

Spiritual Training: Fasting & Solitude – Training for Intimacy

Pr. Israel - May, 25th

This week's message was part of the "Spiritual Training" series, focusing on the indispensable disciplines of fasting and solitude. In a world full of noise, distractions, and constant demands, these two practices help us to grow in intimacy, and be spiritually renewed.

Fasting

Not optional: Jesus said, "When you fast..." (Matthew 6:16–18), not "If." Not for show: It's a secret act of devotion, not public display. Spiritual purpose: True fasting is to draw closer to God, not to lose weight or look spiritual.

Benefits:

Physically: Improves health (autophagy, reduces inflammation, regulates blood sugar).

Mentally: Increases focus, breaks compulsive habits, reduces anxiety.

Spiritually: Sharpens our hearing of God's voice, increases dependency on Him.

"Christian fasting is the hunger of a homesickness for God." – John Piper

Solitude

Countercultural but crucial: We need intentional time alone with God to grow deeper.

Restores spiritual strength: Like Jesus (Mark 1:35), solitude renews our soul and centers us on God.

Reveals our true self: In stillness, we face who we really are before God—no masks, no performance.

Empowers public ministry: Solitude is the bow that gives power to the arrow—our service, mission, and witness.

"You can't be everything for everyone if you're not resting with the One who created you." – Craig Groeschel

Key Bible Verses

Matthew 6:16–18

Joel 2:12

1 Corinthians 9:27

John 4:34

Romans 12:1

Mark 1:35

Psalms 46:10

Matthew 4:4

To Start Thinking:

Why do you think fasting and solitude are so difficult in our modern world?

What spiritual benefits have you experienced (or desire) through fasting or solitude?

To Start Conversation:

When was the last time you fasted or intentionally withdrew for solitude?

Have you ever felt God speaking more clearly to you in a moment of silence or hunger?

To Start Sharing:

What is one specific distraction that keeps you from these practices?

What small step can you take this week to start fasting or practicing solitude?

Weekly Challenge

1. Solitude Practice:

Set aside 15–30 minutes daily for undistracted prayer and Scripture meditation.

2. Fasting Practice:

Fast from one meal this week, choosing a spiritual focus.

Praying.

Heavenly Father,

We quiet our hearts before You, laying aside distractions and comforts that compete for our attention. Teach us to hunger for You more than anything else. Thank You for inviting us into deeper intimacy through fasting and solitude. Forgive us for choosing comfort over communion and busyness over Your presence. Train our hearts to love You more. Strengthen our spirits as we choose to say no to ourselves so we can say yes to You. Let our lives bear fruit from the roots we are choosing to grow deeper in You. In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen.

Announcements:

Be part of our team - become a volunteer

Online prayer meeting - 7am on Fridays

HOP every Friday 7pm at Formation Center

The Way Camp - First Batch on sale!

June 7th - Drive thru after 7:30 pm Service at PIB Gymnasium