



What Is The Purpose Of Fasting?

Episode #151

Introduction

I. Today's Question

What Is The Purpose Of Fasting?

The Old and New Testament speak about fasting. It is evident from reading the New Testament that fasting was a part of the early Christians' walk with Christ. How do we know the importance of fasting for believers today? Should we fast? What is the purpose of fasting?

II. What is Fasting

- a. Fasting is the practice of abstaining from food, drink or water for a period of time.
- b. Fasting is a way of demonstrating that we are serious about our relationship with God.
- c. The scriptures do not record a specific command to fast.

- d. It is voluntary practice that is good, profitable and beneficial.
- e. Acts records the early church as fasting before important decisions.

III. The Purpose of Fasting

- a. The purpose of fasting is to take your eyes off of the things of this world and focus them on God.
- b. Fasting is a way of demonstrating that we are serious about our relationship with God.
- c. Fasting is supposed to change our hearts.

Scripture Isaiah 58:6-10

⁶ *“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? ⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ “If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, ¹⁰ If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.*

- d. Fasting realigns our priorities with the Lord.

IV. The Connection with Prayer

- a. Fasting is often mentioned in the scripture in connection with prayer.
- b. The connection between fasting and prayer is not specifically explained.
- c. Fasting does convey a sense of dependence upon God when praying.
- d. Fasting is not the “magic formula” to getting an answer from God.
- e. Fasting does not get God to respond or change his mind.

Conclusion