

Matthew 6.16-18 **The Rewards of Fasting and the Pitfalls of Playacting**

Summary

The Rewards of Fasting (why we must fast).

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that is good for us. Fasting is a contemplative discipline which we need in our busy city lifestyle.

1. Fasting fights our flesh (Ez 16.49, 1 Pet 4.1-3)
2. Fasting brings victory (2 Chron 20.3,12, Matt 4.3-11)
3. Fasting brings revelation (Moses, Daniel)
4. Fasting can bring healing breakthrough (Mark 9)
5. Fasting commits a new enterprise to God (Esther, Ezra, Acts 14.23)
6. Fasting can bring us back to God (Joel 2.12 Jonah 3)

The Pitfalls of Play-acting (why we must avoid hypocrisy)

- Playacting will wear you out
- Playacting denies that God loves you
- Play-acting is directed to the wrong audience

Your Father...

- He is invisible
- His eye is always on you
- He is eager to reward you

Questions for Personal Application

Remember that what matters is clarity (understanding what we're reading) and honesty (being open about how it should change us)

1. Have you ever fasted? Share your experiences of this discipline.
2. Are you an active or a contemplative person? How can you work on your weakness?
3. Do you get tired and busy? How do you build rest into your life?
4. Which reward of fasting do you need at the moment? How can we fast as a cell for you?
5. Do you play-act sometimes, pretending to be someone you're not? How can this stop?
6. How can you live more aware of God's presence every day? What do you need to change?
7. How do you feel knowing that God sees everything you do?