

FEASTING, FASTING, AND FOLLOWING JESUS

Matthew 9:9–17

While Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is arguably one of the world's most famous works of art, if you've ever seen it (whether in-person at the Louvre in Paris or in photos online) you'll know that it hangs on a plain, tan wall in a large, mostly-empty room. The original rationale for such simplicity of presentation was to help patrons avoid "museum fatigue" caused by overstimulation. But a 2017 study vindicated the decision as it found that "appreciating beauty takes conscious thought—and therefore, distracting a person can prevent them from fully taking in the work of art before them." Simply stated: Beauty is best appreciated when undistracted. The same is true of following Jesus. The Christian life is a beautiful thing, but when we're distracted—by sin, tradition, culture, or preferences—its enjoyment and effectiveness can be diminished. How can we avoid that? How can we make sure we're following Jesus unfettered by the unnecessary?

A question while FEASTING

vv. 9–13

A question about FASTING

vv. 14–17

Follow Christ not convention!