

Sermon Outline

New Here?



TEXT to connect (269-280-2878): Text “**welcome**” if you are new, or “**prayer**” if you would like prayer.

September 27, 2026

“Fasting with a Right Heart”
Pastor Corey Kugle

Matthew 6:16-18

Introduction

**A proper biblical understanding of food (Mk. 7:15,19; 1 Tim. 4:3-5; 6:8)*

1. Pay attention to “the heart” of practicing your faith (v. 1)

- A. Be careful not to do the *right* thing (giving, praying, fasting) in the *wrong* way: for the purpose of being seen by others.
- B. The consequence of doing the right thing in the wrong way: no reward from God.

2. What is fasting?

- A. Defined - “Christian fasting is a believer’s voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.” – Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*
- B. Importance (mention and practice)
 - i. Mentioned more than baptism in the Bible
 - ii. Practiced by the Jews, Jesus (Matt. 4:1-2), and the early church
- C. Is it for Christ-followers today? (Matt. 6:16-18; Mark 2:19-20)

D. Biblical purposes of fasting (from *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald S. Whitney)

1. To strengthen prayer (Ezra 8:23; Neh. 1:4; Dan. 9:3)	6. To humble oneself before God (1 Kings 21:27-29; Ps. 35:13)
2. To seek God's guidance (Judges 20:26-28; Acts 14:23)	7. To express concern for the work of God (Neh. 1:3-4; Dan. 9:3)
3. To express grief (1 Sam. 20:34; 2 Sam. 1:11-12)	8. To minister to the needs of others (Is. 58)
4. To seek deliverance or protection (2 Chron. 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23; Est. 4:16)	9. To overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God (Matt. 4:1-11)
5. To express repentance and the return to God (1 Sam. 7:6; Joel 2:12; Jonah 3:5-8)	10. To express love and devotion to God (Lk. 2:37; Phil. 3:19)

3. **The wrong way to fast** (v.16)

- A. The wrong way to do a right thing: draw attention to ourselves
- B. The consequence of fasting (a right thing) in the wrong way: just human praise; no reward from God.

4. **The right way to fast** (vv. 17-18)

- A. So others can't tell we are fasting
- B. The consequence of doing the right thing (fasting) in the right way: God will reward you!

5. **Conclusion/Next Steps**

- A. Don't be ruled by food (Phil. 3:19)
- B. Fast from one meal
 - i. On your own
 - ii. With others at *The Watch* Prayer group (Tuesdays 12-1pm, Gathering Room)
- C. Read through biblical purposes of fasting and verses, fast the next time you experience one.

How to Start Fasting (*Habits of Grace*, David Mathis, pgs. 123-126)

1. Start small
2. Plan what you'll do instead of eating
3. Consider how it will affect others
4. Try different kinds of fasting (as an individual or corporate/with others)
5. Fast from something other than food
6. Don't think of white elephants (turn attention to Christ or some great cause of his in the world)

*** Do the Right Thing, in the Right Way (with the Right Heart) ***

What's Next?

- October 4, “*Where is Your Treasure?*” – Matthew 6:19-24, Pastor Corey Kugle
- October 11, “*Overcoming Worry*” – Matthew 6:25-34, Pastor Kris Neider