

# A GUIDE TO FASTING



**21**

DAYS OF  
PRAYER +  
FASTING





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## WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is physical abstinence for the purpose of spiritual investment.

*"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*  
- Luke 9:23

Jesus describes the essence of discipleship as self-denial, for the purpose of spiritual engagement. You deny yourself, in order to follow Jesus, to become like Christ, and to do the things that Jesus did.







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## WHAT FASTING IS NOT:

Biblical Fasting is not about weight loss, a cleanse, it's not about penance, and it's not a way to try to manipulate God...

*"A fast is not a hunger strike. Fasting submits to God's commands. A hunger strike makes God submit to our demands." – Ed Cole*







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## WHY DO WE FAST?

In Matthew 6:16, as Jesus, is instructing His followers, He starts by saying, "When you fast..." He doesn't say, "IF you fast..." He says "WHEN."

Jesus assumes that fasting is going to be a regular, prioritized, spiritual practice of every single one of His disciples.

Fasting is not just self-denial, it's self-denial for spiritual investment. We fast in order to develop greater levels of intimacy, dependence, communion, and communication with God. This is why biblical fasting is always intimately linked with the practice of prayer.







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## 7 BENEFITS OF FASTING

### 1. Victory Over Temptation

*(Matthew 4:1-4 - Jesus fasted in preparation for spiritual battle, and had victory over temptation.)*

What we see in Matthew 4 is fasting prepares you and strengthens you for spiritual battle and can give you victory over temptation.

### 2. Increases Our Faith

*(Matthew 17:20-21 - Jesus links faith with fasting.)*

Do you want to increase your faith this year? Do you want to see God work miracles in and through your life? Fast and pray.







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### 3. Brings Personal Guidance

*(In Acts 10, while Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, was fasting and praying, an angel appeared to him instructing him to send for Peter - to have Peter come and declare to him the ways of God.)*

Do you need God's guidance? Do you need Him to reveal to you your next step in your career, your relationships, your finances, your marriage, your ministry, your mission? Do you need personal guidance from God for this next season of life? Fast and Pray with expectancy that God will speak to you.







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## 7 BENEFITS OF FASTING

### 4. Wisdom and Decision Making

*(Acts 13:2-3 - As the early church leaders fasted and prayed the Holy Spirit gave them instruction.)*

Has God given you influence over others that He's called you to serve? Fast and pray, not only for God's guidance in your own life, but for the Will of the Holy Spirit for those you lead as well.

### 5. Deliverance and Protection

*(Ezra 8:21-23 - Ezra declared a corporate fast and prayed for a safe journey for the Israelites and God protected them.)*

Is God asking you to step out into something that terrifies you? Fast and pray. Ask for his protection as you obey Him.







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## 7 BENEFITS OF FASTING

### 6. Spiritual Insight and Influence

*(Daniel 10:12 - The angel equates fasting and prayer with humility and understanding.)*

Regular times of fasting increase your ability to perceive and understand eternal and spiritual matters. You'll gain spiritual insights and be able share them, when the opportunity presents itself.

### 7. Favor and Provision

*(Nehemiah 1:4 - God gave Nehemiah incredible favor and a result of his obedience and boldness, he was sent with permission and provision to rebuild Jerusalem.)*

When we fast and pray, we know that God will take our prayers and turn them into provision.







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## **TYPES OF FASTS**

### **Full fast - No food. Liquids Only.**

If you're new to fasting, we would encourage you not to start with 21 days with no food. Most often in scripture, these types of fasts last anywhere from 3-7 days. You could try a full fast for a 24-hr period and then modify your fast for the rest of the 21 days.

### **Daniel Fast - Planted Foods & Water**

Daniel 1 refers to vegetables, but in the original language, it means things that are sown, which would include fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. Daniel actually practiced this type of fast for 10 days, and then later for 21 days. If you're new to fasting, this might be a good starting point for you.







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## **TYPES OF FASTS**

### **Partial Fast - Restriction of Your Choosing**

This could be that you don't any eat food from sunup to sundown. Or that you abstain from at least one meal a day for 21 days or a specific type of food for 21 days. It could be abstaining from caffeine, alcohol, sugar, etc.

If you've had an unhealthy relationship with food in the past, and you're concerned about practicing a food fast you might consider another type of partial fast. Some examples could be fasting from electronics, social media, your phone, or different forms of entertainment, like TV.

Whatever it is that you abstain from, remember that the point of your fast is to create a physical hunger that drives you to deeper levels of intimacy with God – to find your satisfaction and fulfillment in God alone.

