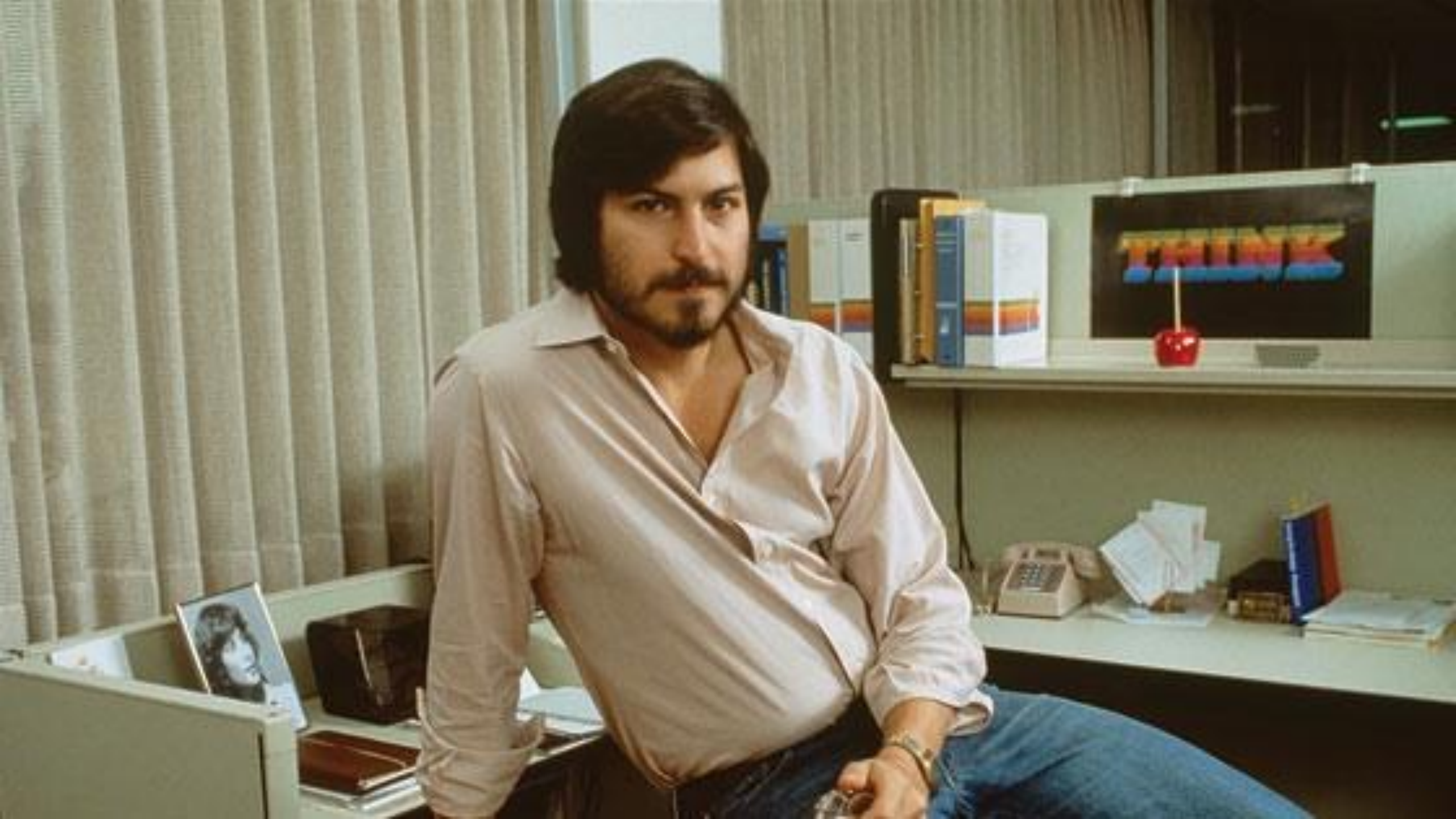


# Empty But Filled

*A Series on Spiritual Disciplines*





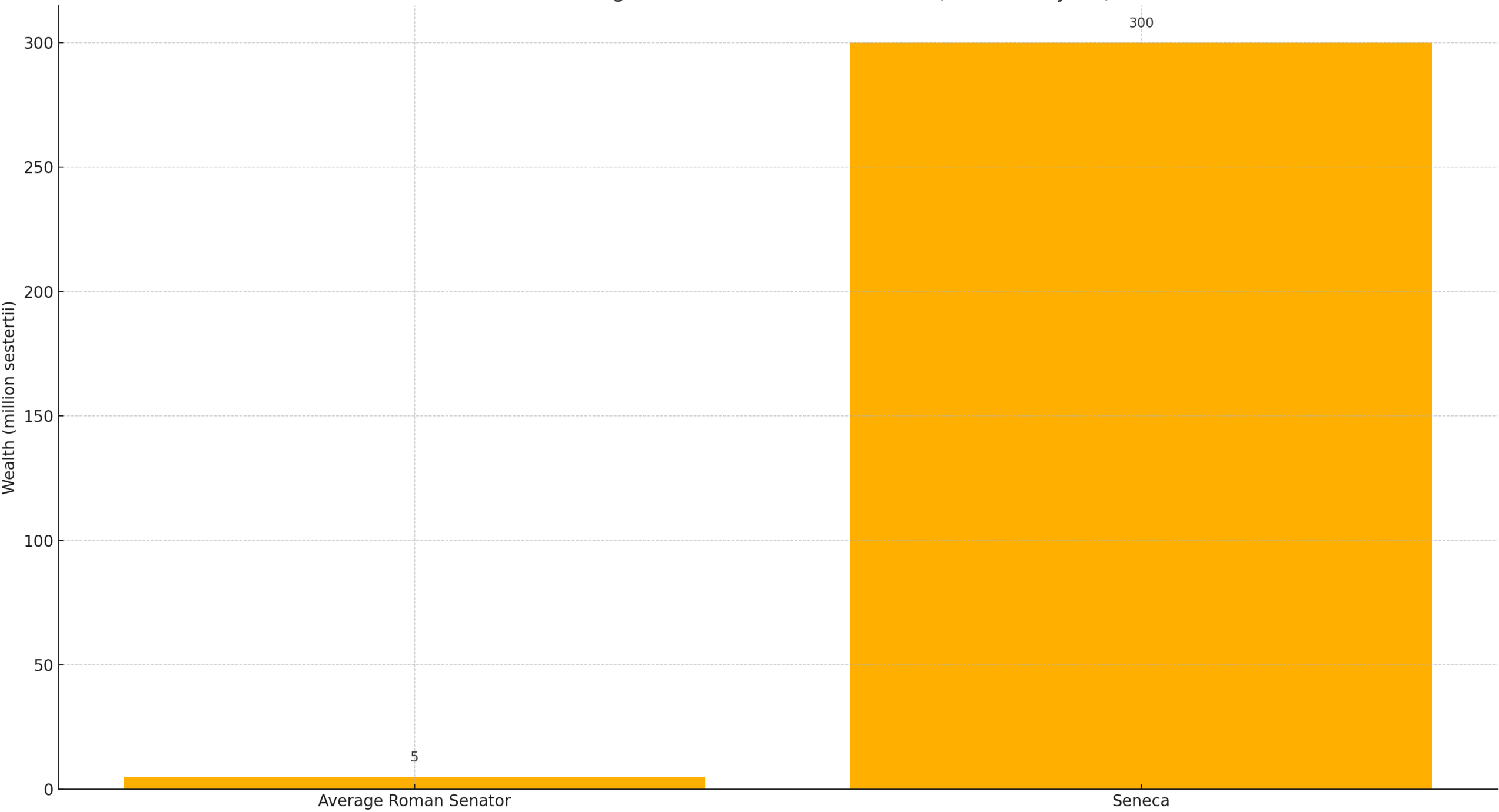








Wealth of Average Roman Senator vs. Seneca (1st Century CE)













# Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*

"Let the pallet be a real one, and the coarse cloak; let the bread be hard and grimy. Endure all this for three or four days at a time, sometimes for more, so that it may be a test of yourself instead of a mere hobby."



# Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*

"Then, I assure you, my dear Lucilius, **you will leap for joy when filled with a pennyworth of food**, and you will understand that a man's peace of mind does not depend upon Fortune; for, even when angry she grants enough for our needs."





# Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*

**"it is the highest kind of pleasure to be able to derive pleasure from this sort of food,** and to have reduced one's needs to that modicum which no unfairness of Fortune can snatch away."



# Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*

"If you would not have a man flinch when the crisis comes, **train him before it comes.**"





# Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*

"This is indeed forestalling the spear-thrusts of Fortune. **By choosing to do without, he gained something far more valuable than all his wealth could buy:** the unshakeable knowledge that he could be content with very little, and therefore, he had nothing left to fear."



# Matthew 6:16 NKJV

"Moreover, **when you fast**, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.





# When. Not If.

*The Bible Assumes That We Fast.*



# Definition

Fasting is the intentional abstinence from food or other pleasures for spiritual purposes. It's not about earning God's favor – it's about creating space to hear His voice more clearly.



# Fasting Reveals What Controls Us

*Point #1*



# Luke 12:16–20 NKJV

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. [17] And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' **[18] So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.**





# Luke 12:16-20 NKJV

**[19] And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."** [20] But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'



# Feasting

*The Direct Opposite of Fasting*



# Doug Batchelor

When we are full, we tend to forget about God.











# Forgetting to Eat is Not Fasting



# Fasting is Intentional



# Andrew Murray

Prayer is reaching out after the unseen; **fasting is letting go of all that is seen and temporal.** Fasting helps express, deepen, confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God.





# Richard Foster

More than any other discipline, **fasting reveals the things that control us.** This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside of us with food and other good things, **but in fasting these things surface.**



# Fasting Reveals What We Actually Need

*Point #2*



# Deuteronomy 8:3 NKJV

So He humbled you, **allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna** which you did not know nor did your fathers know, **that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.**



**Fasting is Exchanging  
One Hunger for another.**





# Word --- Food



# Siegfried H. Horn, *SDA Bible Dictionary*

To afflict the body for the sin of the soul is to dodge the issue and to miss the true nature of repentance, since sin is a disease of the soul and not of the body. **The chief benefit to be obtained from fasting is a clarity of mind** that comes with complete or partial abstinence from food and that enables a person to perceive God's will more distinctly.



# Martin Luther

Of fasting I say this: It is right to fast frequently in order to subdue and control the body. **For when the stomach is full**, the body does not serve for preaching, for praying, for studying, or for doing anything else that is good.



# Martin Luther

**Under such circumstances God's Word cannot remain.** But one should not fast with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work.



# David Platt

What we're saying when we fast is that more than we want our hunger to cease, **we want God's Kingdom to come and His will to be done in our lives.**







# Fasting Reveals Who We Actually Are

*Point #3*



# Luke 15:15-17 NKJV

Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. [16] And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate,



## Luke 15:15-17 NKJV

and **no one gave him anything. [17]** "But when he **came to himself**, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!



# Acts 9:7-9 NKJV

And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. [8]

**Then Saul arose from the ground,** and when his eyes were opened he saw no one.



# Acts 9:7-9 NKJV

But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. [9] **And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.**





# Reactions

- Do we become irritable? That reveals where our peace really comes from.
- Do we become anxious? That shows us what we're truly trusting in.
- Do we become restless? That exposes our need for constant stimulation.
- Do we become more prayerful? That reveals our spiritual hunger.



# Leviticus 16:29-31 NKJV

"This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, **you shall afflict your souls**, and do no work at all,



# Leviticus 16:29-31 NKJV

whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. [30] For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you,













# Roberto Canessa

You don't realize all the things you have in this world,  
much more than you need, and you do much less  
than you can.



# Anxious? Confused? Restless?

*Why Not Try Fasting?*



# Summary

1. Fasting Reveals What Controls Us
2. Fasting Reveals What We Actually Need
3. Fasting Reveals Who We Actually Are

