

Guidelines for Fasting

**“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”
Matthew 5:6**

Fasting is not primarily about not eating in fact fasting is all about eating, in a different way. Fasting is feasting on God and drawing from him deeply it is entering a place of hunger and thirst for more of God. Below are a few concepts to help you during this period of fasting.

Fasting is motivated by a deep desire

- We fast because we want something more than food or the activity from which we abstain
- Fasting tenderizes our hearts to experience the presence of God, it expands our capacity to hear the voice of God.
- Part of fasting is a time issue, when we remove food we should insert something that enhances our relationship like ingesting the word of God.

Fasting is a statement that food and others things are not better than God.

- Job realized this when he said; I have not departed from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food. **(Job 23:12)**
- Fasting is a declaration that God is enough.

Fasting is not something you do for God but an appeal for God in grace and power to do everything for you.

- Fasting is actually a declaration of our weakness and total dependency on God and his grace.
- Our desire for the gifts of God should always be driven by the urgency to help others in ways we could never achieve in our own strength and ingenuity.

Fasting should be motivated by a desire to glorify God.

- There is a difference between being seen fasting and fasting to be seen.
- Because motive is so important God desires us to direct our fasting to him so he can reward openly **(Matthew 6:17-18)**.

Fasting opens our spiritual ears to discern God’s voice and sensitizes our hearts to enjoy God’s presence.

- The gentle words of the spirit are more readily heard during times of fasting.
- God often grants insights and understanding into his will and purposes during times of fasting. **(Acts 13:1-3)**
- As a Church, our corporate fasting allows the Holy Spirit to gather our hearts toward the singular purpose of the will of God for our local church.

Practical Guidelines for Fasting

One: If fasting is new to you, discretion is optimal, progression should be observed in your fasting. Begin by skipping one or two meals a day.

Two: Remember there are degrees of fasting, there's a regular fast of abstaining from all food and drink except water (**Matthew 4:2-3, Luke 4:2**). A partial fast when one abstains from a particular kind of food (**Daniel 10:3**). A complete or absolute fast with no food or liquid of any kind (**Ezra 10:6, Esther 4:16**).

Three: If you've never fasted before be aware that in the early stages you may get dizzy and have headaches. This is the bodies cleansing process and will pass with time. Be sure to break a fast gradually with fruit or vegetables.

Four: If you have a medical condition you are yet trusting God for and food is necessary understand there are other ways of fasting or joining a corporate fast.

- a. You may choose to fast from caffeine, soda, sugar or certain foods you normally partake.
- b. You may deny yourself television, technology or some other recreational activity you engage in the regular rhythm of your life.

Five: How long you fast is entirely up to you and the Holy Spirit. There are fasts of varying lengths in the bible (**Judges 20:26, Daniel 6:18-24, Esther 4:16, Acts 27:33**). If a corporate fast is called and you are joining your leadership, pray for God's grace to participate in the fast.

Fasting is not about denying yourself; it's about satisfying yourself....in God. Fasting is not about physical pain, but spiritual pleasure.

Reference: Practicing the power, Sam Storm.