

Strongholds of the Holy Spirit

Victory Life Church – Pastor Jacob Sheriff

Part 3 “Fasting” — Sunday, June 19, 2022

1 Timothy 4:7 (ESV) Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather **train yourself for godliness**;

Desires — Thoughts — Beliefs — Actions — Habits — Character

“If the places in our souls that are to be indwelt by God and his service are occupied by food, sex, and society, we die or languish for lack of God and right relation to his creatures.”¹ ~ Dallas Willard

Inputs — Desires — Thoughts — Beliefs — Actions — Habits — Character

Matthew 4:1-4 (ESV) Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

“More than any other Discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us... [It] reminds us that we are sustained “by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” Food does not sustain us. God sustains us.”² ~ Richard Foster

“Fasting is one of the more important ways of practicing that self-denial required of everyone who would follow Christ...Fasting teaches temperance or self-control and therefore teaches moderation and restraint with regard to all our fundamental drives.”³ ~ Dallas Willard

Why Fast: recognize our desires, then redirecting them toward the Lord

“[Fasting] will certainly prove humiliating to us, as it reveals to us how much our peace depends using the pleasures of eating...Fasting confirms our utter dependence upon God by finding in him a source of sustenance beyond food.”⁴ ~ Dallas Willard

Inputs — Desires — Thoughts — Beliefs — Actions — Habits — Character

Matthew 15:16-19 (NLT) “Don’t you understand yet?” Jesus asked. “Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. But the **words** you speak come from

¹ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, pg. 176

² Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg. 55

³ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, pg. 166-167

⁴ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, pg. 166-167

the **heart**—that’s what defiles you. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander.”

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT) Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

Fasting is to retrain our desires to be satisfied in God.

“In experiences of fasting we are not so much abstaining from food as we are feasting on the word of God. Fasting is feasting!”⁵ ~ Richard Foster

Inputs — Desires — Thoughts — Beliefs — Actions — Habits — Character

Fasting
Abstaining

Fasting: Food
Abstaining
Fasting

Abstaining: specific inputs or common distractions

“Fasting along with our prayer requests is not some kind of magic bullet to ensure the answer we want.⁶ ...Some Christians think fasting proves to God their utter seriousness and deep devotion. *God*, so they think, *will be especially attentive to my prayer if I fast*. Nonsense. God cannot be manipulated or badgered into giving us what we want.”⁷ ~ Scot McKnight

⁵ Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg. 55

⁶ Scot McKnight, *Fasting*, pg. 49

⁷ Scot McKnight, *Fasting*, pg. 134