

Introduction:

I. The Biblical Warrant and Relevance for Fasting...

A. The Bible has a great deal to say about it...

B. Jesus assumes His disciples will fast...

C. He did not set the practice aside or nullify it...

1. Understand the context...
2. See Matthew 9:14-15

D. There are different kinds of fasts in the Bible (varying duration...)

Observations: 1.

2.

3.

E. Fasting is a spiritual discipline with a rich heritage among Reformed Christians...

II. The Spiritual Purpose for Fasting

A. It is "unto the Lord..." Zechariah 7:5; Isaiah 58:3-7

B. The Pharisees and Scribes fasted to impress others...

C. There is no merit of its self... Isaiah 58:3; Psalm 35:13

D. It is about humbling one's soul...

1. In times of grief... *Joshua 7:6; II Samuel 12:21-23; 1:12; Daniel 9:3*
2. In time of great need... *Nehemiah 1:4; Ezra 8:23; Acts 13:2, 3; 14:23*
3. In repentance... *Joel 1:14*
4. Part of our spiritual warfare... *Mark 17:21*

Observations:

1. Fasting has to do with self-denial and the ongoing struggle against our old man of sin... I Corinthians 9:27; Philippians 3:19

2. It reminds us of our dependence upon God... Matthew 4:1-4

Application: