



February 22, 2026  
Series: Week 8  
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## What Are You Hungry For?

### WHAT IS FASTING?

- “Christian fasting is a believer’s voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.” - Donald Whitney
- “Christian fasting, at its root, is the hunger of a homesickness for God.” - John Piper

### WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES FOR FASTING?

1. Pursuing God - guidance, strengthened prayer, worship, expressing love
2. Turning to God - repentance, humility, grief over sin, returning to Him
3. Depending on God - deliverance, protection, overcoming temptation, concern for His work, ministering to others

### JESUS EXPECTS HIS FOLLOWERS TO FAST

- v. 16a, *“And when you fast...”*
- Matt. 9:14-15 reveals why we fast today —to pursue the bridegroom, Jesus, until He returns to take us home!
- **Reflection:** Did you know that Jesus expects us to fast? Why would this be an important spiritual habit to incorporate in our lives? Have you ever fasted before for the purpose of getting closer to Jesus? If so, what was that experience like? If you haven’t fasted and would like to learn how to, connect with our ministry leaders to learn more!

### HUNGER TO BE SEEN BY OTHERS: FASTING THE WRONG WAY

- v. 16: *“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.”*
- Religious hypocrites...
  - Did the right things for the wrong reasons.
  - Appeared to be godly but were inwardly corrupt.
  - Sought after admiration from the people instead of being seen by God.
- **Isaiah 58:1-5** reveals that the Israelites fasted with the wrong motive, *“It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves.”*
- **The wrong way to fast:**
  - Make it obvious that you are fasting.
  - Seek after the praise & recognition of others.
  - Do not connect with the Father.
- **The Reward:**
  - Seen & admired by others.
- **Reflection:** Have you ever fasted, prayed, or done anything that should have been God-honoring but was used for your own purpose to ultimately make you look good in front of other people? Was the praise and admiration of the people worth it? Why or why not? Why is it dangerous for you to use spiritual practices in a way that makes you known instead of God?

### HUNGER TO BE SEEN BY GOD: FASTING THE RIGHT WAY

- v.17-18: *“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.”*
- **Isaiah 58:6-12** reveals a desire God has for fasting-**our hearts being moved with compassion for others!**

- **The right way to fast:**
  - Get up & do normal life routines
  - Don't make it obvious that you are fasting
  - Connect with your Father, who is and sees you in secret
- **The Reward:**
  - Seen by the Father
  - Rewarded by the Father with a deeper relationship with Him & a transformed heart
- **Reflection:** How would your spiritual life change if you only cared about God seeing you instead of others? Why is His reward better than the praise and recognition of people? What are some ways you can incorporate fasting into your weekly rhythms?

**BIG IDEA: FASTING WITH A HUNGER FOR GOD BRINGS TRANSFORMATION!**

**NEXT STEPS -**

1. Start Fasting Today! Scan the QR Codes for more info!
2. Fast with a Hunger for God.
3. Fast with Purpose.
4. Fast with Other Believers.

**Isaiah 58:1-12 (NLT)**

"Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Shout aloud! Don't be timid. Tell my people Israel of their sins! <sup>2</sup>Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would never abandon the laws of its God. They ask me to take action on their behalf, pretending they want to be near me.<sup>3</sup> 'We have fasted before you!' they say. 'Why aren't you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves, and you don't even notice it!' 'I will tell you why!' I respond. 'It's because you are fasting to please yourselves. Even while you fast, you keep oppressing your workers. <sup>4</sup>What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me. <sup>5</sup>You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the Lord? <sup>6</sup>'No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. <sup>7</sup>Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. <sup>8</sup>'Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. <sup>9</sup>Then when you call, the Lord will answer. 'Yes, I am here,' he will quickly reply. 'Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors! <sup>10</sup>Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. <sup>11</sup>The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. <sup>12</sup>Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities. Then you will be known as a builder of walls and a restorer of homes.



 Book on Fasting



 Video on Fasting- Allen P.



 Video on Fasting-Donald W.