

What are ways today that people can work toward having clean hands and a pure heart? How might fasting help or hurt that effort?

## Sermon Notes

**Focusing Our Hearts through Fasting**  
Matthew 6:16-18

Nolan Donald  
March 6, 2011

### **Taking It Home**

On Sunday, Nolan said that fasting can reveal the motives and nature of our heart. How is that true? What can even our willingness to try fasting show about our relationship with God?

What is the most appealing thing and the thing that make you most apprehensive about fasting? How do you think your faith might be challenged/grow by fasting?

### **Celebrating God's Presence**

This week marks the last meeting of Community Groups for the winter quarter. Spend a few minutes jotting down ways you've seen God working in your group. How have you seen God growing or challenging specific people? What prayers have you seen God answer? Spend a few minutes thanking God for his faithfulness and work.



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grow as joyful servants of Jesus.**

## Community Group Study Guide

*For the week of March 6, 2011*

### Getting Started

Was there any one thing that you most agreed with or disagreed with from Sunday's message? What was it and why?

Before this past Sunday, when you heard the word "fasting" what were your thoughts?

Even after this past Sunday, which one of the following words/phrases describes you're thoughts on fasting? Explain your choice(s).

- Confused
- Reluctant
- Curious
- Cautiously optimistic
- Eager
- Ready to try
- Hungry
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Digging Deeper

Read 2 Samuel 12:16-23. Jot down things you notice. Describe David's use of fasting.

Even though God did not heal the child, how do you think David's season of fasting and praying affected his relationship with God? How did it help him trust God?

Read John 4:27-38. Jesus downplays the importance of food. Does our culture place too much importance on food? How might that distract from truly seeking God?

Read Luke 4:1-4. In the midst of his forty day fast, Jesus tells the devil that "people do not live on bread alone." While we must have food to live, Jesus is suggesting that true life comes from something God. Do you agree with Jesus' statement? Why or why not?

Read Psalm 24:1-6. What do you think it means to have "clean hands and a pure heart" (v. 4)?