

The Heart of Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18

1. What is fasting?
 - a. It is _____ abstinence from food for a _____ purpose.
 - b. It is the practice of ____ - _____ for spiritual _____.
2. Why fast?
 - a. To focus your heart on your _____.
 - b. To focus your heart on your _____.
 - c. To turn your heart to _____.
 - d. To discipline your heart for _____.
3. For whom should you fast?
 - a. Not for _____.
 - b. Not for _____.
 - c. For _____.
 - d. For _____.

**BE DIFFERENT
LIVE DIFFERENT**



ID



A high-angle photograph of a silver fork and knife crossed on a white plate. The fork is positioned diagonally from the top right towards the bottom left, and the knife is positioned diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. The text is overlaid on the center of the plate.

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Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Matthew 6:16-18

But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

A top-down view of a white ceramic plate with a silver knife and fork crossed over it. The knife is on the left and the fork is on the right. The text "What is fasting?" is centered over the plate.

What is fasting?

Fasting is deliberate abstinence from food for a spiritual purpose.

Matthew 4:1-2

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

Fasting is the practice of focused self-denial for a spiritual purpose.

1 Corinthians 7:5

Stop depriving one another,
except by agreement for a time
that you may devote yourselves to prayer,
and come together again lest Satan tempt you
because of your lack of self-control.

A top-down view of a white ceramic plate. A silver knife and a silver fork are crossed on the plate. The knife is positioned diagonally from the top-left towards the bottom-right. The fork is positioned diagonally from the top-right towards the bottom-left. The text "Why fast?" is centered over the intersection of the two utensils.

Why fast?

To focus your heart on
your dependence.

Matthew 4:2-4

And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

Deuteronomy 8:3

He humbled you and let you be hungry,
and fed you with manna which you did not know,
nor did your fathers know, that He might make
you understand that man does not live by bread
alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds
out of the mouth of the LORD.

Hunger pangs tell you that you
depend on food.

**Intentional fasting serves to remind
you that you depend on Christ more.**

To focus your heart on
your weakness.

1 Samuel 14:28

Then one of the people answered and said,
"Your father strictly put the people under oath,
saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food today.'"
And the people were weary.

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**The weakness that results from
hunger can be a powerful reminder
of your human inability.**

To turn your heart
to Jesus.

John 6:48-51

I am the bread of life.

Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness,
and they died. This is the bread which comes
down out of heaven, so that one may eat
of it and not die.

I am the living bread that came down out of
heaven; if anyone eats of this bread,
he shall live forever; and the bread also which I
shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.

**When you fast and are hungry,
turn your heart to Jesus,
THE bread of life.**

To discipline your heart
for obedience.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things.

They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

In what arenas of your life are
you intentionally choosing to say
“No!” to yourself.

A white plate with a knife and fork crossed on it. The knife is on the left and the fork is on the right. The text "For whom should you fast?" is written in bold black font across the center of the plate.

For whom should you fast?

Not for others.

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Fasting is NOT a more effective way to activate the “Jesus genie”.

For the Lord.

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For yourself.

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**What is it *really* that keeps
you from fasting?**