

It's Deeper Than That – Week 6 Small Group Questions

Opening Prayer

Ice Breaker

Jeff's go-to order at Gloria's Latin Cuisine is the chicken with mushrooms, water to drink, and plenty of complimentary chips and dips. What's your "every single time" order at your favorite local restaurant?

Discuss

Main Scriptures: Matthew 6:16-18, Isaiah 58

1. Around 700 million people live on less than \$2 a day, while the average American family throws away about \$1,500 worth of food each year. What's your honest gut reaction to holding those two facts side by side?
2. Read Matthew 6:16–18. Just like with giving and praying, Jesus says "when you fast," not "if you fast." Why do you think fasting feels like an extreme, "super Christian" practice to most modern Americans when it was a normal part of life for Jesus' first listeners?
3. Louie Giglio said, *"Jesus followers are God's primary conduit to care for the poor."* Jeff stressed this isn't a political policy but a Kingdom one. What's the difference, and why does it matter that caring for the poor is something the church owns rather than hands off?
4. Read Isaiah 58:3–5. God's people complain that He isn't impressed with their fasting, and He tells them it's because they're fasting to please themselves while still oppressing workers and quarreling. What does "going through the motions" of spiritual disciplines look like today?
5. Jeff said darkness isn't only found in sinful deeds but in the suffering and injustice of poverty, and that fasting points us toward the eternal feast when Jesus makes all things new. How does fasting become a way to live out "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?
6. Jeff asked, "When can I fast, and what can I fast from, in order to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus says — even to stand with the poor?" How would you answer that question for yourself right now?

Practice

1. Fast one meal this week, and do it quietly, as Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:17–18. Estimate what that meal would have cost and give that amount to someone in need, the Compassion Offering, or a local ministry.
2. Prayerfully consider sponsoring one of the 149 children at Pilgrims of Peru. If you already sponsor a child, write them a letter this week.