**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr April 4, 2021**

**It’s All About The Heart**

Mark 2:18-22

**Key Truth:** Spiritual disciplines are tools that help develop our relationship with God, not rules to be kept in order to be accepted and love by God.

**Background On Fasting:**

1. In the Old Testament it was in response to grief and

 heartache. **2 Samuel 12:6-9, Jonah 3:6-10**

2. In Jesus Day it was a spiritual discipline that became a

 way of boasting before others. **Matthew 6:16-18**

3. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus it was to

 seek guidance from God or in a response to difficult

 circumstances. **Acts 13:1-3**

**Life Principles:**

1. God wants obedience not religious rituals.

 **Matthew 7:21-23**

2. Disciples of Jesus are to be characterized by joy, justice,

 humility, and love. **Isaiah 1:13-15, Micah 6:6-8,**

 **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

3. God is not accepting religious resumes. **Luke 18:9-14**

4. Following Jesus demands a new way of thinking and

 living.

**Taking It Beyond The Walls:** Don’t allow spiritual tools to become instruments of pride. Thank God for the mercy and grace we have received through faith in Jesus Christ.

**CONNECTION GROUP HOMEWORK**

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Why do you think some people are more attracted to religious rituals than to an active obedient relationship with Jesus Christ?

The list below contains some of the things we can do to grow spiritually. Which of these do you think could most easily become something where you just “go through the motions?”

• Going to church
• Serving/Volunteering

• Communion
• Connection Group

• Daily Bible reading/Bible studies

• Giving/Generosity
• Fasting
• Prayer

Which 2 or 3 of the activities above have been most helpful or impactful in your relationship with God?

Read Galatians 2:115-16: What caution does Galatians 2:16 give on the dangers of thinking our Spiritual disciplines put us in a better position with God?

In your own words, what point was Jesus making in the analogies of unshrunk cloth and new wine?

What can you learn from Jesus’ example about how to handle the pressure to conform to non-essential religious rules and traditions?

Discuss Romans 14:1-23: What were some of the issues in the church in Rome that were causing dissention?

What are some suggestions Paul gave for how the Roman church could work through the issues so unity can be restored?