



FASTING GUIDE

*What's so
amazing
about
scripture?*

28 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

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FASTING GUIDE

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is to voluntarily abstain from eating/drinking for an extended period of time. "Eating" and "drinking" can represent anything that is holding you back. What do you "consume" in terms of social food, intellectual food, spiritual food, and emotional food? Are these things distracting you from your relationship with God?

Everyone doing a physical fast should consult a physician first. If you have medical issues, consider fasting TV or media. The point is that there is something God wants you to separate yourself from over the next 28 days so that you can see Him more clearly. Don't cheat yourself by removing yourself from the fast entirely.

Fasting Goal: A Personal Encounter with the Living God

"He must increase and [we] must decrease." - John 3:30

"Be ye holy, for I am holy." - 1 Peter 1:16

You may experience many benefits from fasting (cleansing your body, breaking addictions, etc.), but the goal of fasting is to experience God. Right now your life may be all about you, what you want, and when you want it. Imagine if you separate yourself from your perceived needs (such as food), you may see that life is all about Him.

FASTING PREPARATIONS

Prepare your heart:

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God appears to Solomon and explains that if His people are going through a hard time, they should seek Him and follow His ways. Then, He will hear their prayers and heal them. Be willing to hear what God says needs to change, and be willing to change. Don't continue to sin. What are the paths He wants you to walk? How much does He want you to pray and read His Word? Tell God that you surrender your life to Him and that you want more of Him and His way.

Prepare your motives:

Ephesians 1:3 says that there are spiritual blessings assigned to us. We can never exhaust them! Who knows what God wants to give you or show you? Maybe He wants to bestow gifts such as wisdom, anointing, prayer power, healing power, teaching power, joy, or encouragement. When you eliminate things that are keeping you from focusing on God, He is able to show you things about your life that you never knew.

Prepare your body:

If you decide to eat only fruits and vegetables for your fast, it will result in cleansing of your physical body. You may feel sick as your body detoxes, but you'll make it! This isn't a mind game to see if you can survive eating less or not watching ESPN, but about experiencing God.

Prepare your schedule:

Decide where you will meet with God, what and when you will eat, and how you will spend your time differently. Remember, the fast is about communing with God, so don't fill your time with distractions that will keep you from feeling hungry. Create a plan and commit to spending more time with the Lord.

FASTING GUIDELINES

- Explain to your family in advance what you are doing.
- Ask them not to discuss it with you until your fast is over.
- Never complain or brag about your fast, and avoid, as much as possible, talking about it.
- Establish an accountability partner for prayer & encouragement.
- Stay away from negative people.
- Spend as much time as possible alone in solitude and prayer.
- Journal as you pray and meet with the Lord. Write down the miracles God does in your life!

PICK YOUR FAST

After prayer and consultation with your doctor, select the appropriate fast that's right for you!

Step 1 - Commit to a Fasting Schedule (Choose one)

- Fast for 3 days (Feb 1st - 3rd)
- Fast for 7 days (Feb 1 - 7th)
- Fast for 14 days (Feb 1- 14th)
- Fast for 28 days

Step 2 - Commit to a Fasting Time Frame (choose one)

- 8 hours daily
- 12 hours daily
- 24 hours

Step 3 - Commit to a Fasting option (choose one) Consult a physician before engaging in a physical fast.

- Daniel Fast - Eat only fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds. Drinking only water.
- Partial Fast
 - ◊ Sweet Tooth Gone (No sweets nor added sugars/ sweeteners)
 - ◊ Water Wave - Follow your regular diet with only water as a beverage
 - ◊ Put the Wine Down - No alcoholic beverages
 - ◊ Your Faves & Frequents (none of your favorite/frequent foods nor beverages)

- ◊ Your choice - identify a food, beverage and/or habit that you will abstain from during fasting period
- Complete fast - abstain from all food, except drinking water. Important- this option is limited to a maximum of 3 days if you have chosen the 24 hour time frame. After 3 full days of complete fasting, you must eat and drink normally.

Social Media Fast

- Sunday Fun Day - Only engage social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Netflix, prime, etc.) on Sunday, after church
- Hour Power - Only engage social media for 1 full hour (60 minutes) a day
- Better - Reduce your time on social media by 50%

ENDURING YOUR FAST

Prayer Life During The Fast

There is a question you will need to answer. When you are fasting, will you seek Him, give Him a listening ear and the quality time He deserves? He will constantly separate you from dependence on the world. Consequently, your time alone with Him may become more frequent than you originally planned, and needless to say, your prayer life will greatly improve.

How appropriate that Jesus and Moses spent extensive time in the desert alone with God. It is ironic that the Hebrew name for desert is madbar, meaning "to speak." You will hear His voice throughout the day in a powerful way. Wisdom will cry out to you in the streets. As the stars in heaven declare the glory of God, so every corner will reveal to your willing soul the mysteries of His Kingdom that have been withheld from the rulers of this age (Proverbs 8:1-3, Psalm 19, and 1 Corinthians 2:7). You will hear Him when you are driving, talking on the phone, or counseling a friend. Expect to hear Him loud and clear.

Social Tensions

A frequently asked question about fasting is: "Should you tell people that you are fasting?" Since fasting is a discipline of self-denial and consecration unto the Lord, constant discussion about it will be a distraction. People will bombard you with countless questions about your health, offer you suggestions about your diet, and tell you horror stories about the dangers of fasting. This type of input during your fast will be a major distraction.

For maximum benefit, it would be best for you not to tell anyone about your fast. Jesus was against the religious leaders drawing attention to themselves by giving people the impression they were suffering for the Lord (Matthew 6:16-18). The religious leaders did this in an attempt to puff themselves up and obviously defeated the purpose of their fasting. If your fast lasts only one to seven days, it will be easy to conceal it. As time goes by and you begin to lose a considerable amount of weight, it will become more difficult to avoid questions about your appearance. In such cases, you may inform the individual that you are fasting so that they are not overly-worried about your health.

Eventually there will be those who find out that you are fasting, but you can turn this situation into an edifying one. There is a balance between drawing attention to yourself and giving glory to God. You have to decide when and how to discuss it, because your testimony can be used to encourage others to fast. You should "... be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

AFTER YOUR FAST

Ending your fast properly is just as important as beginning your fast properly. Just as you prepared yourself to begin a fast, you must prepare yourself to stop or break your fast. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself as you end your fast:

- What are the key lessons learned?
- What new habits or disciplines do you want to keep?
- What new dietary rules will you follow?

- What foods will you begin eating and not eat anymore?
- What dreams and visions have you seen pertaining to your personal walk with the Lord or your ministry?

Get In The "Fast Lane"

Before you end your fast and establish a regular eating schedule, it will be important to set aside time to get in the "Fast Lane" on a regular basis. This is vital if you are going to apply and live out the lessons learned during your fast.

1 Corinthians 11:24-28 says that Paul "fasted often." But why? You must view fasting as a new way of life, not just a vacation from the old way. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, "The old is gone and the new has come." Fasting regularly will help you maintain a level of discipline and spirituality that is necessary to hold the ground surrendered by Satan.

Regular fasts will keep the flesh in submission and serve as a reminder as to who is in charge of your life. Choose a regular fasting schedule to follow. There are those who have chosen to fast one twenty-four hour period per week. Others fast sun-up to sun-down, one day per week. You must pray and design a format that you feel God wants for you, a system that you can be faithful to and consistent with.

Physically

Controlling your eating habits when you end your fast will be important. After you fast, you will feel good about yourself, that you deserve "a break today," tomorrow and the next day. Remember, the abuse of food, not food itself, was the root of many evils. If you allow food to take its place back on the throne of your heart, you are allowing bad habits to take root and push God farther from the center of your heart than He was before you began your fast.

Once you begin to eat again, if you are not careful, you will feel uncomfortable. Your stomach will feel bloated and full. Introduce solid food slowly. There is a very good chance you will experience stomachaches and diarrhea from the shock on the digestive

system. Don't force food back into your system. Go slowly if you re-introduce certain types of foods back into your diet.

Emotionally

Satan will be working to take back the ground he has surrendered over to the Lord and he will use your emotional vulnerability to accomplish his goals. It could be an intense time of discouragement leading to depression. Remember to be mindful of this and to eat wisely once you break your fast.

In 1 Kings 18-19, when Elijah is challenged by the 450 prophets of Baal who all followed Jezebel in a most vile and immoral religion. God confronts and defeats them through one man, Elijah. But after this great spiritual victory, Elijah finds himself running for his life from one woman, Jezebel. She had threatened his life and he felt all alone. He became incredibly discouraged and asked God to end his life. Elijah experienced a supernatural and spiritual high, followed by an emotional low. You very well could experience this same type of roller coaster ride.

Thank you for joining in this 28-Day Prayer & Fast!

Special thank you to Life Change Church.