

1. Read Matthew 6:1–18. What three aspects of our devotional lives does Jesus address in this text? Based on what we see in the text, how do we explain the urgency for this teaching? In what ways does our current culture reflect the hypocrisy of the 1st Century religious leaders?
2. Read Isaiah 58:1–7. What does the prophet have to say about fasting that coincides with Jesus' teaching?
3. Under what conditions is fasting an important and helpful part of our spiritual lives? Under what conditions does it become dangerous?
4. Consider your own practices of generosity, prayer, and fasting. Where in these areas are you strong? In what areas can you grow? How can you carry out these devotional functions with greater authenticity? Ask God to reveal to you any "theatrics" and to replace those with authenticity.
5. Read 1 Cor 3:11–15. How can Christians pursue reward rightly? Read Luke 19:17. Take a moment to consider that day when you'll stand before Jesus. Thank him for the reward promised you and ask him for strength and patience to endure until then!