

General Fasting Guide

Commit

Pray and decide what kind of fast you will be doing for the 21 days and commit to it. (If you break the fast just start back up the next day.)

Types of fasts:

- A full fast: No food, water only
- A partial fast: This could include fasting 6am to 6pm (intermittent fast), fasting one or two meals a day, not eating certain foods (sweets for example), or only drinking liquids (juices, protein shakes etc.)
- A Daniel fast: Fruits, veggies, water only. Some include whole grains.

Benefits of Fasting

- Intimacy and connection with the Jesus increases (longing and desire for Jesus increases)
- Increases awareness and sensitivity to the Spirit while at the same time increases awareness of the weakness of the flesh
- The volume of the voices of the flesh, the world, and inner doubt will decrease
- The volume of God's voice will increase
- Our appetite for the things that are pleasing to the Lord increases
- Grace for yieldedness and surrender to the Spirit of God increases
- Alignment and focus of your personal call/assignment
- During corporate fasts you will experience greater synergy and unity positively impacting the trajectory of the community towards the mission and goal
- Fasting itself is a form of intercession on behalf of the community/city/region that
- Direction from God becomes more pronounced
- Fasting aids the revealing of blindspots, character flaws, the roots of sin cycles with the accompanying grace for transformation and freedom
- Fasting confronts our doubt and unbelief that oftentimes go undetected. In their place we gain access to faith. This often leads to greater breakthrough in prayer

Develop Personal Prayer Focuses

Increasing in intimacy with the Lord and increasing in the knowledge of the Lord, His word, will and ways. Desire for the presence of God. Spiritual hunger!! Where do you want to grow personally? Where do you want God to move in your life, job, relationships, finances, etc. Be specific!

Develop Intercessory Prayer Focuses

Prayers for other people, for the lost, for justice, for Columbus, the nation(s). Be specific!

Scripture Reading

Ask the Lord what passages of scripture He wants you to focus on during your fast.

Journal Throughout Your Fast

Write out your prayers. Write out what you feel God is speaking to you. Keep track of where God moves. Write down the testimonies throughout the next three weeks. Write down what benefits you experience from your fast with the Lord. Pay attention to how your desire for God and for His word increases!

Thanksgiving, Praise and Worship

Be intentional about spending time thanking, praising and worshipping the Lord for who He is, what He has done, and agreeing with what He is doing and WILL do in your life. (Expect inner healing, deliverance from lies, unhealthy beliefs/mindsets/strongholds during this time).

Daily Communion

Sit with Jesus and take communion in His presence daily. This will be one of the most powerful things you do during your fast. 21 days of receiving the body and blood of the Lord will be unforgettable (Matthew 26:26-30, 1 Corinthians 11:17-26).

Be Safe

Drink lots of water during your fast and get good rest.

When you break your fast, reintroduce foods you abstained from slowly. Pay attention to how your body responds. Be slow reintroducing meat and dairy if you do a complete fast. Start with vegetables, fruit and bread.

Fasting In The Bible (Old Testament)

First mention(s):

- **Individual Fasting:**
 - 2 Samuel 12:16 - David pleaded with God for the child. He **fasted** and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. (The first time we see an individual fast in the Bible is after David is confronted by the Prophet Nathan. David had just committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah killed to cover it up.)
- **Corporate Fasting:**
 - Nehemiah 9:1 - On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, **fasting** and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. (The first time we see corporate fasting in the Bible was when Israel, having just returned to Jerusalem from exile, assembled after the rebuilding of the wall, to confess their sins as a nation before the Lord.)

Definition:

- Fast (tsuwm): to abstain from food, fast, to cover over (the mouth)
 - Abstain: restrain oneself from doing or enjoying something.

Prominent leaders who fasted in the OT:

- **Moses fasted (no food or drink) for 40 days (multiple times):**
 - Exodus 24:18 - So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.
 - Exodus 34:28 - Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant--the Ten Commandments. (The book of Exodus records Moses encountering God on Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights receiving the commandments. Moses was without food or water during these encounters! Moses fasting was coupled with intense fellowship in the presence of God and receiving the words of God. Prayer and fasting go together.)
- **Elijah fasted (no food or drink) for 40 days:**
 - 1 Kings 19:5-9 - All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." 6 He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. 7 The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." 8 So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days

and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. 9 There he went into a cave and spent the night. (After calling down fire and killing 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, the wicked Queen Jezebel threatens Elijah's life. Elijah being afraid ran and sought shelter under a broom tree. It was there that an angel ministered to Elijah. He ate bread, drank water and was supernaturally strengthened, not eating or drinking again for 40 days and nights. After this, Elijah had a powerful encounter with God in a cave of Mount Horeb, experiencing God's still small voice.)

- **Daniel and the three Hebrew boys fast for ten days, only eating vegetables and drinking water:**
 - Daniel 1:8,12-13 - 8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. 12 "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." (After being taken captive by the Babylonians, Daniel and his three comrades begin to be trained to serve in the palace of the Babylonian King. Daniel desires to refrain from eating the meat from the King's table so he would not defile himself. Defile means to pollute or stain, spiritually speaking. He and his friends prove to be stronger, healthier and more nourished off of their vegetable & water diet than the others who ate the King's food. It's important to highlight Daniel not only fasted but was a man of prayer (Daniel 6:10)).
- **Esther fasts (no food or drink) for three days with her people for the salvation of all Jews:**
 - Esther 4:16 - "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." (Esther calls for her people to fast for three days and nights before she risks her life by going before the king to ask for him to save her people.)

Fasting In The Bible (New Testament)

First Mention:

- **Jesus fasted 40 days and nights:**
 - Matthew 4:1-2 - Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted[a] by the devil. 2 After **fasting** forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the

mouth of God.’ (The first time we see fasting in the New Testament we see it being practiced by our example, our King, our Shepherd Jesus! He shows us that we were never meant to be filled, sustained or nourished by bread alone. There is a level of filling, sustaining that only comes by the word of God and the presence of God. Jesus in John 4:34 tells us that His food was to do the will of His father and complete His work. Fasting positions us to experience the nourishment that comes only from seeking to do and complete the will and work of God.)

Definition:

- Fast (nēsteuō): to abstain from food (religiously):—fast. to abstain as a religious exercise from food and drink

Jesus teaches about fasting

- **Fasting is a spiritual discipline expected of all believers:**
 - Matthew 6:16 - “When you **fast**, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. (In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructs his disciples on how to fast. What sticks out is that Jesus says, “when you fast”, not “if you fast”, making clear that His expectation was that there would be a time they would regularly practice the discipline of fasting. It is important to note that Jesus’ teaching on fasting comes right after His teaching on prayer. Prayer and fasting are meant to go together.)
- **Benefits of Fasting In the New Testament**
 - **Prayer & Fasting Drives out unbelief and builds faith:**
 - Matthew 17:3 - After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. (Moses, Jesus and Elijah are the only three people in the Bible who fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. These are the three men we see on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17:3.)
 - Matthew 17:14-16. - When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.” Matthew 17:19-21 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” 20 So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this

mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by **prayer** and **fasting**." (It was after coming down from that Mountain that Jesus tells His disciples that replacing unbelief with faith to cast out demons is the result of prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:21). This is one of many times you see the combination of prayer and fasting. They are meant to go together).

- **Fasting is an expression of longing and desire for Jesus to return as our Bridegroom King**
 - Mark 2:18-19 - Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are **fasting**, but yours are not?" 19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. 20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast. (Every time we fast it is a sign that the Bridegroom, Jesus, is not with us bodily as He was when He walked with the disciples. It is an expression of lovesickness and desire for His return! We will never be fully satisfied until He returns. The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." (Rev. 22:17))

Fasting & Prayer In The Book of Acts (New Testament Church):

- Acts 10:30-31 - So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was **fasting** until this hour; and at the ninth hour I **prayed** in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.
- Acts 13:1-3 - Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord and **fasted**, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having **fasted** and **prayed**, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.