

Fasting Guide

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline taught in the Bible, which helps our spiritual growth. Jesus expected His followers to fast and in the early church in Acts, the Disciples often fasted before making any important decisions.

Fasting is voluntarily to reduce or eliminate food intake for a specific time and purpose, humbling ourselves before God and feasting on Him instead. It is not about twisting God's arm, or a formula for getting through to Him, or punishing our bodies, rather it's about taking our eyes off the things of this world and focusing on God instead, demonstrating that we are serious about our relationship with Him.

Although fasting in Scripture is mostly fasting from food, there are other ways to fast. Anything you can temporarily give up in order to focus better on God can be considered a fast.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN FASTING FOOD

- **If you have any medical conditions or are on any medication that you think could be affected by fasting, you should consult your GP.**
- Set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord and His Word. Why not use the time with God that you would have spent preparing food and eating it?
- It is important to drink plenty of fluid. Fasting is going without food, not without drink.
- Be careful about how much strenuous activity or driving you undertake when going without food.

NewLife
BAPTIST CHURCH

3 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

10-12 September 2018



Fruitful Christians

Next week, we are looking forward to our three days of Prayer and Fasting. We want to make lots of time to hear what God has to say to us for the year ahead. Each evening, we will begin with worship followed by a short message on Monday from Mike Turner, Tuesday from Glen and Wednesday from Steve.

We encourage you to use the reading guide overleaf each day to draw near to God and then join us for as many of the evening prayer and worship times as possible.

Monday: Fruitful in our workplace

Luke 5: 1-11

It's easy for us to forget that Jesus knows more about our job and our workplace than we do. Our culture tells us to keep God out of the public domain and all too often we give in to that by not seeking the Lord's help with what we do from day to day. The calling of Simon, James, and John teaches us that Jesus is good at fishing for men, women and fish! To Simon's credit he puts aside his pride and follows Jesus' instructions and a fruitless day's work turns into the most fruitful day not just for the three men in a boat but for their competitors too.



What is it that you need help with in your place of work today? Whether you are looking for work, working in the home, or in paid employment, ask the Lord to show you a different approach to the problem you face and then follow his instructions.

Maybe you have a testimony of how the Lord has helped you at work. Come to the prayer time tonight and share it.

Glen Cormack

Tuesday: Fruitful in our family

Jesus was welcome in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in all sorts of circumstances, and we see them sharing all kinds of emotions openly with him.



As you read some of their story, reflect on your own home and Jesus' place in it. How readily do you open your home to him and include him in every aspect of your home life and your family? Is he your first port of call in times of family crisis? What impact does your relationship with him have on your home and those in it: do you see the fruit of the Spirit growing there?

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and if necessary to challenge you as you read the passages.

Maybe you have a testimony of how the Lord has helped you in your home and family. Come to the prayer time tonight and share it.

John 11: 1-44; and 12:1-11; Luke 10:38-42

Susanna Hinton

Wednesday: Fruitful in our friendships

Luke 5:18-25

The story of the lame man being brought by his friends to Jesus is a famous one. Think about this passage today and reflect on what God is saying to you through it. Read it three times pausing after each reading. Ask God to show you what this passage means to you today. Here are some ideas for reflection:



The men brought their friend to Jesus. Who are you bringing to Jesus today? Is there someone in your circle of influence who you can befriend and bring to Christ or even be Christ to them? Consider how you can engage with them today, sharing your faith or even just being Christ in their situation.

The men bring their friend for healing. In verse 20 we read, When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." Jesus responds to the faith of the men carrying the man and not just the man himself. What does this verse say to you about your friendships? Do you take your friends to God regularly?

If the men hadn't brought their friend to God, the man wouldn't have been healed and reconciled to God. Is there someone who used to attend church but for whatever reason has chosen to walk away. Take some time praying for these people to be reconciled to God. Ask God to show you how to encourage them in their faith.

Maybe you have a testimony of how the Lord has helped you in your friendships. Come to the prayer time tonight and share it.

Jen Holder