



Clemson Foothills Church

Isaiah 58

I didn't ask you to do this;
but if you are, do it **MY** way
-YHWH

- Throughout time the people of Israel have instituted various fast for various reasons
- Historically, Israel has equated fasting with mourning and distress
- **SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?** the people have mistakenly thought the abstaining from food is what matters most. (Why haven't you heard us?)
- They were eager for the 'blessings' not the one who blesses
- God's purpose for fasting is repentance and re-alignment with HIS ways and values

- So what was happening here in Isaiah 58?
 - Correction and rebuke of Israel's sin: Israel had fallen into the trap of doing what they want the way they want it **INSTEAD** of God's way
 - Result of this: violence, strife, bondage, finger pointing
 - **COMPLETE DISCONNECT**: Appealing to God while Oppressing one another

- YHWH's case:
- You look religious but aren't aligned at all with MY values
 - What does God value? See Leviticus 19/ Matthew 25/ Isaiah 61
 - God desires that His people would be a blessing to the world. Living as God's co-workers meeting material AND spiritual needs
- Your community is accepting oppression, hunger and nakedness and you are **INDIFFERENT** (See Haggai 1)
- The empty and broken are neglected!
- Zechariah 7 & 8:14-21

The main issue isn't whether I am mournful or not
RATHER it is will we do what feels right to us or
align with God's values?

21 Days of fasting & Prayer for us today

- Cultivate a repentance for any indifference to the spiritual and material needs of our community
- Re-align our priorities, money and time to reflect God's values
- Cultivate an awareness of those in bondage and the poor and naked amongst us
 - Requires healthy small groups (knowing and being known)
 - Am I involved enough to even be obedient to God's values?
 - We are God's instruments of provision & grace to our world

Evaluating money and things:

- Which is a greater sum? At the end of the week/ month/ year all the money I spend on:
 - Concerts/Athletic events
 - Alcohol/Coffee
 - Travel/Vacation
 - Clothes
 - Streaming services/subscriptions
 - Tech/ Phones/ tablets, etc
 - **OR** meeting material needs of those around me
- Am I eager to find ways to help those in need? Am I willing to miss out on some things?
- **Beware:** Being broke due to the pursuit of my own wishes, dreams and desires

Evaluation

- Which do I show a greater eagerness for?
 - My wants, desires and leisure
 - My personal development
 - My education and work advancement
 - **OR** meeting the **spiritual** needs of those around me?
 - See: Romans 6:6/ 2 Cor 5:3/ Titus 3:3/ 2 Pe 2:19/ Gal 4:3-8