



“Fasting: What’s The Point?”

Series: “LIVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT”, Part 13 of 19

Sunday, September 24, 2023, at 9:00 & 11:00 AM

Mat Saxon | Latham Campus

Text: Matthew 6:16-18, “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. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 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.” (ESV)

Matthew 6:16, “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.” (ESV)

I. Fasting is a natural response to grief and awe.

“When we are deeply absorbed in grief, habitual activities and normal pleasures feel out of place. We want to shout, “Stop the world! The one I loved is no longer alive, and I can’t bear it!” That desire to stop everything normal, to let ourselves be absorbed by our loss and pain, is manifested by stopping our consumption of food.” - Lynne Baab

1 Samuel 20:34, “And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had disgraced him.” (ESV)

1 Samuel 1:7, “So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat.” (ESV)

Acts 9:8-9, “Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.” (ESV)

Matthew 6:17, “But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,” (ESV)

II. Fasting is a great way to get into a bad mood.

Ecclesiastes 3:1,4, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance...” (ESV)

Ecclesiastes 7:21-22, “Also, do not pay attention to everything that people say; otherwise, you might even hear your servant cursing you. For you know in your own heart that you also have cursed others many times.” (NET)

Romans 12:15, “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.” (ESV)

1 Corinthians 5:2, “You are so proud of yourselves, but you should be mourning in sorrow and shame. And you should remove this man from your fellowship.” (NLT)

Jeremiah 6:15a, “Are they ashamed of their disgusting actions? Not at all—they don’t even know how to blush!” (NLT)

Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (ESV)

Joel 2:12-13a, “‘Yet even now,’ declares the Lord, ‘return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.’ Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful...” (ESV)

Matthew 6:18, “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” (ESV)

III. Secret fasting will be rewarded.

Acts 13:1a-2, “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers... While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” (ESV)

Acts 14:23, “Paul and Barnabas also appointed elders in every church. With prayer and fasting, they turned the elders over to the care of the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.” (NLT)

Luke 6:12-13a, "One day soon afterward Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose twelve of them to be apostles..." (NLT)

Jonah 3:6-10, "When the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah was saying, he stepped down from his throne and took off his royal robes. He dressed himself in burlap and sat on a heap of ashes. Then the king and his nobles sent this decree throughout the city: "No one, not even the animals from your herds and flocks, may eat or drink anything at all. People and animals alike must wear garments of mourning, and everyone must pray earnestly to God. They must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence. Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will change his mind and hold back his fierce anger from destroying us." When God saw what they had done and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, he changed his mind and did not carry out the destruction he had threatened." (NLT)

Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (ESV)