

# How to Start Fasting

Fasting is hard. It sounds much easier in concept than it proves to be in practice. It can be surprising how on-edge we feel when we miss a meal. Many an idealistic new faster has decided to miss a meal and only found our belly drove us to make up for it long before the next mealtime came. Fasting sounds so simple, and yet the world, our flesh, and the devil conspire to introduce all sorts of complications that keep it from happening. In view of helping you start down the slow path to good fasting, here are six simple pieces of advice. These suggestions might seem pedantic, but the hope is that such basic counsel can serve those who are new at fasting or have never seriously tried it.

## FASTING PREPARATION

### 1. Prepare your Heart:

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God appears to Solomon and explains that if His people are going through a hard time, they should seek Him and follow His ways. Then, He will hear their prayers and heal them. Be willing to hear what God says needs to change, and be willing to change. Don't continue to sin. What are the paths He wants you to walk? How much does He want you to pray and read His Word? Tell God that you surrender your life to Him and that you want more of Him and His way.

### 2. Prepare your Motives:

Ephesians 1:3 says that there are spiritual blessings assigned to us. We can never exhaust them! Who knows what God wants to give you or show you? Maybe He wants to bestow gifts such as wisdom, anointing, prayer power, healing power, teaching power, joy, or encouragement. When you eliminate things that are keeping you from focusing on God, He is able to show you things about your life that you never knew.

### 3. Prepare your Body:

If you decide to eat only fruits and vegetables for your fast, it will result in cleansing of your physical body. You may feel sick as your body detoxes, but you'll make it! This isn't a mind game to see if you can survive eating less or not watching ESPN, but about experiencing God. Some people ask, "What does not eating have to do with my relationship with God?"

### 4. Prepare your Schedule:

Decide where you will meet with God, what and when you will eat, and how you will spend your time differently. Remember, the fast is about communing with God, so don't fill your time with distractions that will keep you from feeling hungry. Create a plan and commit to spending more time with the Lord.

### 5. Fasting Guidelines:

- Explain to your family in advance what you are doing.
- Request privacy from those find out what you are doing.
- Ask them not to discuss it with you until your fast is over.
- Never complain or brag about your fast, and avoid talking about it.

- Establish an accountability partner for prayer & encouragement.
- Stay away from negative people.
- Spend as much time as possible alone in solitude and prayer.
- Acknowledge that your flesh cannot be trained, but must be crucified.
- Journal as you pray and meet with the Lord. Write down the miracles God does in your life!

## 6. TYPES OF FASTS

### A. Complete Fast

- Drinking only liquids, typically water and/or light juices.
- Broth or soup may be included as options.

### B. Selective Fast

- Removing certain elements from your diet.
- The Daniel Fast - abstaining from meat, sweets, or bread; drink water and juice, and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

### C. Partial Fast (a.k.a. The Jewish Fast)

- Abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon.
- Fast during specific times of the day, e.g. 6AM-3PM, or from sunup to sundown.

### D. Technology Fast

- Write down why you are unplugging and what you are hoping to gain out of the experience. When your digital fast gets hard, remember why you started. Share the purpose of your digital detox with a friend so they can help keep you accountable.
- When constantly looking at our phone we can become distracted and not fully present with others. During your digital fast, look for ways to connect with others over lunch or sit in front of someone and give them the your full attention.
- What you are going to fast from? Maybe it's your social media or perhaps it's Netflix. You decide. Determine your parameters and the length of time you are going to fast
- At the beginning you might find yourself reaching for your phone every time you are bored or lonely. A digital fast is not easy to start. Pay attention to your behavior, emotions and desires. A fast can be an incredible opportunity for the Lord to show you deeper things that you would not have noticed otherwise.
- The dark side of technology is that it feeds our insatiable need to be known without actually satisfying it. Ask yourself the hard questions during your fast, like "Where do I seek my identity from?"
- Read a newspaper or book instead of scrolling through your Newsfeed. Did you know we are more creative when we have down time? Go for a walk and let your mind wander.

- E. Soul Fast • Common for: anyone new to fasting food; those with health issues that prevent them from fasting food; those wanting to refocus specific areas of life that are out of balance. • Suggestions: abstain from engaging in social media, shopping, watching television, etc.