|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Yeshua clearly states that His followers will be people who fast.  Fasting together helps bring encouragement and accountability to this process. |  |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | |
| |  | | --- | |  | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | *16Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.  17But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;  18that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* Matthew 6:16-18  **When You All Fast**  One of the drawbacks to the English language is that we have one word for both a singular and plural you.  It's thus harder to tell in certain contexts (especially when reading the Bible) the difference between being addressed to you solely (as an individual) or whether it's a plural "you all" or "you guys."   One of the benefits to reading the King James Version is that it uses the old English which did have different words for the singular you (thee, thine, thou) and the plural you (you, ye, your).     In my regular devotional reading yesterday in Matthew 6, I was drawn to the passage about fasting.  It was only recently that I found out that this passage has both the plural you and the singular you related to fasting.   For most of my spiritual life I have equated fasting as a personal, private spiritual discipline.  Over thirty years ago, I heard a Bible teacher share about the benefits of prayer and fasting.  I began to implement what he shared in my life immediately and discovered a number of those benefits myself.  Actually, a personal time of prayer and fasting in the summer of 1992 actually led me out to Colorado.    So I was surprised when I recently found out that in Yeshua's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount on fasting that there is a "you guys" section.  What this means to me is that it is biblically appropriate to have corporate fasts together.  We don't lose our reward by doing this together and gaining the accountability and encouragement of doing so.  And, even thought there are parts of my flesh that really does not enjoy fasting, I have found out over the years that the benefits far outweigh the negatives.    A couple of weeks ago I shared a bit on an upcoming opportunity to have a time of set-apart prayer and fasting from this Sunday up to Shavuot.  I will plan to touch on this a bit more tonight. | | | |