

## **Five Potential Barriers to Fasting**

### **1. Desire for Self-Sufficiency**

A barrier to fasting can be our desire for self-sufficiency. Our lives are marked by our ability to attain various levels of independence. And in many cases, this is God-honoring. In fact, the Bible teaches us the importance of responsibility. But this desire for independence can actually work against the very things we long to experience in God. We were created to be fully dependent on God. Fasting forces us to admit that we are not self-sufficient and reminds us of our desperate need for God. Until we address this strong desire for self-sufficiency, we will struggle to submit ourselves to God through prayer and fasting.

### **2. Hunger for Worldly Pleasures**

Another barrier to prayer and fasting is our hunger for worldly pleasure. In this life, we cultivate our taste buds for the pleasures of this world on a daily basis. And it creates a barrier to fasting. Fasting is designed to loosen our heart's grip on the temporary things of this world. Fasting helps us recalibrate the palate of our souls for heavenly things. Until we acknowledge that for which our souls truly hunger, we will struggle to see the need for fasting.

### **3. Longing for Self-Gratification**

A third barrier to fasting is our constant pursuit of self-gratification. Our culture bombards us with the message that we can and should have what we want, when we want it and how we want it.

Fasting challenges this cultural narrative, because fasting is about self-denial rather than self-gratification. When we fast, we

are following a Savior who reminds us that anyone who seeks to be his disciple must deny themselves and follow Him.

#### 4. Undisciplined Living

Undisciplined living is a barrier to fasting. Discipline tends to breed discipline and lack of discipline tends to lead to less and less discipline. Often our failure to step into a life of prayer and fasting is not so much a reflection of our lack of desire but a revelation of our lack of discipline. Besides the spiritual side of fasting, there is a practical side that asks us to make a commitment and keep it.

#### 5. Lack of Vision

Another barrier between you and fulfilling a commitment to fasting is a lack of biblical vision. The Bible tells us, "Where there is no vision the people perish." When we have no vision of God or his work in the world, we lack a motivation to fast and call on his name and his help. When we do not believe or see that God can and will act in our lives and in our church and in our communities and in our nations, there is no motivation to overcome these barriers and seek Him through prayer and fasting.