

A VERY BRIEF THEOLOGY OF FOOD

1. Food is created by God and is good

1 Tim 4:1-5 “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴ For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.”

2. Food is not to be worshiped

- a. Glory should go to the Creator rather than the created
- b. God’s gifts should not be mistaken for God
- c. Phil 3:18-19 “For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.”
- d. 1 Cor 6:12-13 ““Everything is permissible for me”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me”—but I will not be mastered by anything. ¹³ “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food”—but God will destroy them both.”
- e. Mark 4:18-19 “Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

John Piper, *A Hunger for God: Desiring God through Fasting and Prayer* (Crossway, 1997). TBC Library call number: 248.47 PIP
-My thinking and portions of these notes owe much to this book.

ISAIAH 58: A FEW THOUGHTS ON FASTING

OUTLINE

- I. The Fasting God Despises (vv. 1-5)
 - A. Call to Attention (v. 1)
 - B. Religious Appearance (vv. 2-3b)
 - C. Ethical Failure (vv. 3c-5)
- II. The Fasting God Desires (vv. 6-14)
 - A. God’s Delight: Help the needy (vv. 6-7)
 - B. God’s Blessing (vv. 8-9a)
 - C. God’s Delight: Cease oppressing and help oppressed (vv. 9b-10a)
 - D. God’s Blessing (vv. 10b-12)
 - E. God’s Delight: Keep the Sabbath (v. 13)
 - F. God’s Blessing (v. 14)

YOM KIPPUR=DAY OF ATONEMENT

PASSAGES

Leviticus 16: detailed explanation of the “day of atonement”

Leviticus 23: the chapter of the biblical “appointed times”

Verses 26-32: the “day of atonement”

Hebrews 9: the final “day of atonement”

KEY ELEMENTS

1. Rest – those who do not rest are to be cut off
2. Afflict yourselves – traditionally understood as fasting (cf. Ps 35:13; Isa 58:3; Ezra 8:21).
3. Priest
 - a. Offers a bull for himself and his family, two burnt offerings, one for himself and other for people
 - b. Enters holy of holies (only on this day) to sprinkle blood on atonement cover
 - c. Kills one goat, sends other (scapegoat) away

THE VALUE OF FASTING

PASSAGES

Matthew 9:15 “Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.”

Matthew 6:16-18 “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

REASONS TO FAST (TOMORROW OR ANY DAY):

1. Fasting is one of the spiritual disciplines
 - a. A way to discipline your body and spirit to do what you want it to do; I beat my body into submission
 - b. Spiritual disciplines are a way which God gives us more grace
2. To fast is to set aside one good for a greater good
3. Fasting reveals who you are and leads you to repentance and devotion
4. Hungering physically teaches you about spiritual hunger
5. Fasting reveals what masters us
6. Fasting goes against our *practical* culture and nature
7. Fasting fights the deadening effects of innocent delights

Danger: