



FREEDOM PLACE CHURCH

2024
Fasting Guide
January 21-27, 2024

Fasting Guide Resource

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How you begin and conduct your fast will largely determine your success. By following these seven basic steps to fasting, you will make your time with the Lord more meaningful and spiritually rewarding.

STEP 1: Set Your Objective

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically.

Through fasting and prayer we humble ourselves before God so the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our churches, and heal our land according to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Make this a priority in your fasting.

STEP 2: Make Your Commitment

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15) For Him it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, decide the following up front:

- How long you will fast – one meal, one day, a week, several weeks, forty days (Beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts.)
- The type of fast God wants you to undertake (such as water only, or water and juices; what kinds of juices you will drink and how often).
- What physical or social activities you will restrict.
- How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word.

Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

Types of Fasts

While preparing for your fast, it is important to choose ahead of time what type of fast you will participate in. Not only will this help with making the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but as you commit to a specific fast ahead of time, and know how you're going to do it, you will position yourself to finish strong.

Choosing your fasting plan is a very personal decision. We are all at different places in our walk with God and our spirituality should never be a cause for comparison or competition. There is nothing more "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but know your body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. It's also important to not let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. This is a time to connect closer to God. Listed below, are some options and variations of different types of fasts you can choose to engage in. As you read over the information provided here, please consider how it applies to your circumstances and convictions. Fasting does require reasonable precautions. If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to

beginning your fast – especially if you are taking medication, have a chronic condition, or if you are pregnant or nursing.

Specific Food or Activity Fast

This type of fast refers to omitting a specific item(s), activity or habit from your time of prayer and fasting. For example, you may choose to eliminate red meat, processed or fast food, or sweets. It could also involve fasting from an activity or habit, such as television watching, or social media.

Daniel Fast

The Daniel fast is a great model to follow that proves to be extremely effective for spiritual focus, bodily discipline and purification in the body and soul. It is probably one of the most commonly referred to types of fasts, however within the term “Daniel Fast”, there is room for broad interpretation. In the book of Daniel, we find two different times where Daniel fasted, once in Daniel 1 and again in Daniel 10. Daniel 1 states that he ate vegetables and water, and in Daniel 10, while the passage does not give a specific list of foods that Daniel ate, it does state that Daniel ate no rich (or choice) foods as well as no meat or wine. So based on these two verses, we can see that either of these, or any variations in between constitutes a fast. Again, there is nothing “inherently spiritual” about one type of fast as opposed to another. It is important to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

Fasting For Kids

It is so important to model the principle of fasting to our kids and it's actually quite simple to introduce different ways they can participate. However, their involvement should come only from a heartfelt desire to, just like our fasting should. The best way to encourage our kids to fast is to keep it fun and simple.

An easy way to explain the benefits of prayer and fasting to kids is to compare it to cleaning out old toys that might no longer work, or that they might have outgrown, to make room for new ones. As we clean out our bodies and make time to connect closer to God and His Word, we make room to receive new gifts from Him.

We do not recommend that children skip meals or drastically reduce their food intake, but a modification of their diet might prove to be an easy place to start. For example, fasting from specific items such as sweets, red meats, fried foods or even introducing a form of the Daniel fast which includes legumes, nuts and whole grains is a great way for children to participate in a safe and healthy way.

Another great way to fast is by reducing some of the time and energy spent watching TV, playing video games, using the computer or phone, and instead choosing to spend time praying, reading their Bible or serving others.

The main thing is for them to recognize the value behind setting aside special times to disconnect from some of the extra-curricular activities and treats they enjoy on a regular basis and learn how to connect to God in a closer way. Of course, you should always check with your child's pediatrician before fasting.

STEP 3: Prepare Yourself Spiritually

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Ask God to help you make a comprehensive list of your sins.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9).
- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4).
- Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in Ephesians 5:18 and His promise in 1 John 5:14,15.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; refuse to obey your worldly nature (Romans 12:1,2).
- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11-13).
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16,17).

STEP 4: Prepare Yourself Physically

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision.

Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.

- Do not rush into your fast.
- Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods.
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.

Your time of fasting and prayer has come. You are abstaining from all solid foods and have begun to seek the Lord. Here are some helpful suggestions to consider:

- Avoid drugs, even natural herbal drugs and homeopathic remedies. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision.
- Limit your activity.
- Exercise only moderately. Walk one to three miles each day if convenient and comfortable.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pains, dizziness, or the "blahs." Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.

The first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will likely experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your liquid intake.

STEP 5: Put Yourself on a Schedule

For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Morning

- Begin your day in praise and worship.
- Read and meditate on God's Word, preferably on your knees.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to work in you to will and to do His good pleasure according to Philippians 2:13.
- Invite God to use you. Ask Him to show you how to influence your world, your family, your church, your community, your country, and beyond.
- Pray for His vision for your life and empowerment to do His will.

Noon

- Return to prayer and God's Word.
- Take a short prayer walk.
- Spend time in intercessory prayer for your community's and nation's leaders, for the world's unreached millions, for your family or special needs.

Evening

- Get alone for an unhurried time of "seeking His face."
- If others are fasting with you, meet together for prayer.
- Avoid television or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus.

When possible, begin and end each day on your knees with your spouse for a brief time of praise and thanksgiving to God. Longer periods of time with our Lord in prayer and study of His Word are often better spent alone.

A dietary routine is vital as well. Dr. Julio C. Ruibal – a nutritionist, pastor, and specialist in fasting and prayer – suggests a daily schedule and list of juices you may find useful and satisfying. Modify this schedule and the drinks you take to suit your circumstances and tastes.

5 a.m. - 8 a.m.

- Fruit juices, preferably freshly squeezed or blended and diluted in 50 percent distilled water if the fruit is acid. Apple, pear, grapefruit, papaya, watermelon, or other fruit juices are generally preferred. If you cannot do your own juicing, buy juices without sugar or additives.

10:30 a.m. - noon

- Fresh vegetable juice made from lettuce, celery, and carrots in three equal parts.

2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.

- Herb tea with a drop of honey. Avoid black tea or any tea with caffeine.

6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

- Broth made from boiling potatoes, celery, and carrots with no salt. After boiling about half an hour, pour the water into a container and drink it.

Tips on Juice Fasting

- Drinking fruit juice will decrease your hunger pains and give you some natural sugar energy. The taste and lift will motivate and strengthen you to continue.
- The best juices are made from fresh watermelon, lemons, grapes, apples, cabbage, beets, carrots, celery, or leafy green vegetables. In cold weather, you may enjoy a warm vegetable broth.

- Mix acidic juices (orange and tomato) with water for your stomach's sake.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks. And avoid chewing gum or mints, even if your breath is bad. They stimulate digestive action in your stomach.

When your designated time for fasting is finished, you will begin to eat again. But how you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being.

STEP 6: End Your Fast Gradually

When your designated time for fasting is finished, you will begin to eat again. But how you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being. Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.

Here are some suggestions to help you end your fast properly:

- Break an extended water fast with fruit such as watermelon.
- While continuing to drink fruit or vegetable juices, add the following:
 - *First day:* Add a raw salad.
 - *Second day:* Add baked or boiled potato, no butter or seasoning.
 - *Third day:* Add a steamed vegetable.
 - *Thereafter:* Begin to reintroduce your normal diet.
- Gradually return to regular eating with several small snacks during the first few days. Start with a little soup and fresh fruit such as watermelon and cantaloupe. Advance to a few tablespoons of solid foods such as raw fruits and vegetables or a raw salad and baked potato.

STEP 7: Expect Results

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, and seek God's face; if you consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. A 24-hour fast each week has been greatly rewarding to many Christians.

It takes time to build your spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time out, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honor you for your faithfulness. I encourage you to join me in fasting and prayer again and again until we truly experience revival in our homes, our churches, our beloved nation, and throughout the world.

2024 Fasting Focus

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

ROMANS 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."

MATTHEW 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

ISAIAH 58:6

"[Is] not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

ThinkB.I.G. (Believe In God)

Write 3 'B.I.G. Things' you'd like to believe God for during our 7-day Fast:

My Faith...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Family...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Friendships...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Finances...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Fitness...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____