

# GROWTH GUIDE

*For you. Your family. Your group.*

ANCIENT PATHS: THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF FASTING

MATTHEW 6:16-18

FOR THE WEEK OF JAN 17, 2021

## SERMON OUTLINE

1. The Assumption of Jesus: When not if. Matt 6:16a
2. The Caution of Jesus: Warning from the hypocrites. Matt 6:16
3. The Promise of Jesus: Reward from the Father. Matt 6:17-18

## REVIEW THE PASSAGE

Read Matthew 6:1, 19-21. What caution do these verses give to fasting with an incorrect motive? In relation to the spiritual disciplines, are there examples you can give where we seek the temporal in exchange for the eternal?

Why is fasting so tightly connected with prayer throughout Scripture? What impact does fasting bring and why does God instruct us to engage in it?

## ASSESS YOUR LIFE

What has been your experience with fasting in the past? What have you found difficult or helpful? Is it something that is a regular part of your disciplines?

Review the list for the purposes of fasting we see in Scripture. What are you in the most need of right now in your life? What purpose would fasting serve for you right now?

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| 1. To strengthen prayer (Acts 13:3)                          | 6. To humble oneself before God (Ps 35:13)                           |
| 2. To seek God's guidance (Acts 14:23)                       | 7. To express concern for the work of God (Neh 1:3-4)                |
| 3. To express grief (2 Sam 1:11-12)                          | 8. To minister to the needs of others (Isa 58:3-7)                   |
| 4. To seek deliverance or protection (Ezra 8:21-23)          | 9. To overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God (Matt 4:1-11) |
| 5. To express repentance and the return to God (Jonah 3:5-8) | 10. To express love and worship to God (Luke 2:37)                   |

## APPLY THE TRUTH

There is a difference in "being seen fasting" and "fasting to be seen." How have you decided to participate in our church-wide 15 Day Fast? What type of fast, what time are you fasting, and for what purpose? (There is benefit in sharing as you are inviting accountability and encouraging others to join you in prayer.)

For the group: Review the prayer list that you made last week as a group. Spend time praying over these things, adding to the list, and reviewing any answers given.