

FAQs about Fasting

Q: What is fasting?

A: Fasting is voluntarily denying the body (giving up of) the food and drink it normally receives, in order that the “Spirit Man” may be in communication with, and be fed of God. The duration of a fast can vary up to 24-hours based on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What fasting is not

Not a way to “pay” for your sins or “earn” God’s love

Not a way to “force” God to do something

Not a way to show off or prove your spirituality

Not a way to lose weight or improve your health

Q: How do I get started fasting?

A: Once you have purposed in your heart that you want to fast. Start by seeking the Lord in prayer, addressing your fasting purpose with Him. Then proceed to abstain from food and drink for the period of time you are committed to.

Q: Why should I fast??

A: There may be numerous reasons why one should fast? Some reasons are: a) to gain a closer personal relationship with the Lord; b) In wake of sickness or danger; c) in a corporate relationship with others for a particular partition, d) for salvation of a loved one, and many more reasons.

Christian fasting is more than just skipping a few meals. It is giving up eating for a period of time to focus more completely on God. There are a number of possible reasons for fasting:

- To humble yourself before God in confession and repentance ([Jonah 3:5, 10](#); [Neh. 1:4-7](#))
- For spiritual renewal
- To seek guidance about a major decision ([Judges 20:26-28](#); [Acts 13:1-3](#))
- To focus on prayer for a particular need ([Ezra 8:21](#))
- To develop discipline and learn to deny physical cravings ([1 Cor. 9:27](#))
- When engaged in spiritual warfare

Q: How often should I fast?

A: Your personal fasting frequency should be as often as you deem it necessary to seek a closer relationship with the Lord. And from a corporate frequency, it should be as often as the particular group deems it to be necessary.

Q: How long should I fast?

A: The length of a fast, for the most part, can be predetermined by the person going on the fast. For a corporate fast, it should be determined by the group of persons going on the fast per the rules or

guidelines set forth by the group. Usually these times are set at 12 hours, 24 hours, or other lengths as set forth by the group.

Q: What should I do while fasting?

A: Dedicate the time/money you would normally spend on eating to God and set aside extra time for prayer and meditation (otherwise you are just skipping meals)

Q: Can I watch TV while fasting?

A: It is advisable to limit the entertainment portion of television programming while fasting in order that we may be totally focused on the purpose at hand. There is a fast called a 'Media Fast,' where there is total elimination of the entertainment media.

Q: I am married, and my unsaved spouse doesn't understand why I fast. What should I tell my unsaved spouse?

A: First, I would say, explain to your spouse the purpose of fasting (in general terms), so it will be understood that this is part of your walk with the Lord. Then, ask permission of your spouse to participate in the fast. This is Biblical. The Bible declares: "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. (1 Corinthians 7:5). The reason we ask permission to fast is because conjugal relationships should cease during the fasting period.

Q: What is the significance of prayer with fasting?

A: Fasting should always be preceded with a purpose, and this purpose is conveyed to the Lord in the form of prayer; prior to the start of the fast, at various intervals during the fast, and at the end of the fasting period. Without prayer, your fast will be incomplete; and may be nonproductive.

Q: How often should I pray when fasting?

A: Prayers should be made to the Lord prior to the start of fasting, at the ending of the fast, and at prescribed predetermined times during the fast. Each individual determines his or her own lengths of their own prayers.

Q: I have trouble fasting for long periods of time. What should I do?

A: Fast for as long as you can, and try adding length to each fasting period as you engage in more frequent times of fasts. God understands the intent of the heart, and rewards us for our diligence.

Q: What should I do about my prescribed medications?

A: By all means, follow the exact regiments as prescribed by your doctor, taking medications as often as told to do so. The Lord will look at the intent of your heart, and in His own time, may act on behalf of your condition.

Q: I heard that there's more than one way to fast. Can you give me an idea of other ways to fast besides not eating?

A: Yes, there are multiple types of fasts. Among the types of fast are the Esther Fast, The Daniel Fast, The Media Fast, The Partial Fast, Fasting from certain types of foods, and others.

Fasting is very personal between you and the Lord. Fasting is to be a sacrifice for you. There are some options of fasts:

- Partial fast: give up some, but not all foods (e.g. give up meat, sweets, etc.)
- Complete fast: give up all food, and take only water and juice
- Non-food fasts: give up TV, computer games, etc.

Q: Where can I learn more about fasting?

A: There are numerous scriptures in the Bible dealing with the subject of fasting. Here are some Biblical examples and commands concerning fasting:

[Judges 20:26](#)—Israel fasted for victory in war.

[1 Sam. 1:6-7](#)—Hannah fasted for a son

[1 Sam. 7:6](#)—Israel fasted in repentance

[1 Sam. 31:13](#)—Men of Jabeshgilead fasted in mourning for Saul

[2 Sam. 1:12](#)—David and his men fasted in mourning for Saul, Jonathan, and the fallen of Israel

[2 Sam. 12](#)—David fasted for mercy upon his child

[1 Kings 21:27](#)—Ahab fasted for mercy

[2 Chron. 20:3](#)—Jehoshaphat and Israel fasted for help and protection

[Ezra 8:21-23](#)—Ezra and the people fasted for help and protection

[Nehemiah 1:4](#)—Nehemiah fasted in mourning and for help upon Jerusalem

[Nehemiah 9:1,2](#)—Israel fasting in mourning and repentance

[Esther 4:16](#)—Esther and friends fasted for victory

[Esther 9:3](#)—Fasting is mentioned as having had a role in the victory

[Psalm 35:13,14](#)—Fasting in prayer and mourning

[Psalm 69: 10,11](#)—Fasting in prayer and mourning

[Isaiah 58:6-8](#)—The fast which pleases God

[Jeremiah 36:9](#)—Israel fasted for mercy

[Joel 1:14; 2:12,15](#)—God commanded fasting and repentance

[Jonah 3:5](#)—The Ninevites fasted in repentance for mercy

[Daniel 9:3](#)—Daniel fasted for wisdom

[Matthew 4:2](#)—Jesus fasted when tempted in the wilderness

[Matthew 6:17-18](#)—Jesus promised that the Father would bless fasting

[Matthew 9:14-15](#)—Jesus said his disciples would fast

[Luke 2:37](#)—Fasting was part of Anna's service to God

[Acts 13:2](#)—Fasting was part of the ministry of the workers at Antioch

[Acts 13:3](#)—Ordination was accompanied by fasting

[Acts 14:23](#)—Ordination was accompanied by fasting