



FASTING

WHAT IS IT?

Fasting is deliberately and purposefully giving up something we normally consume to focus more intentionally on God. Fasting is an important aspect of prayer, pursuing greater intimacy with God, and even in spiritual warfare.

WHY DO IT?

“Prayer is reaching out after the unseen; fasting is letting go of all that is seen and temporal. Fasting helps express, deepen, confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God.” [Andrew Murray]

RELATED SCRIPTURE

“But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting isn’t obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” [Matthew 6:17-18]

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

We notice that Jesus said, “when you fast ...” not “if.” Therefore, we must embrace fasting as an important spiritual habit and a way to seek God with intensity, passion and discipline. The sacrifice of fasting is minimized by the reward of enjoying God who is the Bread of Life and the Living Water. When we fast, we are declaring our dependence on God and demonstrating His the value of His presence in our lives. While fasting can be a personal matter, the Bible also mentions several corporate fasts. Often this fasting was done in times of desperation when a breakthrough was needed.

GIVE IT A TRY!

Fasting most often is done by abstaining from food. However, if you have medical reasons that would make that unwise, ask God to show you what else you might fast from. In deciding what to fast from, two things are important: our intention to seek God with intensity and that we “feel” what we are fasting from—it must involve some type of sacrifice. Besides food, here are other things to consider fasting from:

- Technology: screens and devices
- Social media
- Entertainment food (desserts, candy, cokes)
- Entertainment (TV, sports, etc)
- Talking

1) Plan ahead.

Don’t fast at the last minute, but rather prepare for your time of fasting.

- Ask for God’s help
- Determine how you will seek God during the fasting period (during the time when you normally eat or watch TV or check social media).
- Fast with your Bible open!

2) Start small.

Begin fasting for one meal or perhaps two. If you are fasting from something other than food, start with a 12-24 hour period.

3) Expect it to be challenging ... that's ok!

Fasting will not be easy and will involve some level of discomfort. Seek the Lord in prayer, worship, Bible reading and perhaps even journaling. Allow His presence to be your "portion" and prize during the time when you are missing food (or whatever you are abstaining from).

4) Keep an eye on your heart.

What is God revealing ...? How will you cooperate with God based on the grace He gives during the fast?