

# Re-Focus (40 Days of Re-Focusing Your Faith)

## Re-Focus on Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18

Isaiah 58:1-12

Sunday, March 1, 2015

I want to challenge you today to make fasting a regular part of your spiritual discipline.

Someone has said: “You can’t find a past great man of God who did not fast rather consistently. George Mueller did, Judson Taylor did, George Whitefield did, and many others did as well.” (<http://www.preachology.com/free-sermon-illustrations.html#F>)

“A fast is not a hunger strike. Fasting submits to God’s commands. A hunger strike makes God submit to our demands.” (*Ed Cole*)

“Fasting in the biblical sense is choosing not to partake of food because your spiritual hunger is so deep, your determination in intercession so intense, or your spiritual warfare so demanding that you have temporarily set aside even fleshly needs to give yourself to prayer and meditation.” (*Wesley L. Duwel, Touch the World Through Prayer*)

Fasting can \_\_\_\_\_ your life, your circumstances, your impossible situations, your times of don’t-know-what-to-do.

\_\_\_\_\_ often loves to enter through the point of fasting.

Matthew 6:18

Jesus promises His \_\_\_\_\_ on fasting.

Isaiah 58:3-7

The most powerful place on earth is where fasting is combined with prayer.

Matthew 17:21

### Consider...

1. ...The \_\_\_\_\_ of Fasting

Isaiah 58:6

2. ...The \_\_\_\_\_ of Fasting

Fasting is a tangible expression, a demonstrated purpose, an external sign of the desire of your heart.

- (1) Fasting expresses desperation—“God, I need You!” (Daniel 9:3, Nehemiah 1:4)

- (2) Fasting expresses \_\_\_\_\_ —“Lord, I am available to You.” (Psalm 35:13; Psalm 69:10; II Chronicles 7:14)
- (3) Fasting expresses a desire for wisdom. (Ezra 8:21-23)
- (4) Fasting expresses need for \_\_\_\_\_ when making a decision. (Acts 13:2; 26)
- (5) Fasting expresses your seriousness about your commitment to Christ. (II Corinthians 6:4-6)
- (6) Fasting expresses a cry for a \_\_\_\_\_ . (Isaiah 58:6)
- (7) Fasting expresses a desire for \_\_\_\_\_. (Isaiah 58:8)
- (8) Fasting expresses a need for God’s \_\_\_\_\_. (II Chronicles 20:3; I Corinthians 9:27)
- (9) Fasting expresses a longing to be used of God.
- (10) Fasting expresses a desire to place one’s body under the control of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 9:27)
- (11) Fasting expresses repentance and deep \_\_\_\_\_ to God. (Ezra 10:6-17)
- (12) Fasting expresses mourning or grief. (II Samuel 1:12)
- (13) Fasting expresses a desire for preparation for God’s \_\_\_\_\_. (Exodus 34:28; Daniel 10:2-6 ; I Kings 19:8)
- (14) Fasting expresses a desire to \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord. (Joel 2:12, 15)
- (15) Fasting expresses an awareness of a \_\_\_\_\_ and the commitment to overcome it. (Matthew 4:1-11)
- (16) Fasting expresses \_\_\_\_\_. (Luke 2:37)
- (17) Fasting expresses a cry to God to avert national \_\_\_\_\_. (Joel 1:14)

### 3. ...The \_\_\_\_\_ of Fasting

Fast when the \_\_\_\_\_ leads you to.

When You Fast:

- (1) Tell as few people as possible.
- (2) Make sure you set aside specific time blocks for prayer.
- (3) Have a purpose for your fasting. Make a list and bombard heaven.
- (4) Adjust your physical demands accordingly.
- (5) Check with your doctor.
- (6) Start with a meal or two or a day before you try to have a longer fast.
- (7) When coming off a longer fast, don’t eat heavy meals (soup, soft foods).

- (8) Prepare spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually for a fast. Get ready.
- (9) Unless absolute fast, drink a lot of water. Stay hydrated.
- (10) Expect some physical discomfort (nausea, stomach ache, headache, being lightheaded, etc.).
- (11) Determine the length.
- (12) Expect spiritual warfare (more pizza and burger commercials).
- (13) You may want to invite someone to fast with you.

#### 4. ...The \_\_\_\_\_ of Fasting

There are basically 4 types of fasting seen in the Bible:

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Fast—Not eating food, but drinking water or juice. (Matthew 4:2)
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Fast—Not eating certain foods, a restricted diet. An example would be a Daniel Fast. (Daniel 1:12; 10:3)
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Fast—No food and no water for a specific period of time. (Acts 9:9; Esther 4:15-16)
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_ Fast—Going without married sex for a limited time in order to seek God more intensely. (I Corinthians 7:3-6)

FASTING PUTS YOU IN THE VERY BEST \_\_\_\_\_ TO HEAR FROM GOD.

#### Notice 10 Lies and Truths about Fasting

- I. **Lie:** Fasting is Not for \_\_\_\_\_  
**Truth:** Fasting is for \_\_\_\_\_  
 Matthew 6:16-18  
 “And when you fast...” (Matthew 6:16-17 ESV)  
 Acts 13:2  
 At no point did fasting \_\_\_\_\_ become a spiritual discipline.
- II. **Lie:** God \_\_\_\_\_ Fasting  
**Truth:** God \_\_\_\_\_ Fasting  
 Luke 5:33-35
- III. **Lie:** It’s the \_\_\_\_\_ of Fasting, Not the Attitude during Fasting that is the Most Important  
**Truth:** God is More Concerned with the \_\_\_\_\_ than He is the Act
- IV. **Lie:** Fasting is the Way to Get God to Do What You \_\_\_\_\_  
**Truth:** Fasting is a Way to \_\_\_\_\_ to God’s Will

- V. **Lie:** Fasting is Just Too \_\_\_\_\_—You Can't Do It!  
**Truth:** You Can Do It! Jesus Would Not Encourage Something that Would Intentionally Hurt You or be \_\_\_\_\_ for You to Do.
- VI. **Lie:** Fasting is the Way to Gain God's \_\_\_\_\_  
**Truth:** Only \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ Gains You God's Approval  
 Luke 18:12
- VII. **Lie:** Fasting Doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ Anything  
**Truth:** Fasting Changes \_\_\_\_\_; Fasting Changes \_\_\_\_\_
- VIII. **Lie:** The Victory Always Comes \_\_\_\_\_ the Fast (Time of Fasting)  
**Truth:** Often the Victory Comes \_\_\_\_\_ the Time of Fasting  
 It is essential to \_\_\_\_\_ upon God.
- IX. **Lie:** Fasting Makes You More \_\_\_\_\_ Than Others  
**Truth:** Spirituality Speaks to Your \_\_\_\_\_, Not to External Activities
- X. **Lie:** Fasting \_\_\_\_\_ God's Will  
**Truth:** Fasting Brings You in \_\_\_\_\_ with God's Will  
 James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6