



# Keeping a Holy Lent #1 Fasting

A portrait of Martin Luther, a German theologian, philosopher, and reformer. He is depicted from the chest up, wearing a black cap and a dark, heavy robe. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right of the viewer. The background is a dark, textured green.

# Luther's Caution

“I kept the rule of my order so strictly that I may say that if ever a monk got to heaven by his monkery, it was I. All my brothers in the monastery who knew me will bear me out. If I had kept on any longer, I should have killed myself with vigils, prayers, readings and other works.”





# Salvation by Works, Pride and Despair

- Earning our Salvation
- Pride - Isn't God impressed with us!
- Despair - We'll never be good enough!

# What is a Lenten Fast?

A wooden cross is the central focus, with a purple cloth draped over its horizontal beam. At the top of the vertical beam is a crown of thorns. The background is a solid, dark blue-grey color.

- The traditional Lenten discipline.

# What is a Lenten Fast?



- Going without meat.
  - You get rid of the fat (Mardi Gras)
  - You bid farewell to meat (Carnival)

# What is a Lenten Fast?

- What do we give up for Lent?
  - Something *\*good\**
  - Something that we will *\*notice\**
  - Something that will *\*pinch\**



# What is the Point?

- Fasting is not. . .
  - . . . proving our love for God.
  - . . . simplifying our lifestyle.
  - . . . putting sin to death.

# What is the Point?

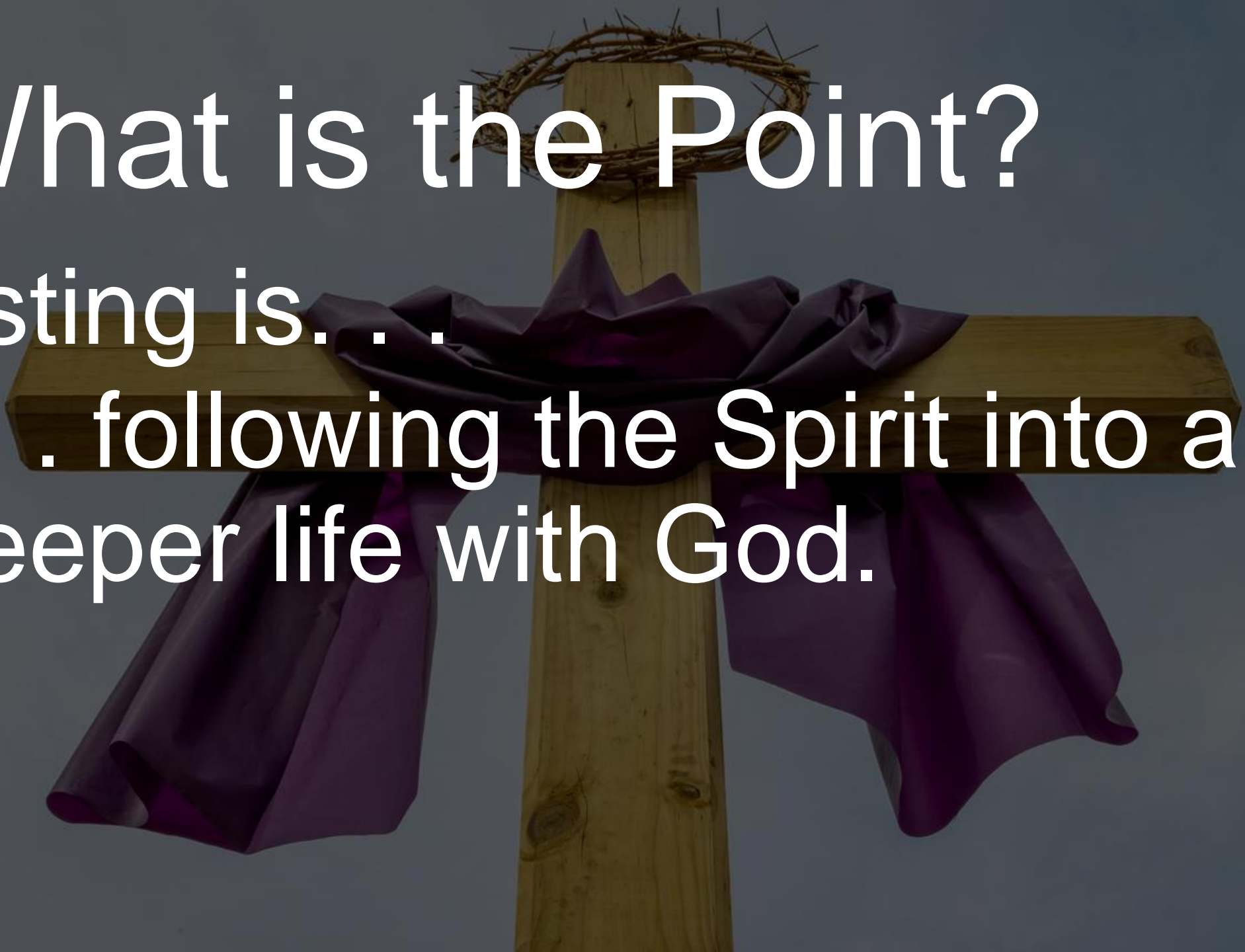


- Fasting is . . .
  - . . . opening ourselves up to God's love.
  - . . . identifying with Christ in his suffering.



# What is the Point?

- Fasting is . . .
  - . . . following the Spirit into a deeper life with God.



# What is the Point?

A wooden cross is centered in the image. A crown of thorns is placed on top of the vertical post. A purple cloth is draped over the horizontal bar of the cross, with the ends hanging down. The background is a solid dark blue color.

- Don't mistake the secondary goods for the primary purposes!



A portrait of Martin Luther, a German theologian, is visible in the background. He is wearing a black cap and a dark garment, looking slightly to the right with a serious expression. The background is a dark, textured green.

# Luther's Commendation

“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, or studying, or for doing anything else that is good. 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.”



# An Invitation to Lent



I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

- Not to earn God's love, but to be opened to it
- Not to demand God's forgiveness, but to go further into it
- Not to master holiness, but to be mastered by it