

If my people pray

Fasting - Luke 4:2-4 Message Reflection Guide

El Bulli restaurant, 2 hours north of Barcelona, is so popular that customers must reserve a table 6 months in advance. But noted Spanish chef Ferran Adrià decided to close the doors of his award-winning restaurant for 2 years so he and his staff could have time to think, plan, and innovate. Adrià told Hemispheres Magazine, "If we are winning all the prizes, why change? Working 15 hours a day leaves us very little time to create." In the midst of great success, they took time out for what is most important to them.

The first-century church in Antioch experienced a time of exciting growth when "a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21). As a result, Barnabas and Saul came to teach the new believers (vv.25-26). But along with the hard work, they took time to seek the Lord through prayer and fasting (13:2-3). Through this, God revealed His plan for taking the gospel into Asia.

Conversation Starter

What point or thought spoke to you from the message on fasting this past Sunday?

Getting Into The Scriptures Read aloud Luke 4:2-4.

What has your past experience with fasting been? Why have you or haven't you fasted in the past? What has Jesus taught you about or through fasting?

Read Matthew 9:14-15 What does Jesus say is the purpose of fasting? In what ways has Jesus' kingdom not fully come to bear in your world? Where are you praying for Jesus to come in and push back darkness?

Read Isaiah 58 What insights does God give us about the type of fasting that He desires?

Are there any functional saviors that you should consider fasting from? If so, what? (These could be morally neutral things.) *Here are some helpful questions to help you diagnose:*

What things absolutely draw you away from Jesus?

What things distract you from Jesus or cause you to grow numb to Him?

What things become excuses for not participating in community or serving others?

What things do you run to when you are hungry, angry, lonely or tired?

Making It Real

In your community group share what you will be fasting and what spiritual discipline (prayer, reading the bible, worship, silence, journaling etc...) you will focus on. The purpose of sharing this is for accountability.