

A Question About Fasting
Lesson #11
Mark 2:18-22
8-17-25

John 14:6 *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me."*

Ephesians 2:8 *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – ^[9] Not of works, so that no one can boast."*

Acts 4:12 *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

Acts 10:43 *"All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name."*

I. Jesus was criticized by the Pharisees and John's disciples.

A. They asked Jesus a question about fasting.

****Mark 2:18** *"Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, 'How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?'"*

Mark 2:18 (NKJV) *"The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. Then they came and said to Him, 'Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?'"*

Mark 2:18 (NASB) *"John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they *came and *said to Him, 'Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?'"*

B. There was only one annual fast commanded by God.

Leviticus 16:29 (Amplified) *"This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month (nearly October) on the tenth day of the month you shall humble yourselves [by fasting] and not do any work, whether the native-born or the stranger who lives temporarily among you."*

Leviticus 16:30 *"For it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord."*

II. Jesus corrected the Pharisees and John's disciples.

A. Fasting is not to be done as a show.

Matthew 6:1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Matthew 6:16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full."

B. Fasting is done during times of sorrow.

****Mark 2:19** "Jesus answered, 'How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them.'"

****Mark 2:20** "But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast."

John 16:20 "I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy."

John 16:21 "A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born, she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world."

John 16:22 "So with you; Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."

III. Jesus clarified the truth about the gospel and their works system.

A. No one sews a new patch on an old garment.

****Mark 2:21** "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse."

B. No one stores new wine in an old wineskin.

****Mark 2:22** "And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

How can we apply this to our life?

A. There are times when fasting is appropriate.

Matthew 6:17 "But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ^[18] so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

B. Make sure your motives are aligned with God's Word.

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

I Corinthians 10:31 "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

Romans 4:4 "Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ^[5] However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness."