

Friday, March 4, 2022

## **Fasting...For the Right Reasons?**

[Isaiah 58:1-12](#)

In the beginning of our text, God's people were questioning God.

*"Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?  
(Isaiah 58:3a).*

The answer comes very readily. When you do these things that are in your own interest and not acceptable to God, you do not see the will of God. The prophet let them know that the "fast" God desired was in the genuine concern of others, not the ritual of the law.

Jesus used the same words from Isaiah 58:6-7 in Matthew 25:35-36.

*<sup>35</sup>" for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."*

These words are often used as part of our mission statements in our churches. The prophet Isaiah assures the people that if they fasted for the right reasons, they would be rewarded, as did Jesus in His teachings in Matthew 25 as He promises eternal life.

The people in this passage of Isaiah were fasting in the wrong spirit and for the wrong reasons. Whether it is in fasting, worshipping, or in our prayer lives, do we sometimes find ourselves going through the same rituals -- depending on our own power and not on the power of the Holy Spirit?

During this Lenten season, we need to seek God's guidance to live as Jesus proclaimed in Matthew 25 (Read [Matthew 25:31-46](#)).

May we worship Him in the right spirit and for the right reasons so that we may experience the promise of eternal life.

***Prayer:** Christ Jesus, You desire us to work for Your kingdom here on Earth. Help us to allow the Holy Spirit to direct us as we worship during this Lenten season. May we be Your hands and feet in all we do and say. Amen.*

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