

According to the Bible, there are three duties of every Christian: give, pray and fast. **Biblical fasting** takes a lot of discipline and strength—strength which you can only receive from God. Your private discipline will bring you rewards in Heaven, says [Matthew 6](#).

When you give God your first through fasting, prayer and giving at the beginning of the year, you set the course for the entire year.

Why should I fast?

Are you in need of healing or a miracle?

Do you need the tender touch of God in your life?

Is there a dream inside you that only He can make possible?

Are you in need of a fresh encounter?

Do you desire a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord?

Are you ready to have heightened sensitivity to the desires of God?

Do you need to break away from bondages that have been holding you hostage?

Is there a friend or loved one that needs Salvation?

Do you desire to know God's will for your life?

BIBLICAL FASTING FOCUS

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2 *"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."*

ROMANS 12:1 *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."*

MATTHEW 6:33 *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

ISAIAH 58:6 *"[Is] not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"*

We want to encourage you to target your prayers during the fast. Two specific areas we will be focusing on together are leadership and finances. The Bible instructs us to continually pray for our leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-2). When we lift up our leaders, here in the United States and around the world, we can expect God's peace in our lives and in our nation.

Another great promise, from the book of Isaiah, proclaims that the chosen fast will "undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free." We are living in tough economic times and we know that so many people are under a financial burden. As we come together to fast and pray, we believe that your burdens will be lifted and that financial blessings will be released into your life!

We encourage you to seek the Lord in prayer and let your decisions about your biblical fasting come from Him. Ask the Lord to show you areas to target during your time of fasting and prayer. We believe that, as we pray and seek God and give Him our best at the first of the year, He will bless our ENTIRE year (Matthew 6:33)!

Types of Fasts:

Full Fast Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

The Daniel Fast Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread. Drink water and juice. Eat fruits and vegetables.

Step 1: Be Specific Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately.

The king's food was against dietary laws.

Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine.

The king's food had been offered up to idols/demons.

Step 2: Fast as a Spiritual Commitment *The Daniel Fast* involves a spiritual commitment to God. "Daniel proposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" ([Daniel 1:8](#)).

Step 3: Reflect Inner Desire by Outer Discipline Many people have an inner desire for better health, but they can't discipline themselves to avoid junk food, and other foods that are not good for their health. The physical health you seek from God may be more than an answer to prayer. Your physical health can be linked to any of the following factors:

Your food choices.

The level of your spiritual commitment as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.

Your time commitment. If you determine to fast for a certain time, keep it. For example, if you determine to fast 10 days, don't stop on Day 9.

Your testimony commitment. Your fast is a statement of faith to God that you want Him to heal your body, and faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast.

Step 4: Pray to Perceive Sin's Role in Poor Health Notice [James 5:13-16](#):

Sin is something related to the cause of sickness.

Lack of health/healing may be the result of spiritual rebellion.

Lack of health/healing may be due to sin of wrong intake, i.e. drugs, pornography.

Repentance is linked to health according to James.

Elders have a role in healing both spiritual and physical health.

Sick people must desire to be well

The anointing oil could mean

Medicine for healing,

Symbolic of the Holy Spirit, or

It could be baptism

Prayer alone may not gain healing, faith is the major factor.

In Greek there are several words for "sick". James uses "Kanino", which not only includes disease, but also means weak or weary.

Attitude is important. James said, "are there any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms."

Step 5: Fast as a Statement of Faith to Others Daniel was making a statement of faith when he asked for only vegetables to eat and water to drink, then dared the overseer to compare the appearance of the four sons of Israel with the young men who ate the king's food.

Step 6: Learn the Effects of the Food You Eat Why are some foods good for us, and other foods not? What does certain food do to your body? If we really knew, there would

likely be some things we would never eat again.

Step 7: Yield All Results to God Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants" ([Dan. 1:13](#)).

3-Day Fast This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Partial Fast A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown. You can select from three types of fasting —a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Scripture References for Fasting: [Matthew 6:16-18](#), [Matthew 9:14-15](#), [Luke 18:9-14](#)

Relation to Prayer and Reading of the Word: [1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18](#), [Nehemiah 1:4, Daniel 9:3, 20](#), [Joel 2:12](#), [Luke 2:37](#), [Acts 10:30](#), [Acts 13:2](#)

Corporate Fasting: [1 Samuel 7:5-6](#), [Ezra 8:21-23](#), [Nehemiah 9:1-3](#), [Joel 2:15-16](#), [Jonah 3:5-10](#), [Acts 27:33-37](#)

Remember that it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing ([Isaiah 58](#), [Jeremiah 14:12](#), [1 Corinthians 8:8](#)). May God greatly bless you as you fast!

How to Begin Start with a clear goal. Be specific. Why are you *fasting*? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Pray daily and read the Bible.

Preparing Spiritually Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from those you may have offended ([Mark 11:25](#); [Luke 11:4](#); [17:3-4](#)). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that try to hinder you ([Romans 12:1-2](#)).

Deciding What to Fast The type of fasting you choose is up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may desire to fast like Daniel, who abstained from sweets and meats, and the only liquid he drank was water. Remember to replace that time with prayer and Bible study.

Deciding How Long You may fast as long as you like. Most can easily fast from one to three days, but you may feel the grace to go longer, even as much as 21 to 40 days. Use wisdom and pray for guidance. Beginners are advised to start slow.

What to Expect When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to praise and worship. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face.

How to End Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

What is fasting?

Biblical fasting is giving up specific foods and drink for a specified number of days for a specific purpose. The type and length of the fast you choose is between you and God, and should not be determined by what anyone else is doing.

Fasting, prayer and reading God's Word go hand in hand. When you fast, also pray for God's purpose and plan for your life to be revealed. Fast and pray about every major decision in your life.

Simply put, fasting is a way to conquer the physical and open the door to the supernatural in your life. When you deny your body, you feed your spirit and grow closer to the Lord.

Why fast?

In Matthew 6, Jesus gave us specific direction on how to live as a child of God. That pattern addressed three specific duties of a Christian: Giving, Praying and Fasting. Jesus said, "*When* you give" . . . "*when* you pray" . . . "when you fast." He made it clear that fasting, like giving and praying, was a normal part of Christian life.

Types of fasts

Be sure to consult your doctor before beginning any fast, especially if you have any type of medical condition.

FULL FAST. Drink only liquids – especially water. On this type of fast you may also take in clear broth and 100 percent fruit and vegetable juices in order to maintain your strength. You establish the number of days for your fast in your prayer time.

PARTIAL FAST. There are many options for partial fasts. Below are just a few for you to select from.

Daniel Fast : The most frequently used example of a partial fast is found in Daniel chapter 10. The Daniel Fast is a fast from meats, sweets, breads and any drink, except water, for a specific time period (Daniel 10:2-3). The easiest way to think of this fast is eating only vegetables and fruits, and drinking only water.

The following are examples of other types of partial fasts.

Give up one item of food or drink such as caffeine, coffee, soft drinks or sweets. Give up one meal a day for a specific amount of time, one meal a week, etc. fast for a specific

number of days . . . one day, three days, so on. Choose to fast from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. or from sun-up to sundown. When doing this type of fast, consider your work and sleep schedule. The hours that you sleep should not be considered part of your fasting period, so the timeframe for this type of fast may vary.

CORPORATE FAST vs Private Fast .

A Corporate fast is a joint fast of believers for a specific purpose that can yield powerful results. Although this fast involves others, it is also very much a “private and personal experience.” Esther called all of her people to fast for protection against danger (Esther 4:16). Samuel declared a fast for national revival (1 Samuel 7).

Other common questions

What if I have a medical condition?

Consult your doctor before starting any fast. Decide together what is possible. If your health condition prohibits you from fasting food, try fasting something else and concentrate on prayer and Bible study. God knows your heart.

I forgot and ate something that wasn't on my fast; do I need to start again? No, think of fasting as a marathon, rather than a sprint. Don't give up! If you fall down, get up and keep trying. Conquering “king stomach” is difficult, but you'll make it.

Do I continue to exercise while fasting?

For most people moderate exercise is OK. But it is best to always consult a doctor about fasting and exercise. If you are on a complete fast, you may not have the energy for exercise.

What if I have a manual labor job?

If you have a job that requires you to expend a lot of physical energy, you may want to consider a full fast for one to three days or make your fast a partial fast that allows you to receive enough nutrition to perform your job.

Can my husband and I be intimate during our fast? Read I Corinthians 7:2-5, especially verse 5, which says, “do not deprive one another (of sexual relations) **EXCEPT WITH CONSENT, for a time; that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer.**” So the answer is yes. Scripture allows this for the purpose of fasting and prayer, **BUT** only with mutual consent.