious activity: Giving to others, Praying to God, and Fasting for God.

II. The Theme: Religion without Hypocrisy

- a. If we practice our religion for _____, we will not please _____

III. Emphasis on the Heart (vv.14-15)

1. Jesus repeats the idea in verse twelve to emphasize the heart of Christians toward _____ who have hurt us

IV. Illustration Three: Fasting (vv.16-18)

Definition: Fasting is *abstaining* from food/water for a period of time for a spiritual purpose.

1. Fasting is one of the ways that one practices _____
2. _____ Himself fasted in accordance with the OT law, and when He was tempted in the wilderness

“The purpose of fasting is to loosen to some degree the ties which bind us to the world of material things and our surroundings as a whole, in order that we may concentrate all our spiritual powers upon the unseen and eternal things.” – **Ole Hallesby**

V. How Not to Fast

1. In a _____ way
2. As a _____ to release the answer or result, we are seeking
3. In a way that calls _____ attention to it

VI. How to Fast

1. When _____ by the Lord
2. When in a hard _____
3. A _____ time in life
4. A time of _____
5. A time of _____
6. Make it personal between _____ and the _____
 - a. Continue to remind yourself of the importance of disciplining all of yourself to the Lord and His purposes.

VII. Conclusion

- a. Biblical and Godly righteousness is to be without hypocrisy
- b. Jesus illustrated how many were using the three pillars of Judaism as opportunities for self-promotion
- c. Jesus wants His people to be blessed by Him for doing the right things for the right reasons

Answer Key:

I. Introduction

II. The Theme: Religion without Hypocrisy

- a. If we are practicing our religion for **OTHERS**, we will not please **GOD**

III. Emphasis on the Heart (vv.14-15)

1. Jesus repeats the idea in verse twelve to emphasize the heart of Christian toward **OTHERS** who have hurt us

VI. Illustration Three: Fasting (vv.16-18)

1. Fasting is one of the ways that one practices **SPIRITUAL LIFE**
2. **JESUS** Himself fasted in accordance with the OT law and when He was tempted in the wilderness

V. How Not to Fast

1. In a **MECHANICAL** way
2. As a **CROWBAR** to release the answer or result we are seeking
3. In a way that calls **UNDUE** attention to it

VI. How to Fast

7. When **LED** by the Lord
8. When in a hard **SEASON**
9. A **MOMENTOUS** time in life
10. A time of **GRIEF**
11. A time of **HOPE**
12. Make it personal between **YOU** and the **LORD**
 - a. Continue to remind yourself of the importance of disciplining all of yourself to the Lord and His purposes.