



## **Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: SERMON ON THE MOUNT 07.15.2018**

### Recap:

- Fasting isn't about what we are giving up; it is what we are responding to: God's faithfulness.
- In the Old Testament, the Jews were not supposed to for God to forgive them. They fasted because it was God that rescued, redeemed, and restored them.
- In Jesus' time, fasting had become a bi-weekly ritual that was part of a religious checkbox. It stopped being about a response to trust in God.
- People would try to look hungry and thirsty for everyone else's benefit so that people would be impressed with how religious they were being. Instead of pointing themselves to God, they were pointing to themselves.
- Fasting is a physical response to your need for God and to the very real reality that regardless of the situations you face, you can put your trust in God that he rescues, redeems, and restores.

### Discuss:

- What is your experience with fasting? What are some reasons that you have heard people say concerning why they fast?
- READ Luke 18:9-14.
- How do you think a person who follows Jesus' teaching can stay humble? How do you think can people avoid becoming self-righteous?
- READ Matthew 6:14-18.
- Why do you think Jesus wants his followers not to show they are fasting? Do you think he wants us to hide that we are fasting or just not make it obvious?
- Over the past three weeks, we've learned about doing things (giving alms, praying, and fasting) in secret and God will reward in secret. Do you think all religious activity should be done in secret? What role does being in a religious community have with this?
- How do you think fasting shows one's need for God and trust in God?
- If you feel comfortable share, after thinking about fasting (that it is a response to God rescuing, redeeming, and restoring us), do you feel called to any particular response?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

### Read at Home: Additional Readings about Fasting

- Zechariah 7:1-14
- Isaiah 58:1-9
- Matthew 4:1-11