

A Guide For Prayer & Fasting

What is a fast?

- Fasting can be formally defined as, “*The voluntary refraining of food and drink for a certain period of time for the purpose of seeking the mind, heart and counsel of God through prayer, the Scriptures and the work of the Holy Spirit.*”
- ✓ It is a time when our spiritual hunger and nourishment is given more attention than our physical hunger and nourishment.
- ✓ Fasting is a spiritual discipline to bring or retain spiritual health; it tones the muscles of our soul and spirit.
- ✓ This refraining most often includes other areas of fleshly comforts, entertainment, social media, etc.
- ✓ Fasting must include prayer; *just missing food is simply a diet!*

Why is fasting so powerful?

- It is important to understand that an effective fast involves much more than abstaining from food for a period of time. It involves possessing a right focus:
- ✓ It is not to be viewed as a way to pressure God into doing what we want Him to do – rather, it is to be approached as creating an atmosphere for God’s dealings and direction in our life. It is an outward sign of an inward attitude.
- ✓ We become increasingly renewed and realigned in Christlikeness; making us more effective in serving Jesus, His Mission and His House.
- True Fasting & Prayer:
- ✓ Softens our hearts and receptivity to the work of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Involves repentance and seeking the Lord for any needed change in our heart.
- ✓ Releases fresh spiritual power to our life and circumstances.
- ✓ Is a powerful tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to shape our personal lives, to shape our relationships, to shape our families, to shape the church, and to literally shape the course of nations and history.

Practical Points on Fasting

There are different kinds of fasts and approaches to fasting:

- **Complete fast** — Receiving no food or drink whatsoever is not recommended – Jesus and Moses are the only ones recorded to have done this. Such a fast comes with the possibility of great physical risk, so *please* seek counsel before you proceed.
- **Regular fast** — Eating no food but drinking water. (Limited amounts of FRESH juices, OR WATERED DOWN JUICE from a box, is also taken on occasion by some.)
- **Partial fast (DANIEL FAST)** — Eating a light meal of mainly fresh or lightly cooked vegetables and legumes, and/or simple fruits. The quantity consumed is also reduced. (Daniel 10:3).
- **Liquid fast** — This allows liquids of all kinds (fresh fruit juices, soup broths or soups pureed) for the period of days one has set. (this usually *excludes* sodas, milkshakes and such.)
- ❖ Prayerfully allow the Holy Spirit to direct your choice of fast. Whatever is done, it should allow you to give more attention to prayer and time in the Word as you ignore your fleshly desires.
- ❖ Don’t confuse missing meals you normally don’t eat, as fasting – fasting is going without, or at least having much less nourishment than our bodies are used to receiving.
- ❖ Some persons should never fast without professional supervision. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment.
- ❖ Expect some physical discomforts, especially from the second through the sixth day.
- ❖ However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your liquid intake.
- ❖ Prepare yourself to feel temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, agitation, or anxiety.
- ❖ Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.
- ❖ As you continue to fast, you should experience a sense of STEADY IMPROVEMENT in your well-being physically, spiritually and mentally.

May we enter into God’s presence with our worship and prayer as we feast upon God’s Word during this corporate season.