

discussion guide for June 24th

*“Why Fast”*

Mt. 6:16-18 (p. 1255-DSB\*)

GRIND IT  
BREW IT  
DRINK IT  
SAVOR IT



"Yes, I try to find **common ground** with everyone." 1 Corinthians 9:22b NLT

➤ **GRIND IT** (11:00 am)

Pastor Tom mentioned four kinds of spiritual fasts from the Bible. Match them with the descriptions.

FAST MATCH

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| ___ Partial  | a) up to 40 days without food, 3 days without water. Mt. 4:2 (p.1251, DSB*)   |
| ___ Normal   | b) abstain from some food items or one or two meals. Dan. 10:3 (p.1143, DSB*) |
| ___ Absolute | c) go without food for a period of a day or days. Jud. 20:26, (p.318, DSB*)   |
| ___ Extreme  | d) go without food and water for up to three days. Ezra 10:6 (p.578, DSB*)    |

If anyone in the group has done spiritual fasting, ask them to describe their experience to the group.

\*“DSB”=Discovery Study Bibles on common ground tables.

➤ **BREW IT** (11:10 am)

Ask someone to read Mt. 6:16-18 (p.1255, DSB\*) as group members listen for dos and don'ts of fasting. List them here:

Vs. 16: “Don’t \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 17: “Do \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 18: “Don’t \_\_\_\_\_

- How would these change for fasting in our society?

Pastor Tom mentioned four biblical reasons for fasting that form the acrostic F-A-S-T

1. **F**orgiveness –Fast when you need forgiveness

- Read Joel 2:12-13 (p.1170, DSB\*)
- How does broken-ness over sin lead to forgiveness?
- What is God's response to true repentance?

2. **A**doration –Fast as an act of worship to God

- Read Luke 2:36-38 (p.1336, DSB\*)
- Have you ever been so “caught up” in the presence of God that you forgot about eating? Describe it.

3. **S**upply –Fast for something only God can give

- Read Ezra 8:21-23 (p.577, DSB\*)
- What did the people of Israel need from God?
- List modern needs that might warrant fasting on your part.

4. **T**rainig –Fast to learn about real priorities in life

- Learn about things more important than food:
  - The Worship of God - Luke 2:36-38 (p.1336, DSB\*)
  - The Work of God – John 4:32-34 (p.1397, DSB\*)
  - The Word of God – Mt. 4:2-4 (p.1251, DSB\*)
- The common lesson of fasting is \_\_\_\_\_. Read Ps. 35:13 (p.1336, DSB\*) Ezra 8:21-23 (p.577, DSB\*). How does fasting teach humility?

\*“DSB”=Discovery Study Bibles on common ground tables.

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➤ DRINK IT (11:40 am)

Maybe you have never considering fasting as you are following Jesus. Perhaps it seemed fanatical or extreme. *Has your thinking been adjusted today?* Can you agree fasting is taught in the Bible right along with prayer? Since fasting is mostly done in private for personal intimacy with God, you may never have heard it taught before.

Beside each of the words below, think of a reason you might fast. Commit to use fasting as a regular step of devotion in the future.

- Forgiveness
- Adoration
- Supply
- Training

Prayer Time: (11:45 am)

- Prayer needs of people outside the group.
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- Prayer needs of members in the group.
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- Pray for absentees by name. Consider giving \_\_\_\_\_ a call this afternoon.

Go Deeper: Use the “*Savor*” section of this guide in your daily quiet time this week. If you would prefer receiving a daily e-mail, [Sign up for “The Daily Cup” e-mail devotions: herb@hbcaustin.org](#)

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➤ SAVOR IT (all week long)\*\*

You discovered the benefits of fasting last Sunday. These daily readings and probing questions will help reinforce the biblical teachings about fasting.

Monday, June 25: Read Nehemiah 9:1-3, (p. 591-DSB\*). If you wanted to hear from God, or needed something only God could supply, what might you do? Have you been heartbroken over your own sin or the sin of your nation? Could your desire to be one with God surpass your need to eat for a time?

Tuesday, June 26: Read Isaiah 58:1-6, (p. 950-DSB\*) Why didn’t God honor the fasting as described here? What did Israel do that was so wrong? What adjustment did God want Israel to make?

Wednesday, June 27: Read Acts 13:1-3, (p. 1455-DSB\*) When important life decisions needed to be made in the early church, what did the leaders do? Does the mention of fasting and prayer with the same emphasis indicate fasting was a normal thing to do? When would you fast in order to hear from God?

Thursday, June 28: Read Acts 14:21-23, (p. 1460-DSB\*) How was fasting used in this passage? Is personal intimacy with God an adequate reason to fast? Should fasting be fairly normal in the life of a follower of Christ?

Friday, June 29: Read Matthew 6:16-18, (p. 1255-DSB\*) How does a hypocrite fast? What is the reward of the hypocrite? How should you go about your public appearance when you fast? Who do you want to impress when you fast? Does scripture say “when you fast” or “if you fast.” What is the implication?

\*\*DSB\*=Discovery Study Bibles on common ground tables.

\*\*To subscribe to “The Daily Cup” email devotions, use the card on common ground tables, or e-mail [herb@hbcaustin.org](#).