THE SECRET SAUCE - PRAYER AND FASTING
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I. **INTRO:**
   A. **Secret Sauce** - Webster - An element, quality, ability, or practice that makes something or someone successful or distinctive

II. **Matt 6:5-18**
   A. V5 & V16 - “When” you pray and fast - Not “if”

III. **What is fasting? What it is not?**
   A. Not merely going w/out food for a period of time (starving, deprivation)
   B. Not something done by a bunch of religious fanatics
   C. Not limited to special occasions

IV. **What fasting is? - Types of Fasts:**
   A. Absolute fast – No food or water.
   B. Normal fast – No food but water allowed
   C. Partial fast – Abstaining from some foods or drinks and things.
   D. Abstaining from certain things: TV, Video Games, time, etc.
      1. **Biblically fasting is refraining from food for a spiritual purpose.**
         a) **Matt 4:4** “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”.

E. **Fasting helps reveal Lordship**
   1. **Gal 5:24** 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
   2. **Rom 8:8** 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
   3. **Rom 8:13-14** - Live controlled by the flesh vs. the Spirit; Death vs. Life

F. **Fasting is about a purpose**
   1. It’s not about what you move AWAY from but it is about what you move TOWARDS!
   2. **Matt 5:6** 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.
      a) **Blessed** - Happy, fortunate, favored
      b) **Hunger** - To crave or to seek with eager desire
      c) **Thirst** - To have a strong desire to attain some goal, because of an existing lack.
      d) **Filled** – to eat to the point of being satisfied; gorge, fill full
   3. **Job 23:12** 12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

V. **3 keys to Prayer and Fasting - V5-6 & V16-18**
   A. **DEVOTION** - Do not be like the hypocrites
      1. **Hypocrites** - hupokrites - One who pretends to be other than who they really are; An actor under an assumed character; stage player
         a) A person who professes beliefs and opinions that he or she does not hold in order to conceal his or her real feelings or motives.
2. **1 John 1:8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
3. **Ps 51:6** Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.
4. **Acts 26:16-18** - Open our eyes

**B. DIRECTION - Pray/Fast to God and not to men**
1. **Gal 1:10 NLT** 10 Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.
2. **John 12:42-43** 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
3. **Col 3:23-24** 23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

**C. DISCRETION - Pray/Fast in secret**
1. **Secret** - kryptos - Not known by the public but known by an in-group or those involved
2. **Openly** - phaneros - Clearly known or revealed, visible, evident, plain and clear
   a) Private discipline produces public rewards
3. C.S. Lewis - “*Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching.*”
4. **Heb 11:6** 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

**VI. APPLICATION:**
A. What are you willing to say no to so that you can say yes to something bigger?
B. What areas of your life are you living like a pretender?
C. Do you have a VERTICAL focus or a HORIZONTAL focus?
D. What can you change about your life privately that will have an impact openly?