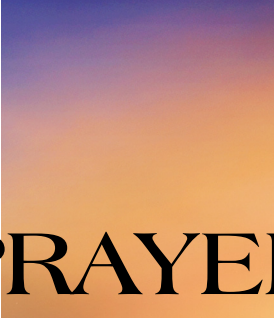




A GUIDE TO
Prayer &
Fasting



PRAYER

As you prepare for any period of prayer and fasting, it can be tempting to start thinking of a whole list of prayers but you should start simple. Think about the most important two or three things on your heart and focus in on those with God. Write these down and be open to hearing what God wants to show you in those areas.

The breakthroughs, miracles, and answers to your prayers will be by-products of drawing closer to Jesus. When praying, make your primary goal to know Jesus more and experience Him. Pray prayers of total surrender, and aim to glorify God with your life. Focus first on what's right about Him, such as His goodness and His greatness, and see everything else through that filter.

Have a place and time where you can seek Him every day. If you do not plan to pray, you may not pray. If you find it a challenge to disconnect from the busyness of your day, listening to worship music is a great way to prepare your heart for prayer.



FASTING

Fasting is a Christian discipline that, when incorporated into your life in a healthy way, can be very fruitful. As we break away from our regular pattern of our lives for a little while, we create space for God to fill.

Through fasting, we give God some room to get rid of some barriers and dirt in our lives. Spending more time in God's presence and humbling ourselves through fasting will help us to better understand God's view on the things we are praying for. This is why fasting is always linked to prayer.

As you prepare to fast, it is important to choose or create a fasting plan that works for you. This section provides some general information about different types of fasts, as well as some suggestions on how to create your own fasting plan. It is important to mention that one type of fast is not spiritually better than another. You can make your own choice.

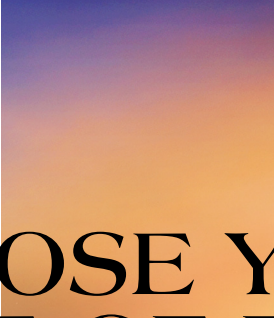
Do not let what you eat, or not eat, become the focus of your fast. Remember, this is a time to disconnect enough from your regular routines and habits in order to spend more time with God. Here are a few tips to keep in mind before getting started:



START WHERE YOU ARE

We are all at different places in our walk with God. Likewise our jobs, daily schedules, and health conditions are all different and place differing levels of demand on our energy. So most importantly, whether you have fasted before or this is your first time, start where you are.

When you start fasting, you must learn to fast in a way that works for you. Fasts usually include abstinence from food or at least certain types of food. If you will fast over a long period of time, mixing things up a bit during a fast is what typically works best for people. For example, do a fruits and vegetables fast for a few days. Then do all liquids for a while. Maybe even mix in a few days of only water if you think you are ready for that. Then go back to fruits and vegetables for another few days. With today's juicing machines, it is so easy to get a healthy dose of all your nutritional needs even while taking in only liquids.



CHOOSE YOUR TYPE OF FAST

While preparing for your fast, it is important to choose ahead of time what type of fast, or what combination, you will pursue. Not only will this help with making the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but also it will position you for a strong finish.

A few options and variations of a fast:

You may choose to fast a certain period of time or you may choose to only fast several days. This is a personal decision and should be prayerfully considered as it applies to your circumstances.

Important Note!

It is important to mention, that no matter the fast you choose to follow, your goal should be to earnestly seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. Fasting is a practice to help you separate from the world and draw closer to God. Through sacrifice and self-control, believers can experience deeper fellowship with God and become more receptive to his voice, wisdom, and direction. Fasting is also extremely effective for spiritual focus, bodily discipline, and purification of the body and soul.



5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTS

The Bible doesn't spell out a prescription for every aspect of living and worshipping the Lord. For example, we don't see a requirement for how long and how often we're supposed to pray. Fasting is similar.

Rather than giving a legal command and requirement of exactly how to fast, the Bible shows us a wide variety of examples of the practice of fasting. With this in mind...enter into prayer and fasting with a humble heart. Study what the Bible says about fasting and let the Holy Spirit lead you. Consider how fasting can cultivate discipline, crucify your flesh, and teach you to live not by bread alone but by the word of God. (Matthew 4:4). If you mess up halfway through your fast, it's okay, just try it again. Consider each attempt at fasting as a practice run, guiding you toward the right path for a spiritual breakthrough in your journey with the Lord.

A few basic types of fasts:

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1. Regular fast
 2. Liquid fast
 3. Partial fast
 4. Daniel fast
 5. Non-food fast

!! General Caution !!

If you are pregnant or nursing, or if your health is quite delicate, we recommend you consult your doctor before starting any kind of fast. Some fasts are not recommended if your daily routine includes a lot of physical activity. Please ask the Lord for wisdom in choosing what is best for you at this particular moment.

1. Regular Fast (water-only)

It is a water-only fast, abstaining from all food. It is extreme and should be done only for very short periods of time. Usually, the first few days of a water-only fast are the most difficult. But after working through the initial side effects and discomfort, most people report feeling clear, focused, and receive a boost of energy.

2. Liquid Fast

It is a fast of only consuming natural vegetable juices, fruit juices and water while abstaining from all kinds of solid foods. Liquid fasts should only be done for a short time and precautions should be taken as it might make it challenging to perform effectively in your job and may deplete the energy set aside for your family.

If you opt to not to make your entire fast liquids-only, substituting one or two meals for natural juices and water is a great alternative.

3. Partial Fast

It is a fast that involves restricting what you eat and the times of day you eat. This could mean fasting certain meals of the day or abstaining from certain kinds of foods or drinks. A partial fast can vary in duration from part of a day to weeks. This is one of the most popular fasts among people who are brand new to fasting.

In this type of fast you omit specific item(s) from your meal plans. For example, you may choose to eliminate all red meat, processed or fast food, or sweets, chocolate or coffee. Most people can incorporate this type of fast relatively easily. It can also prove to be a great solution for people with specific dietary needs or medical conditions that may cause certain limitations.

4. Daniel's Fast

The basic idea behind this partial fast is to abstain from meats, sweets, alcohol and bread while still consuming unprocessed, plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds, for 21 days. In the Bible book of Daniel, Chapter 1 states that he only ate fruits, vegetables and water. In Chapter 10, while the passage does not provide a specific list of foods that he ate, it mentions that he abstained from rich foods, meat and wine. An important fact is that fasting and prayer were Daniel's habits. The Daniel's fast was not powerful because of what Daniel gave up, but rather because of the humility of his life.

5. Non-food fast

For those with a medical condition, the non-food fast is the safest way to practice this spiritual discipline. While fasting typically refers to refraining from specific food items, you may also find it extremely beneficial to fast from a regular activity or habit. This might include things such as watching television (shows, movies, etc), social media (Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, etc), video games, or excessive shopping, etc.

There are many other distractions that we could eliminate from our daily routine. Often we use these things to distract ourselves from the real issues in our lives. If you can identify such other things, maybe you can give those up instead of food. Try to tune out some of those regular distractions from your day as much as possible. Replace that time with things like prayer and Bible study that will nourish you spiritually.



THE START AND END OF A FAST

Depending on the type of fast you choose, it is very important to prepare your body ahead of time before starting the fast. Take about a week to transition into your fast; otherwise, you could get sick. The same principle applies to breaking your fast. When your fast is over, it is advisable to transition out of your fast very gradually.

It is very important to drink lots of water while fasting. Drinking at least two litres of water per day will help to support your critical liver function.

Select your food items wisely. The key is to prepare a plan ahead of the fast and to choose menu items well. For example, if you're drinking fruit juices, try to use natural fruit, raw food and limit artificial ingredients. Remember do not let food become the focus of your fast, but make wise eating choices.



FASTING TIPS

Here are some other ideas to help you embrace the fasting experience:

- As you select your type of fast, make a fasting calendar and determine what each fasting day and week will look like.
- Keep your fridge and cupboard stocked with the items you need. Being unprepared to fast sets you up to give in to temptation.
- Make it a priority to attend church and your Garden Group during your fast. Being around other believers will encourage you to keep going when fasting gets difficult.
- If you mess up, do not get discouraged. Just get right back on track. God is merciful and will give you the strength to finish.

May God bless you richly as you proceed with your Prayer and Fasting adventure!

BIBLE VERSES ON FASTING

"It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " – Matthew 4:4 NIV

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." – John 6:35 NIV

"When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." – Matthew 6:17-18 NIV

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light

will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I". – Isaiah 58:6-9 NIV

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." – Romans 14:17 NIV

"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you." – Isaiah 26:3 NIV

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." – 1 Corinthians 10:31 NIV

"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him." – Psalm 34:8 NIV