

Small Group Guide

Week of August 25, 2024

Speaker: Mark Delaney

What About Fasting?



Icebreaker



- What's your favorite snack that you can't resist, even if it's not great for you?
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?



Discussion Questions



- Reflect on a time when you felt spiritually stagnant or stuck. What do you think contributed to that feeling?
- How does the analogy of a pacifier resonate with your own life? What are some "spiritual pacifiers" you rely on?
- Jesus said, "You can't live life 'FOR' Jesus without doing life 'WITH' Jesus." What does doing life 'WITH' Jesus look like for you on a daily basis?
- The sermon mentioned that discipline transforms one-time actions into daily habits. What are some small, consistent practices that could help deepen your relationship with Jesus?
- How do you typically react to the idea of fasting? What are some misconceptions you've had about it?
- In what ways can fasting be a tool for experiencing more of God in your life? Can you think of a time when fasting or another spiritual discipline led to a breakthrough?
- Discuss how the analogy of new wine and wineskins relates to embracing new spiritual practices. How can you make space for God to do something new in your life?
- What are some ways you've seen God move in your life when you've committed to spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, or reading the Bible?



Thought for the Group



True spiritual growth happens when we stop just living life "FOR" Jesus and start doing life "WITH" Jesus. This means moving beyond mere actions and routines and into a daily, intimate relationship with Him.

One key way to do this is through spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, and reading Scripture. These practices aren't about earning God's favor but about positioning ourselves to experience His presence more deeply.

However, discipline can be challenging, and it's easy to get discouraged. But the good news is that God meets us in our efforts. When we commit to these practices, even in small ways, God begins to transform our lives from the inside out. We start to see that our spiritual hunger can only be truly satisfied by Him. We're reminded us that God sometimes allows us to experience spiritual dryness or stagnation to make us aware of our need for Him. Instead of seeing these times as failures, we can view them as opportunities to press into God more deeply, to let go of old habits or mindsets, and to embrace new ways He wants to work in our lives.

Let's commit to not just going through the motions but to actively pursuing a deeper relationship with Jesus. Let's replace our spiritual pacifiers with practices that draw us closer to Him, trusting we'll experience the fullness of life He promises.



Next Steps



- Choose one spiritual discipline that you've struggled with or haven't fully embraced, such as fasting, consistent Bible study, or solitude. Set a realistic goal to practice this discipline.
- Reflect on old habits or mindsets, then, take a bold step to create space for God to work in a new way in your life. This could mean letting go of a past hurt, simplifying your schedule to prioritize time with God, or stepping out in faith to serve in a new capacity.