

WHITFIELD PARISH

St James' Church † St Luke's Church

LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 15 June 2008

The Good Life – good fasting

Matthew 6 v.16 – 18

1. What is your experience of fasting?
2. In the Jewish faith of Jesus' day, three duties were expected – giving, praying and fasting.
The OT often speaks of fasting in different contexts. Why were they fasting in –
 - (i) Nehemiah 9 v.1-2?
 - (ii) Ezra 8 v.21-23?What can we learn from this?
3. Michael Green says of fasting:
'It lessens the hold of material things on us' and 'Fasting is a mark of sincerity and repentance'.
How does fasting achieve these things?

Read Matthew 6:16-18

4. What problems was Jesus highlighting in this passage?
5. What, according to Jesus, is the right way to fast?

6. What do you think the “reward” of v.18 is?
7. How might Acts 13 v.1-3 serve as an example of the practice and benefits of fasting?
8. How could fasting benefit –
 - (i) you, as an individual?
 - (ii) our congregations?
9. How could fasting be introduced into the life of our congregations?

Read Isaiah 58 v.3-9a

10. What is the prophet saying about –
 - (i) bad fasting?
 - (ii) good fasting?

PRAYER SUGGESTION:

Use Isaiah 58 v.3-9a as a basis for your prayers.