

Tools Or Rules?

The Passage:

Jesus' Take On Fasting And How God Works

Matthew 9:14-17/ Isaiah 58:1-14

Fasting: The What, When & Why

Biblical fasting is a **RESPONSE**, not a **RITUAL**.

How God Works:

God seldom uses the same game plan **TWICE**.

The Truth About Spiritual Disciplines, Traditions, And Rituals

1. No two **PERSONAL** relationships are ever **EXACTLY** the **SAME**.

Romans 14:1-12

2. Never turn a **TOOL** that works for **YOU** into a **RULE** for **EVERYBODY**.

Colossians 2:16-17, 20-22/ Mark 2:27

3. Try them **ALL**. Keep what **WORKS FOR YOU**.

4. Always judge the **FRUIT**, not the **WATERING SCHEDULE**.

Micah 6:7-8



Tools Or Rules?

The Passage:

Jesus' Take On Fasting And How God Works

Matthew 9:14-17/ Isaiah 58:1-14

Fasting: The What, When & Why

Biblical fasting is a _____, not a _____.

How God Works:

God seldom uses the same game plan _____.

The Truth About Spiritual Disciplines, Traditions, And Rituals

1. No two _____ relationships are ever
_____ the _____.

Romans 14:1-12

2. Never turn a _____ that works for _____
into a _____ for _____.

Colossians 2:16-17, 20-22/ Mark 2:27

3. Try them _____. Keep what _____.

4. Always judge the _____, not the _____.

Micah 6:7-8

LIFE GROUPS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

These questions are designed to help groups discuss the weekend teaching while building relationships with each other and applying God's Word to our lives.

September 28, 2025

WARM UP



1. In this weekend's passage, Jesus gave a metaphor about the old and the new. Do you usually like to try new things, or do you prefer to stick with what you're familiar with? Give examples.
2. Fasting can be spiritual or dietary. If you had to give up one favorite food for a month, which would be hardest to let go of?
3. What is something that stood out to you from this weekend's message?

KNOW IT



1. A spiritual discipline is a practice or habit that helps a person grow in their faith, such as prayer, fasting, or Bible study. This weekend, we were reminded that these practices are "tools, not rules," meant to be engaged with meaningfully, not ritualistically.

With this in mind, read Romans 14:1-12 and Colossians 2:16-17, 20-22. As you read, look for 2-3 ways you see God valuing relationship over ritual.

2. How might these verses shape your view of your own spiritual practices? How should we treat those who do things differently, and why does it matter?

SHARE IT



1. Larry encouraged us to try different spiritual practices and keep what works. Are there any disciplines you've tried and kept? Any you've set aside? Any you haven't tried yet, but want to?

2. As we see in Matthew 9:16-17, embracing change requires flexibility. Has there been a time when a change upset you at first but ended up working out better than expected?

LIVE IT



1. Looking again at Matthew 9:16-17, if the "new wine" is God's new work in your life, what are some "old wineskins"—old habits, mindsets, or rules—that could hold it back? How might God be calling you to grow out of those old habits?

2. God has wired us all differently (Psalm 139:13-16). Ask God to show you if there's someone—maybe even yourself—you've been too hard on for not fitting into a mold Jesus never meant for us. Send them a note of support, or if it's you, thank God for making you unique in His image. Share your experience with your Life Group this week.