



Learn to Fast

What is Fasting?

Fasting is the most powerful spiritual tool of all the Christian disciplines and has been used for thousands of years to bring deeper maturity to a Christian life. It is a voluntary act of obedience in response to the Lord's call to fast or in submission to the discipline of living a lifestyle of fasting. It also employed periodically by those who need breakthrough in some area of life or are determinedly desperate for more of God in their life.

Fasting is typically known as the act of abstaining from food or drink for a designated period of time, to focus on prayer and seeking God's will. However, some people (especially those with health restrictions which make it difficult to fast from food), will choose to fast from various forms of entertainment. You are encouraged to seek the Lord in prayer for the type of fast you should undertake.

Fasting is beautiful thing if you understand the fullness of how it is used. Many biblical examples of fasting demonstrate that, through the practice of fasting, God grants supernatural revelation and wisdom as He opens your eyes to what he wants to teach you. In Acts 13:2, as the disciples fasted and worshipped, Holy Spirit gave them instruction to "*Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them*". In Exodus 34:28, Moses fasted food and water for 40 days and 40 nights. As a result, the Lord gave him the Ten Commandments.

In Matt 9:14, we read that the pharisees fasted regularly (religiously) to be right with God but fasting has nothing to do with that. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are already in right alignment with God. Instead, fasting is about suppressing the cry of your flesh and setting aside distractions so that you are better able to see and hear the Lord clearly for your life. Fasting helps you build maturity in your spirit and draws you closer to God. Bottom line, you are encouraged to fast and pray because you are in love with God and want more of Him in your life.

Why Fast

The following quote accurately and pointedly describes the merits of fasting.

“Fasting begets prophets and strengthens strong men. Fasting makes lawgivers wise; it is the soul’s safeguard, the body’s trusted comrade, the armor of the champion, the training of the athlete.” Basil, Bishop of Caesarea (AD 330– 379)

As the Basil described, fasting is a tool that strengthens the body, reigns in the soul and frees the spirit man (the spiritual connection with Holy Spirit) to better hear revelation from the Lord. When practiced regularly, fasting can transform your body and soul (mind, will and emotions) and propel you towards the fulfillment of God’s will for your life.

Fasting can also lead to the transformation of your family, city, state or nation. When combines with repentance, prayer and worship, fasting can lead to spiritual awakening to the world around you. Other reasons to fast can include any of the following:

- Fast so that the awesome power of God can be released through you.
- Fast to restore your heart to the first love" you had for your Lord
- Fast to build a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fast as a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fast to reveal and transform your spiritual condition.
- Fast to see breakthrough in your life or family.
- Fast to quicken the Word of God in your heart so that His truth becomes more alive and meaningful to you.
- Fast to transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fast to experience personal revival which makes you a conduit of revival for others.
- Fast to discipline your flesh and learn to be led by Holy Spirit.
- Fast to seek direction for your life, your family or your city.

Beginners Ideas for Fasting

1. **Decide** what your fast will entail
 - What is the focus/purpose of your fast?
 - What food or drink will you abstain from?
 - How long you will fast?
 - How often you will read the Word and pray – or let Holy Spirit lead you
 - How you will break your fast (the longer the fast, the more important it is to plan how you will reintroduce food into your body)
2. **Pray.** This is the most important part of your fast and prayer can be prompted by your hunger level. You can pray (declare) scriptures over yourself and the focus of your fast. You can pray as the Lord leads. You can pray in the Holy Spirit (in tongues). Check out the resources in each section of Stand in The Light for documents that can guide your prayer time.
3. **Give yourself grace.** If you don't keep your fast for any one day, just start again the next day. Remember Romans 8:1 *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*
4. **Fast in Humility:** There is no need to overtly publicize your fast. It is a private, personal commitment between you and the Lord. Matt 6:16 warns, *"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting."*

Fasting Resources

Before you begin a fast be sure to do some research on the subject. Consider any of the following resources on fasting.

Bill Bright's Guide to Fasting and Prayer,
<https://21days.churchofthehighlands.com/resources/guide-to-fasting-and-prayer>

The Jericho Fast, Rhoda Diehl

The Jesus Fast, Lou Engle

The Daniel Fast, Susan Gregory