Fasting as Spiritual Exercise

Exercises that sharpen thoughts about God Practice to improve performance Exercises are my choice

The example of the godly...

- OT characters -Ezra 8:21; Neh. 1:4; Dan. 9:3
- The church in Antioch at the sending of teachers -Acts 13:1-3
- Galatian churches at the appointing of elders -Acts 14:23
- Paul (perhaps imposed; not by his choice) -*II Cor. 6:5; 11:27*

In God's eyes:

- Only *public* fast commanded, on the Day of Atonement ("afflict your souls") Lev. 23:27-29
 - Foolishly added, Isa. 58:1-5
 - "Extra credit" from God
 - Faked afflicting

In the eyes of our peers:

Generally unobserved, *Mt. 6:16-18*



In my own eyes:

I learn that I can rise above simply being controlled by my wants – even reasonable wants.



Sometimes I face momentous circumstances that cause me to fast. My strength won't eliminate them.



"Afflicting my soul" by my choice can enhance my focus on what's really important.