

An ontological  
reality

Since we talked about the Fast yesterday, I'll bet some of you have thought that it would be a great way of losing weight. Anyone? How many of you have ever thought about going on a reducing diet?

I must say that always occurs to me when I think about not eating. And that's what always comes to my mind in terms of a Fast.

However, a Fast doesn't have anything at all to do with a reducing diet. As a matter of fact, some people will gain weight. You can kill a Fast by trying to accomplish something like losing weight.

Now, what does the Fast mean?

When you get right down to it, we're usually fasting most of the time, aren't we? No? Well, we feast--or we eat 3 times a day. (At the fast pace we go that might add up to about an hour and a half a day.) Maybe more if you add a couple of coffee breaks morning and afternoon, of about ten minutes each and maybe add some extra time if you go out to dinner with friends in the evening. So we are not eating most of the time. And the other times we are eating. So we are always fasting or feasting--feasting and fasting.

You know, we break-fast each morning. Ever thought about that?

Well, Fasting is a spirit reality. Which is to say it's grounded in life. It's grounded in the way life is.

You have to get piousness out of your mind. You've got to get morality out of your mind. It's not right to fast. It's not wrong to fast. But fasting is just the way life is. Now, what does it mean to bring radical intentionality to this activity?

To really get down to it, I don't like fasting. I like--Eating. I don't even like to think about fasting. But if now we suddenly discover that Fasting is the way life is anyway, then let's take a look at what goes on.

A Fast is on  
behalf of all  
men across the  
globe

We need to remind ourselves once again that the Fast doesn't have anything to do with ourselves. A Fast has to do with living on behalf of. The occasion of this Fast has to do with living on behalf of every local man--clear across the globe.

Detachment

Detachment is the way life is. No way to hang on to family, goods, etc. to make them permanent. Fasting is a way of symbolizing that detachment. When we fast, we are detaching ourselves from food.

Nonchalance

Food just represents an object which we are detaching ourselves from. We could choose something else. Like our job, or our family (maybe that speaks to some if you've left your spouse at home this summer.)