



FASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

One of the points Jesus makes about fasting is that our goal should be to please God and not others. Jesus states,

"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you"

(MT 6:16-18)

But does that mean we should keep our fast a secret from everyone? What about our spouse? I can only imagine my wife's response if she were to cook my favorite meal, not knowing I'm fasting, and then hear me say I'm not going to eat it. Of course, I should tell her what I'm doing. I don't think Jesus' point was to keep your fast a complete secret. His point was to teach us that when we fast we must seek to please God and not the approval of man. I think you should tell a few key people in your life about your fast and ask them to do at least three things while you fast.

1. Pray for you.

You need your friends to pray that you will hear from God as you seek His wisdom during your fast. You will also face many physical challenges. On the first or second day you will probably experience some hunger pains, headaches, and fatigue. Ask your friends to pray for physical strength.

2. Hold you accountable to your commitment.

If no one knows about your fast, then you'll be tempted to break the fast before the appointed time. I don't care how 'holy' you think you are, the thought will cross your mind. The best way to defeat that temptation is to have a friend hold you accountable to your commitment.

3. Encourage and celebrate with you.

This is the best part of a fasting. The encouragement you will receive will be priceless. The best part of the fast for you will probably be celebrating with your friends how God blessed you. High-fives and chest bumps are in your future... well, for men. Ladies...hugs and whatever else you guys do.

In the past, I have always asked a few friends to partner with me as I fast, and it has made a huge difference. Prayers are felt and encouraging words lift you up as you struggle. As you think through your upcoming fast with Foothills Church, think about the people in your life that could hold you accountable and encourage you through the process.

The best is yet to come!

