

# BIBLICAL/GOD CENTRED FASTING

## WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that is taught in the Bible. It means to voluntarily reduce or eliminate your intake of food for a specific time and purpose.

Fasting is one of the most powerful spiritual disciplines of all the Christian disciplines. It is a way to align our hearts with the psalmist: “My soul thirsts for God, the living God” (Psalm 42:2). “It’s a means of God’s grace to strengthen and sharpen our Godward affections,” writes David Mathis in his book, “Habits of Grace.”

In his book “Hunger for God,” John Piper writes: “Christian fasting, at its root, is the hunger of a homesickness for God. Christian fasting is not only the spontaneous effect of superior satisfaction in God, it is also a chosen weapon against every force in the world that would take that satisfaction away.”

## WHY SHOULD WE FAST?

Fasting is one of the Spirit’s tools for strengthening and transforming grace in our lives. This spiritual practice is a gift from God meant to grow us and draw us into a deepening relationship with Him.

- Fasting was an expected practice in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted for at least two recorded 40-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast. He said, “When you fast,” not, “If you fast” (Matthew 6:16).
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of your “first love” for the Lord (Revelation 2:4) and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Ezra 8:21). King David said, “I ... humbled myself with fasting” (Psalm 35:13, New International Version).
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance and a transformed life.
- Through fasting, the Holy Spirit will imprint God’s Word deeper on 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 and make you a channel of life change to others.

## Fasting Creates an Environment for Miracles

- Fasting forces, the flesh to go under the authority of God's Spirit in us.
- When we are effectively fasting, we are letting God have all the room. His Spirit becomes powerful and mighty in our words and actions.
- Fasting releases faith transform our circumstances of lack, chaos, and fear into God's ordained circumstances of supply, peace, and faith

## Fasting Opens our Heart to Hearing God's Voice

- When we fast, there is almost nothing distracting us from hearing God's voice.
- We have emptied ourselves of our most basic need so we can put our full attention on God. This is the best time to make those difficult choices in life.
- When we are at a crossroads and don't know which way to turn, fasting helps us to hear God's direction.
- As we walk in the Spirit, we won't be hung up by the desires of our flesh trying to hold us down and keep us off course.
- We will be able to hear more clearly from God when our spirit is stronger than our flesh.

*So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5.16 NIV).*

## Three Important Questions

1. What are the motives for my fast?
2. What are the specific needs I'm fasting for?
3. Am I determined to minister unto the Lord during my fast (Acts 13:2)?

**If you are not serious about your fast, you won't get real serious results!**

## KINDS OF BIBLICAL FASTING

1. **DANIEL FAST** (Partial Fast) Daniel 10:2-3, 10-12
  - No bread, pasta, or meat – only vegetables, fruit, and water
  - Daniel sought the Lord for 21 Days – brought focus and clarity
2. **ESTHER FAST** (Absolute Fast)

- Esther 4:16 – no food or drink for three days
- Purpose is to seek God’s favour in the time of trouble

### 3. JESUS FAST (Dominion Fast)

- 40 Days and 40 Nights – no food or drink
- This was a supernatural work of God
- Jesus establishing His dominion in the new kingdom

### 4. SELF EXAMINATION FAST (One Day Fast)

- Leviticus 23:27, Jeremiah 36:6
- Purpose is for self-examination and consecration
- Spiritual check-up and refinement

### 5. BEFORE A BATTLE FAST (Battling Fast)

- “Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.” Judges 20:26
- The children of Israel fasted that day until evening and brought a peace offering before the Lord.
- It brought victory as they battled against the tribe of Benjamin

### 6. HEALING FAST (Fast For Healing)

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed<sup>ed</sup> go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,” Isaiah 58:6-8

## NON-FOOD FASTING

- Spending Fast, Hobby Fast, Media Fast, etc

## THE EFFECTS OF GODLY FASTING

**“Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, 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” (Ezra 8:21).**

1. We fast to seek God to know the right way. God will give wisdom and guide us.
2. We fast to lay a foundation for our children and the following generations
3. We fast for substance, for resources, finances, blessing, and favour

## **Recommended Resources**

**Fundamentals of Fasting** by Dr Bill Bright

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/personal-guide-to-fasting.html>

- How to Fast Safely
- What length of fast is right for you
- Physical and spiritual preparation
- How to finish a fast in a healthy way
- How to experience God’s Best during your fast

**Fasting Journal by Jentezen Franklin** can be purchased from Amazon

- This includes a scripture and devotional for each day

What kinds of things can you pray about as you prepare to fast?

1. What kind of fast should I do?
2. How long will I fast?
3. Will I ask anyone to join me on this fast?
4. Should I have something that I’m praying for as I fast? Do I have a list of personal requests or requests that relate to others?
5. Will I be tempted to replace what I’m fasting from with something else unhelpful? What temptations might I have?
6. What is God’s goal for me in this fast?
7. Can my body handle this fast (if doing a food fast)? Do I need to consult a doctor? What cautions might I need to take?
8. Does God have any promises for me as I start this fast? Is there any extra Bible reading that I should commit to during my fast?

“You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.” Psalm 63:1

“For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.” Psalm 107:9

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13

“For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish. Jeremiah 31:25