

2025-02-16 Sarah Smith - "The Disciplines - Class 5"

"Fasting – Part 1"

Adult Study Class Study Notes

<https://youtube.com/live/zPO4tP5jQtw>

<https://www.livinghopebranch.org/the-disciplines-class-5/>

Summary

This class is a discussion centered on the discipline of fasting, highlighting its importance in spiritual growth and connection with God. Sarah Smith reflects on their struggles with fasting compared to prayer and study, emphasizing the unique blessings that can be derived from fasting. Sarah references various scriptural teachings that associate fasting with deeper communion with God, spiritual breakthroughs, and the purifying of the heart. Sarah also touches on the physical benefits of fasting and encourages the audience to consider fasting as a means to express longing for God, emphasizing that fasting should not merely be about abstaining from food but a holistic commitment to seeking God's presence.

Highlights

1. **Fasting is a unique spiritual discipline** that complements prayer and study.
2. **Fasting allows believers to hear** from and commune with God in a profound way.
3. **Scriptural references** highlight fasting as a commandment and a means to spiritual breakthroughs.
4. **The act of fasting reveals what we truly value in our hearts.**
5. **Fasting can lead to both spiritual and physical benefits**, including improved health and increased humility.
6. **The longing for God's presence** is a core aspect of fasting.
7. **Fasting is not just an act of abstaining from food**, but a holistic approach to seeking God.

Key Insights

1. **Fasting as a Discipline:** Fasting is presented as a spiritual discipline that allows believers to engage in a deeper relationship with God. Unlike prayer, which is often about talking to God, fasting is about listening and being receptive to His guidance.
2. **Experience with Fasting:** Many individuals within the discussion express their limited experience with fasting compared to prayer and study. This highlights a common struggle in the faith community to engage with fasting as a regular practice, emphasizing the need for encouragement and teaching in this discipline.

3. **Spiritual and Physical Benefits:** Sarah notes that fasting can provide both spiritual and physical advantages. Scripturally, fasting is associated with humility, faith, and joy, while physically it can enhance health, boost memory, and reduce inflammation. This dual benefit is a compelling reason for individuals to incorporate fasting into their spiritual routine.
4. **Fasting as an Act of Worship:** Sara teaches that fasting should be viewed as an act of worship rather than merely a ritualistic abstaining from food. It connects the practice to a longing for God, positioning fasting as a way to express a desire for divine communion and spiritual intimacy.
5. **Fasting Reveals True Values:** Engaging in fasting can bring to light what individuals prioritize in their lives. The struggle that arises from hunger can lead to self-reflection and a clearer understanding of one's spiritual needs and desires.
6. **Community and Fasting:** The class discussion encourages communal fasting, suggesting that collective fasting can lead to communal blessings and miracles. The shared experience of seeking God through fasting can strengthen the community's faith and unity.
7. **Call to Action:** Sarah challenges the congregation to actively practice fasting, suggesting a monthly commitment to fasting together. This call to action emphasizes the importance of incorporating fasting as a regular spiritual practice to foster growth and connection within the faith community.

Conclusion

This class on fasting presents it as an essential spiritual discipline that believers can engage with to deepen their relationship with God. Sarah challenges the congregation to reflect on their current practices of prayer, study, and fasting, encouraging them to view fasting not merely as an abstention from food but as a purposeful communion with God. By emphasizing both the spiritual and physical benefits of fasting, Sarah inspires a renewed commitment to this practice, advocating for a collective approach to fasting within the congregation to experience its transformative power.