

**Foundations In Fasting**  
30 Hours  
**Sheldon Juell, Ph.D.**

**Lesson 1: Fasting and the Christian Life**

**Topic 2: Fasting: Is It Relevant Today? – Class Notes**

**2.1 – Topic 1: Summary**

- Fasting and the Christian life
- The Day of Atonement – *Yom Kippur*
- We Fast Because . . . .

**2.2 – Topic 2: Fasting: Is It Relevant Today?**

- Self-Indulgence
- The Downfall of Pride
- Our Physical Appetite
- Fasting: It's Not Only About Food

**2.3 – Self-Indulgence Is the Enemy of Gratitude – Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.**

- “Self-discipline usually its friend and generator. That is why gluttony is a deadly sin. The early church fathers believed that a person’s appetites are linked: full stomachs and jaded palates take the edge from our hunger and thirst for righteousness. They spoil the appetite for God”.

**2.4 – Self-Indulgent Society – Donald S. Whitney – Spiritual Disciplines & the Christian Life**

- “Christians in a gluttonous, denial-less, self-indulgent society may struggle to accept and to begin the practice of fasting. Few Disciplines go so radically against the flesh and the mainstream of culture as this one”.

**2.5 – Self-Indulgent Society – Donald S. Whitney – Spiritual Disciplines & the Christian Life**

- “But we cannot overlook its biblical significance. Of course, some people, for medical reasons, cannot fast. But most of us dare not overlook fasting’s benefits in the disciplined pursuit of a Christlike life”.

**2.6 – FEAR**

- **FEAR - (False Evidence Appearing Real)**

**2.7 – The Downfall of Pride – Richard Foster – The Celebration of Discipline**

- “If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David said, ‘I humbled my soul with fasting’ (Ps. 35:13). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear—if they are within us, they will surface during fasting”.

**2.8 – The Downfall of Pride – Richard Foster – The Celebration of Discipline**

- “At first, we will rationalize that our anger is due to our hunger. And then, we know that we are angry because the spirit of anger is within us. We can rejoice in this knowledge because we know that healing is available through the power of Christ”.

**2.9 – Fasting and Our Appetite – C. S. Lewis – The Problem of Pain**

- “Fasting asserts the will against the appetite—the reward being self-mastery and the danger pride: involuntary hunger subjects appetites and will together to the Divine will, furnishing an occasion for submission and exposing us to the danger of rebellion”.

**2.10 – Fasting and Our Appetite – C. S. Lewis – The Problem of Pain**

- “But the redemptive effect of suffering lies chiefly in its tendency to reduce the rebel will. Ascetic practices which, in themselves, strengthen the will, are only useful insofar as they enable the will to put its own house (the passions) in order, as a preparation for offering the whole man to God”.

**2.11 – Fasting and Our Appetite – C. S. Lewis – The Problem of Pain**

- “They are necessary as a means; and as an end, they would be abominable, for in substituting will for appetite and there stopping, they would merely exchange the animal self for the diabolical self. It was therefore truly said that “only God can mortify”.

**2.12 – Treasures On Earth or In Heaven – John Piper – A Hunger for God**

- “fasting is God’s testing ground—and healing ground. . . . Fasting is a way of revealing to ourselves and confessing to our God what is in our hearts. Where do we find our deepest satisfaction—in God or in his gifts?”

**2.13 – Treasures On Earth or In Heaven – (Mt. 6:19-21)**

- “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mt. 6:19-21).

**2.14 – Fasting Exposes Those Areas Where We Lack Discipline**

- We must come to the place that God is our source of life—He alone is our provider. Food does not sustain us, God sustains us. Therefore, when we are fasting, it is more than abstaining from consuming food; we are feasting on the Word of God.

**2.15 – Fasting Exposes Those Areas Where We Lack Discipline**

- One of the obstacles to fasting and one of the reasons that keeps us from fasting is that more than any other type of discipline, fasting exposes the areas where we lack discipline and especially those areas which control us. Fasting makes us vulnerable, exposes sin in our lives, and takes us to a place where we just do not want to go.

**2.16 – Fasting Is Not Confined To Only Food – Martyn Lloyd-Jones – Sermon on the Mount**

- “Fasting if we conceive of it truly, must not . . . be confined to the question of food and drink; fasting should really be made to include abstinence from anything which is legitimate in and of itself for the sake of some special spiritual purpose”.

**2.17 – Fasting Is Not Confined To Only Food – Martyn Lloyd-Jones – Sermon on the Mount**

- “There are many bodily functions which are right and normal and perfectly legitimate, but which for special peculiar reasons in certain circumstances should be controlled. That is fasting”.

**2.18 – Topic 3: Why and When Should Christians Fast?**

- 9 Reasons Why Christians Should Fast.
- Jesus said, “**When you fast**”.
- Fasting and Divine Intervention.
- Biblical Situations Where Fasting Occurred.