

Sparking The Flames Of Revival: Ep. 4 When You Fast Matthew 6:16-18

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, 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 others 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.

“The **tipping point** is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses an threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire.”— Malcolm Gladwell

Fasting is a component of the inward, secret and invisible spiritual life. *OPEN SPACES

**Fasting is the willful refraining from eating for a period of time.
*Religious— Brings into alignment Spirit, Mind and Body**

Invisible Essentials

Vs. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others 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.

- **ESSENTIALS: “But when you”** — Jesus is more speaking of essentials of the faith here rather than a smorgasbord.
- **INVISIBLE: “your Father, who is unseen”**— Jesus here is speaking of being Spirits in a material world. **The Ghost In The Machine'*

Hypocrites and Oil

Vs. 17 “do not look somber as the hypocrites do

- **“As the hypocrites do”**—“The word **hypocrite** is rooted in the Greek word hypokrites, which means “**stage actor**, pretender, dissembler.”
- **“put oil on your head and wash your face”** — This counter-intuitive command is based on *Jesus' Revolutionary Upside Down Kingdom*.
 - *The Bible, A Good ATTITUDE and a Smile*

¹ The “ghost in the machine” is British philosopher Gilbert Ryle's description of René Descartes' mind-body dualism

Rewards from a Father

Vs. 18 and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

- **“And your Father who sees”**

- We do not serve an absentee Father.
- American studies into the seemingly [incontestable link](#)² between fatherlessness³ and delinquency date back to the mid-1800s.
 - The Father identity is inseparable from the Christian worldview and its understanding of the nuclear family.

- **“Will reward you”—** We serve a generous God of extravagance.

Gift, Prize and Reward

Food for the Journey: Questions and challenges to go deeper in individual reflection or in one of our community groups.

1. If the inward life is a generator for the outward existence, what are some ways to make sure that our life is being empowered from within?
2. How much consideration do you give to the invisible life?
3. Hypocrisy turns you into an external actor whose incongruence of inward ideals and outward expressions become a mockery to God. Why would God hate hypocrisy?
4. Why would God choose to make his role as a loving Father so prevalent in the bible?
5. What would a reward from God look like and why would God reward us when he has already given us salvation in Jesus. Is that not enough?

² <https://thefatherlessgeneration.wordpress.com/statistics/>

³ <https://www.thetrumpet.com/16988-south-africa-consumed-by-fatherlessness>