







Desperate Times, Total Fast

- Esther 4:15-16 – ¹⁵ Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”
- In the middle of desperate situations, fasting can sharpen our abilities to follow God's leading and feel his presence.



Sorrowful Times, Selective Fast

- Daniel 10:2-3 – ² At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. ³ I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips...
- After receiving a troubling vision, Daniel is distraught and enters into a partial fast.
- Not every fast will look the same or have the same originating motivation. But, all fasts have the same goal: creating space in daily life for God to fill.



Keep It Secret

Matthew 6:16-18 – ¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Keep It Secret

- Fasting is taught by Jesus alongside prayer and giving.
- Jesus does not say "if" you fast, but "when" you fast.
- The "big idea" here is that our fasting should never be done with a boastful or showy attitude.
- We are promised that a fast that stays hidden from others will be "rewarded" by God.



Fasting Forward

Matthew 9:14-15 – ¹⁴ Then John’s disciples came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁵ Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

Fasting Forward

- Though fasting should be a staple of Christian life, it is clear that Jesus was opening up new ways for it to be expressed.
- Jesus expected his followers to rejoice while they experienced his bodily incarnation. But, he also knew that joy would end and fasting would return.
- This fasting will end again someday when Jesus returns!



Closing Reflections

- Are you facing a desperate, sorrowful or confusing time? Consider a fast.
- Have you ever prayed, or given, or fasted for self-centered, prideful reasons? Repent and ask God to forgive you and redirect your efforts.
- Choose a day this week to enter into some kind of fast.



Deeper Waters
Creating Space
