



# Fasting FAQ's

## WHAT KIND OF FAST ARE WE DOING?

The type of fast we are suggesting is a "Partial Fast." It does not require complete abstinence from food but only limits food intake. There are three options we are recommending for your participation in this fast.

### OPTION 1: Single Meal Fast

If possible, we would like everyone to eat only one green meal per day consisting of fruits, greens, vegetables and/or soups and a generous supply of fluids. If you have any health conditions, we recommend you consult your physician before starting this fast.

### OPTION 2: Daniel Fast

Another variation is known as the "Daniel Fast." Based on the Prophet Daniel's diet and typical Jewish fasting principles, this fast is similar to a vegan diet that may include fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The Daniel Fast may include multiple meals throughout the day in addition to fluids. Again, if you have any health conditions, we recommend you consult your physician before starting this fast.

### OPTION 3: Media Fast

For those who cannot modify their diet due to medical reasons, you may consider a non-food fast such as giving up TV, computer use, secular music, sports, video games, etc. You don't need to consult your physician for this.

Obviously, you are welcome to modify these options to suit your own schedule or lifestyle. For example, some may opt to eliminate only one meal per day or certain kinds of foods or drinks. Ultimately, our hope is that everyone in the church will participate in the 21 Days of Hunger in some way that allows them to seek after God with greater purpose.

## WHY IS FASTING IMPORTANT?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline promoted in scripture. Jesus, Peter and the apostles, Moses, Elijah, Esther, Daniel and many others fasted on a regular basis. To fast is to "give up" food (or other items) for a period of time in order to focus more completely on God. It is an expression of faith and spiritual diligence; it is to deny the flesh in order to emphasize building one's spirit and becoming more in tune to the work of the Holy Spirit. Through fasting one can experience spiritual renewal, deliverance from sin, receive guidance from the Holy Spirit, receive answers to prayers, and develop greater spiritual discipline.

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## **DOES FASTING MAKE ME HOLY?**

Fasting should never be a means to prove one's spirituality or earn favor with God. This is nothing more than spiritual pride and will nullify your fast in God's eyes. Neither is fasting a way to obligate Him to answer a prayer because of your supposed spiritual devotion. On the contrary, fasting should bring us more fully into submission to His will and sovereign plan for our lives. Additionally, our motive for fasting should not be to lose weight or improve our health. Although these results may occur, such self-serving motives should not be our reason for fasting. Spiritual, biblical fasting is for God's glory, never for personal benefit.

## **IS IT IMPORTANT TO PRAY DURING A FAST?**

Yes! Absolutely. Fasting without prayer is nothing more than dieting. Dedicate the time and money you would normally spend on eating to God. Be sure that your schedule enables you to set aside time for prayer and studying God's Word.

## **HOW MIGHT MY BODY BE AFFECTED?**

To minimize the effects of fasting, drink plenty of fluids—especially water. Be prepared to feel "tired out" or become exhausted more quickly. You may also feel colder than usual. On longer fasts you should plan to get extra rest. Be careful not to turn into a grump. Because fasting usually results in a lack energy, hunger and tiredness, you may get a little cranky. Resist that tendency. You can't mistreat or abuse people and expect God to honor your fast!

## **WHAT IF I HAVE MEDICAL ISSUES?**

If you have a chronic illness, eating disorder or any other health issues, you should always talk with your health professional before considering a fast. This is especially true if you are taking doctor prescribed medications.

## **ARE THERE SITUATIONS WHEN I SHOULD "PAUSE" FROM THE FAST?**

Yes, especially if you are feeling ill, excessively weak or emotionally distressed. In such situations, resume your regular (healthy) eating routine and consult your physician immediately.

## **HOW DO I END THE FAST?**

Never break a fast with large quantities of food (especially junk food). Ease back into your regular eating routine with light, healthy foods. This is especially important for fasts longer than several days. In fact, use the fast as a catalyst to improve your eating habits and eliminate sweets and fast foods from regular eating.

*"Then I proclaimed a fast ... that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions. So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer."*

*Ezra 8:21-23*