



why fast?

Fasting has the potential for significant impact in our lives. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life personally and God can speak to you in new and dynamic ways.

Fasting and prayer can also work on a much grander scale. According to Scripture, personal experience and observation, we are convinced that when God's people fast with a proper Biblical motive – seeking God's face not His hand – with a broken, repentant, and contrite spirit, God will hear from heaven and heal our lives, our churches, our communities, our nation and world. Fasting and prayer can bring about revival – a change in the direction of our nation, the nations of earth and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Biblical fasting is, very simply, denying oneself something for the sake of seeking and honoring God. Pastor Stovall Weems says that “prayer is connecting with God; fasting is disconnecting ourselves from the world.” That's a great way to describe the feeling. In addition to food, you can also fast from other things that keep you connected to the world. These may include television, social media, video games and more.

If you do not already know of the power and importance of fasting, here are some very important facts:



- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded 40-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, “when you fast,” not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the “first love” for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a Biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (**Psalms 35:13; Ezra 8:21**). King David said, “I humble myself through fasting.”
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!

- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life – and make you a channel of revival to others.

If you fast, you will find yourself being humbled. You will discover more time to pray and seek God's face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

how should I fast?

Fasting can include food, social media and entertainment, among other things. It should be something you are accustomed to so that it stretches you to give it up. Giving it up for a period of



time enables one to focus on God. For example, when those hunger pangs happen, turn to prayer. When you usually watch your television shows, open your Bible to read and pray instead. Fast from social media or watching sports so you can focus on God.

Don't let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. Our focus should be on drawing closer to God. Remember, this is a time to disconnect enough from your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God.

Here are a few tips:

1. start where you are:

We are all at different places in our walk with God. Likewise, our jobs, daily schedules and health conditions are all different and place various levels of demand on our energy. So most importantly, whether you've fasted before or this is your first time, start where you are. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but it's very important to know your own body, know your options and, most importantly, seek God in prayer and follow what that Holy Spirit leads you to do.

Remember, the goal of fasting is not just to do without food or Facebook. The goal is to draw nearer to God.

2. make your commitment

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus encouraged us to fast (Matthew 6:16-18). For Him it was a matter of when believers fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, I encourage you to decide up front the type of fast God wants you to undertake and how much time each day you will devote to prayer and reading God's Word. Making these commitments ahead of time will help sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

Some may participate in an **intermittent fast**, which is removing certain meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) from your daily schedule, and substituting that time with prayer or engaging in the Word of God.

Others will engage in a **Daniel fast**. In the book of Daniel, we find two different times where the prophet Daniel fasted. Daniel 1 states that he ate only 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 he ate no rich (or choice) foods, as well as no red meat or wine. So, based on these two verses, we can see that either of these, or combinations of the two, constitute a Daniel fast. Again, it is important to mention that there is nothing inherently spiritual about one type of fast as opposed to another. The foundation of the Daniel fast is fruits and vegetables. Some starchy vegetables and dairy could be included, but that depends on the individual. Your goal should be to seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

If giving up food is a stumbling block to you, then consider fasting of TV, social media, reading (other than the Bible), or shopping. There are many distractions and ways that we use to stay in control that we could eliminate from our daily routine. If you can identify such other things, maybe you can give those up instead of food.



Remember that you are covered by God's grace. God will show you what to do and give you His peace.

3. prepare your heart to receive from the Lord

Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Remember that God is your Father and He loves you and is for you.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (**1 John 1:9**).
- Seek forgiveness from people whom you have offended, and forgive those who have hurt you (**Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4**).
- 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; refuse to obey your worldly nature (**Romans 12:1,2**).
- 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**).

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 and you will feel refreshed. My prayer is that this will be a significant time in your life where you experience God's presence like never before!

Blessings!!

Pastor Chris

**Excerpts taken from *Your Personal Guide to Fasting and Prayer*, by Dr. Bill Bright, Campus Crusade for Christ International