

Discussion Questions

July 12, 2020

Read Matthew 6:16-21

- 1) What has been your experience with the practice of fasting? Have you ever considered fasting as a regular spiritual discipline? Why or why not?
- 2) If someone followed you around, saw how you spent your time, and knew your thoughts, what would they say you treasured?
- 3) Jesus wants our hearts to be free to love him and to love other people. Sometimes our hearts are not free to do that because we are holding onto so many other things—and those things are holding onto us. What might you need to let go of for a time in order to move toward greater freedom in Christ?
- 4) Fasting is both a *letting go* and a *taking up*. It is saying “no” to one thing in order to say “yes” to another. Often in the Bible fasting is linked with prayer. When we give something up it creates space and time for us to intentionally be with God. Why do you think it is important to emphasize both the “no” and the “yes” when it comes to fasting?

Putting it into practice...

Consider your answer to question #2 and pray that God would show you what to fast from this week. Choose a day and time period that is doable for you. Remember the intent is not to be a super-hero disciple, but simply to grow in relationship with God. Often spiritual growth comes through a series of small steps.

If you are thinking about fasting from food maybe just do one meal sometime this week. Take the time you would have given to meal prep, eating, and cleaning up afterward and instead spend it in prayer or Bible reading or taking a quiet walk in God’s creation. If you find it to be fruitful, you could consider doing two meals the next week. If, for example, you are fasting from spending money on Amazon, you might need to have a longer time frame than a few hours! Try something that makes sense for you and take time to reflect on, and thank God for, the experience afterward.