



**Speaker:** Pastor Matt Magee

**Series:** Abide: Cultivating Intimacy with Christ

**Sermon Title:** Fasting: a Feasting of Faith in the Lord

**Scripture:** [Mathew 6:16-18](#); [9:14-17](#); [Deuteronomy 8:1-3](#); [Matthew 4:1-4](#); [Revelation 22:20](#)

**Recommended Resources:**

- [Life Action's \*The Heart God Revives with Complete Spiritual Renewal\*](#)
- [A Hunger for God](#), by John Piper
- [Habits of Grace](#), by David Mathis
- [Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life](#), by Donald A. Whitney

**OUTLINE**

1. What is Christian fasting
  - "Fasting is a Christian's voluntary abstinence from food to cultivate intimacy with God for biblically-reasoned purposes." – Pastor Matt's definition
  - John Piper, in *A Hunger for God*, describes fasting as a feasting of faith.
2. When you fast (Matthew 6:16-18)
3. The new wine of fasting (Matthew 9:14-17)
4. Three main purposes for fasting
  - Fasting strengthens our dependence on God's Word (Deuteronomy 8:1-3; Matthew 4:1-4)
  - Fasting Humbles Us Before the Lord (Joel 2:12-13; Psalm 35:13)
  - Fasting Intensifies Our Desire for the Lord's Return (Revelation 22:20)
5. Other purposes (as outlined by Don Whitney in *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*)
  - Strengthening prayer (Ezra 8:23; Joel 2:13; Acts 13:3)
  - Seeking God's guidance (Judg. 20:26; Acts 14:23)
  - Expressing grief (1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 1:11-12)
  - Seeking deliverance or protection (2 Chron. 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23)
  - Expressing repentance and returning to God (1 Sam. 7:6; Jonah 3:5-8)
  - Humbling yourself before God (1 Kings 21:27-29; Ps. 35:13)

- Expressing concern for the work of God (Neh. 1:3-4; Dan. 9:3)
  1. Ministering to the needs of others (Isa. 58:3-7)
  2. Overcoming temptation and dedicating yourself to God (Matt. 4:1-11)
  3. Expressing love and worship to God (Luke 2:37)

**PRAYER NOTE:** Please be praying for our students and leaders who will be attending the **IGNITE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** this weekend.

- Leaders: Aaron Berta, Matthew & Kimberly Ott, Steve & Heather Rittgers;
- Students: Boden Ott, Braden Magee, Caralina Morris, Conner Rausch, Ethan Lyphout, Logan Fowler, Nolan Almquist, Ryker Heims, Sinnett Berry, Skylar Magee.

### **DISCUSSION GUIDE**

1. Is Christian fasting a new concept to you? Discuss any previous experience or perceptions about fasting.
2. Discuss your initial thoughts to making fasting for godliness a regular part of your Christian practice.
3. According to Pastor Matt's sermon, what are the two definitions/descriptions of fasting?
4. Read Matthew 6:16-18 together. What principles can you draw out about fasting from these verses?
5. Review Matthew 9:14-17 and discuss what the term 'new wine' symbolizes in relation to fasting?
6. What practical steps can you take to incorporate fasting into your life?
7. Which of the three main purposes for fasting hit home with you most and why?
8. Review the list above of the additional purposes Don Whitney lists for fasting. Which would be a strong motivation for you to fast?
9. Would your group consider selecting one day (or one day/week until Thirst) to fast together? Our upcoming Thirst conference is a great reason to be seeking the Lord in powerful ways now, through fasting and prayer.

You can use [\*Life Action's The Heart God Revives with Complete Spiritual Renewal\*](#) that was handed out this morning at church.