
The Heart That Feeds Itself vs. The Heart That Frees Others

By **Tori King** September 3, 2026

Turning away from old habits creates space for God to build new patterns.

Isaiah 58:1-14: God connects the ancient Israelites' mistakes with a heart that feeds itself. Doing religious activities like fasting means nothing to God if people continue to argue, fight, and exploit their workers. Outer rituals cannot hide an unchanged heart.

The "fast" God actually desires is for people to actively fight oppression, free the mistreated, feed the hungry, and provide shelter for the homeless. They asked God, "Why have we fasted, and you don't see it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you don't notice?"

God was looking for a fast that would stop injustice and help others. Their fasts ended with fighting and arguing, and their "spiritual devotion" did not make them any kinder. They needed to fix relationships and break the chains of injustice. God was looking for a heart after His heart. God was looking for true humility and a true fast without a wrong heart, and then He would answer their prayers as a nation.

As Christians today, God initiates the same change, but people must let go of control and invite Him into their daily choices. The Lord wants a stripping away of wrong motives spiritually done in our hearts.

Fasting and praying should be changing our own hearts, and God should be able to speak to us and tell us, "Get rid of this, daughter or son, because it's ugly and not of the Lord." We have to swallow some hard truths as God does a work on our heart during a fast, but it starts by hearing the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 61:1 describes the anointing to "proclaim liberty to the captives." Together, they reveal God's heart: true worship and spiritual breakthrough result in active compassion and the heart that frees others, to comfort those who mourn and release those in darkness.

The church today cannot make a difference if we are bound and not set free ourselves. If we are arguing and fighting and are at odds with each other, then God says we need to get our hearts right. God is looking for a true fast with a right heart. This starts with us and allowing the conviction of the Holy Spirit to do a work.