



Experience 14: Fasting

Thursday, January 28, 2021

Matthew 6:25, 33-34

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ... For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

During this 40 Days of PWE, we have said that "fasting is chosen abstinence for a spiritual purpose." I believe one of the most important spiritual purposes of fasting is that it trains us to live in the spirit of Jesus' teachings about worry.

If eating can bring joy, can fasting? Think about how you feel when that bowl of sweet potato fries comes out to your table or you unwrap that fresh taco, or when you take the first sip of your favorite hot drink. We live in an instant gratification culture, when we can get what we want pretty much all the time, and when we get what we want we are happy! Food especially brings us joy, and Jesus knows that, he created us that way! But sometimes we depend on food more than we depend on Jesus for our joy.

Fasting is about joy because when you fast you are humbly choosing to connect to the one who provides your needs.

the satisfaction we get from the presence and the Word of God can be just as good as the satisfaction we get from food?

In the scripture we're focusing on today, Jesus talks about our needs, and how God will provide them. Sometimes I become aware of how my wants and desires trick me into thinking they are a need because they are what bring me happiness. Fasting helps us learn to fight against our desires and our instant gratification culture and become aware of our actual needs! Is it possible that

Actions to take

- Schedule a time to fast from food during the next week or so. If you're new to fasting, choose a meal to fast. If you've got some experience, fast for a longer period. Choose the amount of time you'll be fasting before you start.
- Spend some time in your journal recording your thoughts on these questions before your fast:
 - What do I depend on for happiness or comfort? Is it food, relationships, sports, entertainment, anything else?
 - What things do I consistently worry about?
 - What food especially brings me comfort?
- When you are ready to break your fast, get your comfort food and enjoy it with Jesus.
- Tell him how you feel and how it brings you joy. Express how He is even greater than this joy you feel. Journal about your gratefulness for his provision of joy and comfort in the midst of your worries and needs.