

Matthew: The Life & Teaching of Jesus the Messiah

Lakewood Presbyterian Church

Key Idea: *Fasting, like prayer, has as its sole audience the triune God of the Bible and is always practiced in conjunction with prayer, both in the church and privately, but also on occasions of national repentance & humiliation.*

Lesson 31 Matt. 6:16-18 Righteous Fasting (7-12-26)

I. OVERVIEW: PIETY WITHOUT H _____ (6:1-18)

- A. The issue in 6:1-18: How does genuine piety e _____ itself?
- B. Our Lord gives three examples of doing r _____ (6:2, 5 & 16)

II. WHEN YOU FAST? HUH? (V. 16a)

- A. But isn't fasting medieval, even popish? _____
- B. But isn't fasting Old Testament? _____
- C. What is Jesus' expectation for his disciples? _____
- D. So why won't modern evangelicals fast?
 - 1. Because we don't know how to c _____
 - 2. Because we don't know how to f _____ (Zech.7:4f)
 - a. How many days of fasting did the Law require? _____
 - b. How many days of feasting? _____

III. HYPOCRITICAL FASTING IS O _____ AND M _____ (V. 16)

- A. Pharisaic fasting was an o _____ to be s _____ by men.
 - 1. What does the hypocrite do with his face? _____
 - 2. How often did the Pharisee fast? _____
 - 3. Pretentious fasting had become so much the norm that Jesus had to d _____ his disciples for _____ (Mt. 9:14-17)
- B. What are the implications of "new wine skins" for today? (Mark 2:22)
 - For systematic, ritual fasting? _____
 - The character of the new covenant? _____

IV. BIBLICAL FASTING IS: O _____, P _____, AND SOMETIMES P _____

- A. On **public fasting**: Avoid de- _____ Jesus' words.

1. There is still a place for p_____ and even n_____ days of Fasting. (Ezra 8:21; Acts 13:1-3)
2. Consider the examples of both E_____ and the c_____ at Antioch.
 - a. Occasions in the Church: _____
 - b. A time for prayer, humiliation and fasting may be initiated by either the l_____ of the church (elders, Presbytery, General Assembly), but also by the c_____ m_____.
 - c. If it is done by the latter, then the call to fasting may not be in the n_____ of some g_____ god.

B. On **private fasting**: Avoid b_____ s_____ (v. 17-18) Why?

1. Understand the whom of fasting: _____
2. Understand the why of fasting: _____
 - a. We need to learn to h_____ ourselves, not b_____ in ourselves.
3. Understand that prayer and fasting are i_____ .
4. Understand the occasional nature of fasting:
 - a. It is a means of expressing r_____ and s_____ for sin.
 - b. It is a means of strengthening and focusing p_____.
 - c. It is a means of practicing self-d_____ and building self-c_____ in a Christian's character.

C. A final word: F_____, r_____ and then come back to the T_____