



## **The Power of Fasting**

Matthew 9:14-17

**Listen!** America is obsessed with eating and food.

**Why talk about this?** In a society as affluent as ours hunger, eating, dieting, gorging, cooking, and excess are ubiquitous themes.

- People who are obsessed with food are not in a strong connection with God.

### **Matthew 9:14-17:**

- Why do we and the Pharisees fast?
- Mourn:
- Bridegroom with them:
- Patch:
- Wineskins:
- Know the season:
- They will fast:

**Idea:** Fasting is temporary abstinence from something in order to focus on the inner work of connecting with God and communicating with Him.

### **Fasting does not:**

- Make God love me more.
- Make God do what I want done.
- Make me better than others or more spiritual than others.
- Make my problems go away.

## **Fasting 101: The basic truths about fasting :**

- Fasting is always done to sharpen my inner focus on relationship with God.
- Fasting must be done with pure motives. Mt 6:16-18.
- Fasting is most often accompanied with prayer.
- Jesus assumed that we, His disciples, would fast when He was gone. Mt 9:15.
- Fasting is done to strengthen prayer.
- Fasting is done to express mourning over sin.
- Fasting is done to express mourning over loss.
- Fasting is done to seek deliverance or protection.
- Fasting is done to seek guidance or direction from God.
- Fasting is done to express repentance and confession and return to God.
- Fasting is done to humble yourself before God.
- Fasting is done to express love and worship.
- Fasting is done to overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God.
- Fasting is done to prepare for a difficult assignment.
- Fasting is for God and for focus on God.
- Fasting is rewarded by God.
- Fasting can be personal (private) or corporate.
- Fasting is an element of worship.

**For Instance:** Ted's Testimony.

**Application:** Regularly seize the opportunity to fast and pray—Jesus assumed we would:

- The World-wide Friday Fast.
- Three day food fast.
- One day absolute fast.
- Forty day media fast.
- Forty day soda fast.
- Forty day video game fast.
- Forty day recreation fast.
- SEE FASTING GUIDE AVAILABLE AT THE KIOSK.

**Remember:** “This kind comes out only by fasting and prayer.” Mt 17:21. There are some needs, struggles, confusions, alienations, impasses, or situations that need the focused dependence and intensity of fasting and prayer.

“When exercised with a pure heart and a right motive, fasting may provide us with a key to unlock doors where other keys have failed: a window opening up new horizons in the unseen world; a spiritual weapon of God’s providing, ‘mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.’” Willis.

**Question:** *What is God calling you to do?*