

FASTING GUIDELINES

There are some moments in the year where we encourage the church to seek God together in prayer and fasting. The primary motivation of fasting is to help us take seeking God seriously and replace eating time with prayer. If you are considering fasting during this time, please read the following and ask the Spirit to guide you as to how, when and for how long He wants you to fast and pray. Some of us are doing a partial fast each day, others are fasting just one day.

TYPES OF FAST

1. **THE ABSOLUTE FAST** - To fast completely without food or water up to a maximum of three days usually in extraordinary circumstances: see Esther 4:16, Ezra 10:6 and Acts 9:9.
2. **THE PARTIAL OR DANIEL FAST** - Cutting back meals to vegetables and fruit only, one meal a day or breakfast and evening meal after our prayer meeting. This is a practical fast for those involved in heavy work or who have medical reasons for requiring regular good intake: see Daniel 10:2-3.
3. **THE NORMAL FAST** - No food is eaten and drinking only water over a period of 24 hours.
4. **THE JUICE FAST** - Some prefer to have a liquid only fast which allows for more physical work. Many use this type of fast for their long fast.
5. **FASTING FROM OTHER THINGS** - For example television or social media, and using the time to pray instead!

SPIRITUAL GUIDELINES

1. Fasting must first and foremost be *unto* God. Receiving from God or seeing situations changed are secondary matters. Be sure your motives are appropriate as you enter into your fast. Desire to meet with God and to be more Christ-like.
2. Schedule in time to pray and read the Word of God. If you don't you will miss wonderful opportunities to hear from God.

3. Be prepared for opposition. This will come from the enemy as he doesn't want you to fast. It will also come from your own body, which is used to having three meals a day! You may also find that well-meaning friends, family, neighbours, colleagues, etc. will actively encourage you to stop.
4. Headaches, dizziness, tiredness, touchiness, etc. are all part of fasting too! One writer said he never knew the strength of the 'desires of the flesh and lust of the eyes' to be so strong as when he fasted.
5. Expect to hear God in dreams, visions, revelations and through the Word of God in new and exciting ways.
6. Do not listen to the lie that nothing is happening. Fasting is a discipline that God has instigated, He blesses the obedient.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

This is not a comprehensive list of guidelines but some helpful hints. If you are planning on fasting for more than three days, it is good to let a leader know. If you want to talk to someone about fasting, please feel free to speak to any of our Pastors.

1. Fast with someone else. There is strength in numbers!
2. Make a commitment and set a duration. However, be willing to review the duration if health or circumstances change.
3. If drinking juice, drink low or non-acidic diluted juices. Watch your intake; schedule it so you are self-controlled.
4. If underweight or ill, consult your doctor even for a few days fast.
5. Don't boast about your fast. It is to be done in secret, but don't be legalistic about this. Tell those who need to know.
6. Schedule regular rest breaks as you grow weary and exercise only lightly.
7. Break the fast gradually, especially prolonged fasts.
8. Remember we are under grace, not law. If at any point you feel you need to break the fast, be released to do so. Fasting is to meet with God, not to damage our bodies or create condemnation.