

**SERMON NOTES: Mt.6.16-18 “Fasting Without Hypocrisy”
Matthew Series: ‘THE KING IS COMING’ #83
June 14, 2020**

The Bible records no teaching of fasting for **practical** reasons.

Old Testament commanded only one fast annually on that day (the Day of Atonement) all the people were to **“humble [their] souls”** (Le.16.29; cf. 23.27).

Fasting is an entirely noncompulsory, **voluntary** act, not a spiritual **duty** to be regularly observed.

I. WRONG FASTING IS PRETENTIOUS FASTING v.16

One wrong way of fasting was not a matter of spiritual conviction but a means of **self-gratification**.

Another wrong way of fasting was as a ritual to gain **merit** with God & **attention** before men.

When the **heart** is not right, fasting is a sham and a mockery.

II. PROPER FASTING vv.17–18

Proper fasting is a legitimate form of spiritual **devotion**.

The single prescribed occasion for fasting has **ceased** to exist. (He.10.10)

Fasting is associated primarily with **mourning** or other times of consuming spiritual need or anxiety.

Fasting is appropriate during times of **sorrow**.

Fasting on occasions of **deep grief** is a natural human response.

Fasting is often prompted by overwhelming **danger**.

Fasting was sometimes associated with the **receiving or proclaiming of a special revelation** from God.

We tend not to seek fasting with **intensity** & **determination**.

Fasting often accompanied the beginning of an **important** task or ministry.

Fasting has no more power to **assure** godly leadership than it has to;

- ❖ **assure forgiveness**,
- ❖ **protection**, or
- ❖ any other good thing from God.

Fasting is likely to be a part of sincerely desiring to know the Lord’s **will** & have His **power** before

- ❖ **decisions** are made,
- ❖ **plans** are laid, or
- ❖ **actions** are taken.

People who are consumed with concern before God do not take a lunch break.

In every scriptural account genuine fasting is linked with **prayer**.

Fasting has no value, and becomes sin and a spiritual **hindrance** when done for any reason apart from knowing & following the Lord’s will.

Fasting is always linked with a **pure** heart & must be associated with obedient, godly **living**. Those Israelites lived only for **themselves** (v.6).

There can be no right fasting apart from:

- a right **heart**,
- right **living**, &
- a right **attitude**.

CONCLUSION:

Genuine fasting is simply a **part of** - concentrated, intense prayer & concern:

- ✚ for the Lord,
- ✚ His will, &
- ✚ His work.