

“He is Able”
Great Reasons to Fast

I. Introduction

- A. The primary purpose of fasting is to gain more of God !

II. Wrong reasons to fast

- A. When it is designed to give us the appearance of spirituality.

1. Isa. 58:1-2 (NLT) ¹“Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Tell my people Israel of their sins! ²Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to hear my laws. You would almost think this was a righteous nation that would never abandon its God. They love to make a show of coming to me and asking me to take action on their behalf.”

- B. When it is designed to earn God’s favor.

1. Isa. 58:3-4 (NLT) ³‘We have fasted before you!’ they say. ‘Why aren’t you impressed? We have done much penance, and you don’t even notice it!’ I will tell you why! It’s because you are living for yourselves even while you are fasting. You keep right on oppressing your workers. ⁴What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me.

III. Great reasons to fast

- A. When it is designed to bring freedom.

1. Isa. 58:6 (NLT) “No, the kind of fasting I want calls you to free those who are wrongly imprisoned and to stop oppressing those who work for you. Treat them fairly and give them what they earn.”

2. Fasting breaks bondages !

- B. When it is designed to put us in touch with other people’s suffering.

1. Isa. 58:7, 10a (NLT) ⁷I want you to share your food with the hungry and to welcome poor wanderers into your homes. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. ¹⁰Feed the hungry and help those in trouble.

2. Heb. 2:18 (NLT) *Since he himself has gone through suffering and temptation, he is able to help us when we are being tempted.*
3. Heb. 4:15-16 ¹⁵*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.* ¹⁶*Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

C. When it is designed to gain wisdom and guidance from God.

1. Isa. 58:11 (NLT) *The LORD will guide you continually, watering your life when you are dry and keeping you healthy, too. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring.*
2. Acts 13:2-3 (NLT) ²*One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work I have for them.”* ³*So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.*
3. He purifies our heart !

IV. Conclusion

Upcoming weekend messages for “He Is Able”

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Oct. 22-23 | A Risk-Taking Church |
| Oct. 29-30 | The “Big Message” of Jesus |
| Nov. 5-6 | Myths About Giving |
| Nov. 12-13 | The Best is Yet to Come (1 Service held at the Glendale Arena) |
| Nov. 19-20 | The Kind of Church God Builds |
| Nov. 26-27 | What I Learned From our Building Campaign |

(Unless otherwise indicated all Scripture verses are in the New American Standard version.)