

# Fasting Guide

The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God. Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating distractions for a spiritual purpose; it hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out. It also enables us to celebrate the goodness and mercy of God and prepares our hearts for all the good things God desires to bring into our lives. Remember, your personal fast should present a level of challenge, but it is very important to know your body, your options, and, most importantly, to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

## Types of Fasts

### Complete Fast

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

### Selective Fast

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

### Partial Fast

This fast is sometimes called the "Jewish Fast" and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.

### Soul Fast

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

## Timing of a Fast

This year, we are encouraging fasting as part of our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting, a season of focused prayer as a church family. You may also choose to fast at other times during the year for your own spiritual development. It's very typical to fast a single meal, a whole day, or three days or more. The timing of your fast is not as important as the strength of your focus on God as you fast.

## Examples of Biblical Fasts

Jesus fasted to acknowledge His dependence and to gain spiritual strength through reliance on the Holy Spirit and God's Word. He did this before He began His public ministry (Luke 4:1-2).

Nehemiah fasted for confession, repentance and favor in the sight of the king to get permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:4).

David humbled himself, asking God to intervene because of injustice (Psalm 35:13). In 2 Samuel 12:17-23, he fasted for healing and miraculous intervention.

Mordecai and the Jews fasted upon hearing the news of Haman's wicked plot for their extermination (Esther 4:3).

The early church fasted while worshiping and committing their ministry to the Lord.

They also sought the Lord through fasting for guidance and confirmation during the appointment of elders (Acts 13:2, 14:23).

Jesus expected His disciples to fast, but He did not command it (Matthew 6:16).