



WHY FAST?

Family Devotional/Adult & Teen Discussion Guide

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JANUARY 13, 2019

1. PRIMARY STATEMENT: Fasting is supposed to be a season of focusing on God, but it can easily become a season of focusing on “doing it the right way.” In the end, God’s not impressed with the “how” of fasting; He’s impressed with the “why.”

2. BIBLE VERSE:

Matthew 6:16 [NLT]

“And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get.”

Fasting can become a way to show how “spiritual” you are by how you do it. It’s human nature to want a pat on the back for doing something hard, but we should seek that from God, not people.



Q . You shouldn’t fast to impress others, but you should encourage others, especially your family / children, to want to fast themselves. What’s the difference between this and what Jesus was describing? Where is the line between inspiring others and showing off?

3. DISCUSSION:

Matthew 15:1-3 [NLT]

“Some Pharisees and teachers of religious law now arrived from Jerusalem to see Jesus. They asked him, ‘Why do your disciples disobey our age-old tradition? For they ignore our tradition of ceremonial hand washing before they eat.’ Jesus replied, ‘And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God?’”

When you’re working hard to serve the Lord through a fast, it’s easy to become sidetracked judging others on the “how” of their service. Instead, focus on the heart behind why you’re fasting.

Q . As Christians, we’re called to look out for each other, and confront those who have strayed into sin. How is that dynamic different from the Pharisees’ interaction with Jesus?

Q . Imagine a scenario where your focus on the details and traditions of a fast could overshadow the heart behind it in someone else. What would that conversation sound like? How can you avoid playing it out in real life?



4. PRAYER FOCUS

Talk to God in a different way this time. Try to communicate without using the phrases and terminology that normally come to mind. What do you need? What are you thankful for? Keep it real, and just say it in plain English.



LIFE IS A HIGHWAY: YIELD

Family Devotional/Overflow Kids Discussion Guide

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1. POWER VERSE: Galatians 5:25 *"...let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."* What's up: "Slow Down, Wait A Minute, Listen To The Holy Spirit!"

This week, we continue our series called, "Life Is A Highway". In this series, we're learning that life is a lot like a highway. The Bible says that there are two roads that we can choose to travel on. One leads to life in Heaven forever and one leads to sin and death. We have to make sure we are on the road that leads to Heaven.

2. ACTIVITY:

Show your children a GPS or map app on your phone.

Q. How does a GPS/map app know where to tell you to turn? (It's in constant communication with satellites that give it information about your position.)



Q. What happens if you're using a GPS/map app and you make a wrong turn? (The GPS tells you how to get back on the right road.)

Q. If a GPS/map app has access to ALL the information about your location, would it ever be smart to ignore the directions it gives you? Why not?

3. DISCUSSION:

The Holy Spirit is like this GPS/map app. He speaks to us as we travel down the highway of life. He tells us where to go and what to do. We need to listen to His still small voice in our hearts and always obey what He tell us.

Q. How is the Holy Spirit able to help you in your everyday life?

Q. How has the Holy Spirit helped you in the past? Did you listen?



4. PRAYER FOCUS

Pray for your children to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking into their lives. Practice slowing down by sitting still for a few moments. Ask your children to listen to what the Holy Spirit is speaking to their hearts. Then, pray that God will help them obey the Holy Spirit this week.