



Fasting — In Deep Pursuit
February 16, 2025 | Matthew 6:16-18
Questions for Study and Group Discussion

*** Before you begin, please read Matthew 6:16-18.*

1. **Ice-breaker:** The Bible mentions fasting (purposefully going without food for a period of time) as a spiritual discipline. What comes to your mind first when you think about fasting? What questions do you have about it? Do you have any personal experience with fasting?
2. Notice that Jesus says “when you fast . . .” in Matthew 6:16, 17. (He doesn’t say if you fast.) Why is fasting important as followers of Jesus? (Hint: see also Matthew 4:4.)
3. What approach to fasting is Jesus discouraging in Mathew 6:16? What might this look like today?
4. How can fasting express or cultivate an “appetite for God”?
5. While fasting in the Bible refers to abstaining from food for a time, followers of Jesus may sometimes also choose to abstain from other good things as a way to cultivate their appetite for God. Make a list of other things (even things that are otherwise good) that can distract our attention away from God, such that a periodic “fast” from these things may be worth considering. (Example: social media.)
6. Fasting isn’t only going without. It’s also “filling up” with other things like prayer, Bible reading, and worship. Why is it important to include this “filling up” emphasis as well?
7. What practical considerations should be taken into consideration regarding fasting? Why are these important to keep in mind?
8. What is one step you can take to practice this discipline of fasting in your life?
9. What other questions or comments do you have about what you’ve looked at in the Bible today?
10. What was your biggest take-away from the message? Why?
11. **Challenge:** Identify one way this passage is challenging or encouraging you. Who can you tell about what you’re learning this coming week?