

**Rolling Hills Community Church**  
Twelve Essentials to Spiritual Growth  
Summer Sermon Series  
May 27, 2007

***“Introduction to the Essentials of Spiritual Growth”***

Based on the book Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster

**The “Twelve Essentials to Spiritual Growth” are as follows:**

<b>The Inward Disciplines</b>	<b>The Outward Disciplines</b>	<b>The Corporate Disciplines</b>
Meditation	Simplicity	Confession
Prayer	Solitude	Worship
<b>Fasting</b>	Submission	Guidance
Study	Service	Celebration

*“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”* **Matthew 6:16-18**

**What is Fasting?**

Voluntarily denying oneself of food, or something else, in order to focus on spiritual matters.

**Purpose of Fasting:**

There are many purposes for fasting, but the three main purposes for fasting...

- **Prayer** - for deeper communion with God. Remember, this is an inward discipline.
- **Confession** - for cleansing of sin
- **Decisions** - for seeking God’s wisdom in a particular decision.

**Biblical References to Fasting:**

- Old Testament
  - Individually
  - Corporately – The Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 23:27**)
- New Testament

*“Then John’s disciples came and asked Him, ‘How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?’ Jesus answered, ‘How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.’* **Matthew 9:14-15**

**What about us? What is our Responsibility in the area of Fasting:**

Fasting reveals the things that control us...Food does not sustain us – God sustains us.  
Overall, Fasting is feasting on God and His Word!