

"The Means of Grace: Why Do We Pray and Fast?"
Matthew 6:5-8, 16-18

"Genuine fasting is combined with concentrated, intense prayer, for a period of time, because of a desire to have a greater concern for the Lord, His will, and His work." (John MacArthur)

"Without a spiritual purpose, it is not Christian fasting, it's just going hungry." (John Piper)

- Some Observations from Matthew 6:5-8, 16-18:
 - It is assumed that the Christian will pray and will fast. *"And when you pray...and when you fast..."*
 - The Scripture argues that there is a right and wrong way to pray and a right and wrong way to fast. *"You must not...do not..."*
 - The Scripture argues that the primary function of prayer and fasting is private, not public. This is for the benefit of us, not God. *"Go into your room and shut the door...that your fasting may not be seen by others..."*
 - The Scripture argues that prayer and fasting can lead to a reward from man or a reward from God. *"To be seen by others...your Father who sees in secret will reward you..."*
- Examples of Fasting in the Bible:
 - Grief leads to fasting. (2 Samuel 1:12)
 - Fear because of circumstances leads to fasting. (2 Chronicles 20:3-4)
 - Brokenness over sin leads to fasting. (Jonah 3:1-10)
 - Seeking God's will leads to fasting. (Acts 13:1-3)
 - Asking God's help in doing a task leads to fasting. (Acts 14:23)
 - Fasting is crying out: "God, we need You; God, we can't do this without You; God, it is too much for us; God have mercy on us!" Prayer is a humble admittance of our insufficiency.
- Other Scriptures about Fasting: (Zechariah 7:5, 9-10 and Isaiah 58:3-12)
 - When we fast with the right heart for the right purpose it transforms our lives, or helps us grow in holiness.
- Duty and Delight: (2 Corinthians 8:8; 9:6-11; Luke 17:9-10)
 - *Actions of Delightful Duty* (commands) show loyalty, commitment, and identification. They are the evidence that we are saved. *Actions of Delightful Freedoms* show dissatisfaction in the minimum, those who delight want as much as they can have of Christ. More knowledge, more holiness, more dependency, and more glory to God. (Generous giving, fasting, bible studies/church services, more fellowship). All of this is done in joyful humility to grow in righteousness and a knowledge of Christ.
 - The sinful traps are *minimalism* for our comfort or *maximizing* our efforts for man's praise.

Announcements:

★**DONATIONS:** Sunday is the LAST DAY that we are collecting monetary donations for the Christian Union Summer Camps. Each summer our denomination hosts 3 weeks of church camps in Greenfield, Ohio for children ages 9-18. Your monetary donations would help with the cost of purchasing food for these church camps, in order to not increase the price of camp for each child. For more information about the denomination and about the church camps themselves, please see the board on the back table. There is a container on the back table for your monetary donations. You can also give on Venmo, please make sure to note that it is a donation for the Summer Camps.

★**MEMBERS MEETING:** We will be having a Members Meeting ***THIS*** Sunday, May 28th, immediately following the worship service. This meeting will be to vote on the budget options and the proposed By-Law changes and additions that were presented at the Members Meeting last month. If you are a current church member, please plan to stay for this meeting.

★**BAPTISM SERVICE:** Our next Baptism Service is scheduled for Sunday, June 11th. If you are interested in being baptized or have any questions about baptism, please see Pastor Jeremey or one of the other Elders

★**CHURCH DAY OF PRAYER:** Our monthly day of prayer as a church body is *NEXT* Wednesday, May 31st. We ask that you set aside time on that day to pray for the elders, deacons, and ministries of our church body.