

TO FAST OR NOT TO FAST OR HOW TO FAST
Matthew 6:16-18

Just about every ancient religious tradition about which we know anything from antiquity practiced some form of fasting for a variety of reasons:

1. A food _____
 2. Some kind of _____ to a divine will
 3. As a sign of _____
 - a. Under ideal conditions a human can go _____ food for 90 days
 - b. On long fasts hunger _____ after about 3 days
 - c. Hunger does not return usually for _____ when the body's stored food supply is exhausted
 - d. It is after this time that _____ sets in
- I. _____ in the Old Testament
- A. First appeared as a _____ activity of Moses
Exodus 34:28; Deut. 9:9
 - B. _____ for fasting in the Old Testament
 1. _____ because of sin Deut. 9:18
 2. A physical sign of _____ I Sam. 7:6
 3. More _____ prayer Nehemiah 1:4-11
- II. Fasting in the _____
- A. A means of _____ to be spiritual
 - B. A tool to _____ God
 - C. A _____ religious exercise
 1. _____-Pharisees fasted _____
 2. Talmud says this was _____

III. Fasting among New Testament _____

- A. Jesus never _____ his disciples to fast
- B. _____ was a common practice among the early Christians
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____

IV. Now to our text: Matt. 6:16-18

- A. Don't make your fasting _____
 - 1. They try to look _____
 - 2. They want to be _____
 - 3. Their only _____
- B. When _____
 - 1. _____ your hair
 - 2. _____ your face
- C. God alone _____ you are fasting

V. Reflections

- A. If we fast, _____ do we do it?
- B. Things that make me _____ to be more spiritual.
- C. _____ has always been in the church.
- D. Don't let _____ press you into their mold.
- E. Don't ask, don't tell.