



SERIES: PRAYER AND FASTING

WEEK 5: FASTING AND THE FLESH

SPEAKER: PASTOR ROB STACEY

SERMON SUMMARY

In this message, Pastor Rob Stacey unpacked Jesus' words in Matthew 6, reminding us that fasting is not about performance, guilt, or health trends—it's a spiritual act of surrender and formation. In a culture dominated by self-indulgence and hyper-focus on comfort, biblical fasting challenges us to confront what truly controls us. Rob drew on Romans 7 to highlight the tension between flesh and spirit, showing how fasting becomes a tool to align our physical bodies with our spiritual purpose. More than going without food, fasting is about forming right desires, crucifying the flesh, and participating in the ongoing work of transformation. Fasting reveals what sits on the throne of our hearts and invites us to enthrone Christ anew.

OPENING PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to speak through Scripture, reflection, and silence. Ask God to reveal areas in your life where the flesh has taken priority over the Spirit.

ICEBREAKER

- What's one physical habit you've developed that's helped your spiritual life?
- Have you ever done something physically that changed you spiritually? (e.g. a pilgrimage, fast, baptism, silence, etc.)

SCRIPTURE READING

READ MATTHEW 6:16–18 AND ROMANS 7:15–25 TOGETHER.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

JESUS' TEACHING ON FASTING

- What stands out to you about Jesus' expectation in Matthew 6: "When you fast..."?
- Why do you think Jesus placed such emphasis on secrecy and sincerity in fasting?

FLESH VS SPIRIT

- In Romans 7, Paul describes a war between the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. How do you relate to his struggle?
- Rob said fasting isn't about willpower but surrender. How does fasting help you submit to the Spirit's leading?

EMBODIED SPIRITUALITY

- Rob reminded us that we don't just have a body—we are a body. How do physical actions like fasting shape your spiritual life?
- What habits or appetites do you think fasting could help you realign?

TRAINING OUR DESIRES

- What do you think Rob meant when he said, "Fasting isn't just about going without food; it's about training our desires to desire rightly"?
- What area of life are you most aware of competing desires (flesh vs spirit)?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Fasting is a physical and spiritual practise that forms right desires.
- The battle between flesh and spirit is real—and fasting helps us fight well.
- True transformation requires both surrender and action.

APPLICATION FOR THE WEEK

- Try a Fast: From sun-up to sundown one day this week. Drink water, go about your day normally, and notice what surfaces.
- Practice Surrender: Each time you feel hunger, open your Bible to the Sermon on the Mount, pray briefly, and ask God to reveal what's ruling your heart.
- Memory Verse: "Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:18)

CLOSING PRAYER

"Father, thank You for meeting us in our hunger. Use this week's fast to reveal what we need to release and re-centre our lives on You. Help us crucify the flesh and walk in step with the Spirit. Amen."