

The Sermon on the Mount
A Hunger for God; Matthew 6:16-18

Rejoinder from last week

Matthew 6:13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.']

1 Chronicles 29:10 So David blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed are You, O Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever."

1 Chronicles 29:11-13 "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all...Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name."

Matthew 6:13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.']

Matthew 6:16 "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."

Matthew 6:17-18 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face 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."

I Samuel 7:1-14, Fasting as a Mark of Repentance by Israel

I Samuel 7:5-6 Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah and I will pray to the Lord for you." They gathered to Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day and said there, "We have sinned against the Lord."

II Chronicles 20, Fasting and Praying to God as a Plea for Help by Jehoshaphat in the Midst of Crisis because of the Threats of Judah's Enemies

II Chronicles 20:3-4 Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the Lord.

Ezra 8, Fasting and Praying as a Plea for Traveling Safety in a Precarious Situation

Ezra 8:21-23 Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions....So we fasted and sought our God concerning this matter, and He listened to our entreaty.

Nehemiah 1, Repentance, Fasting and Praying for the Plight of the City of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 1:4-5 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven. I said, "I beseech You, O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant..."

Esther 4, Fasting and Praying for Deliverance for an Evil Plot against all Jews

Esther 4:15-16 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, "Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."

Daniel 9, Fasting and Praying for Divine Revelation and Guidance Concerning the Return of the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem

Daniel 9:3-5 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned..."

Jonah 3, Fasting as a Sign of Repentance by Nineveh

Jonah 3:7-8 The king issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands."

Matthew 4, Fasting and Praying by Jesus as a Mark of Spiritual Disciple

Matthew 4:1-2 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

Matthew 9, Fasting as an aspect of the Christian life

Matthew 9:14-15 Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 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 13:1-3, Fasting and Praying by the Church at Antioch for Divine Guidance about Missions

Acts 13:2-3 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.” Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 14:21-23, Fasting and Praying by Paul and Barnabas for Divine Guidance for the Selection of Church Leaders

Acts 14:21-23 ...they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord...

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God rewards fasting because fasting expresses the cry of the heart that nothing on the earth can satisfy our souls besides God. God must reward this cry because God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. John Piper

Fasting is an aspect of prayer, worship, repentance, and dedication. Fasting allows us to express our love for God, a love for God that is greater than anything in this world.

Fasting as
a tangible expression of repentance

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a request for protection

Fasting as

- a tangible expression of repentance
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2. Fasting must include wisdom with regard to health risk
3. Fasting can include things other than food

It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased. CS Lewis