

21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

DETAILS

Biblically, fasting is abstaining from food, drink, sleep or sex to focus on a period of spiritual growth. Specifically, we humbly deny something of the flesh to glorify God, enhance our spirit, and go deeper in our prayer life.

Fasting isn't some kind of a "work" that's commanded by Christ or required by Scripture. However, that doesn't mean that fasting isn't recommended as a part of our spiritual growth. The Book of Acts records believers fasting before they made important decisions (Acts 13:4; 14:23). Fasting and prayer are often linked together (Luke 2:37; 5:33). Too often, the focus of fasting is on the lack of food. However, the purpose of fasting is to take our eyes off the things of this world and instead focus on God. Fasting is a way to demonstrate to God and to ourselves that we are serious about our relationship with Him. Although fasting in Scripture is almost always fasting from food, there are other ways to fast. Anything you can temporarily give up in order to better focus on God can be considered a fast (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). Fasting should be limited to a set time, especially when the fasting is from food. Extended periods of time without eating are harmful to the body. Fasting is not intended to punish our flesh, but to focus on God.

Ways you can fast:

- **Complete Fast** - A complete fast means refraining from eating all food. Most people still drink water or juice during a complete fast. When Jesus fasted in the desert, the Bible says, "After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." This verse does not mention Jesus being thirsty. If you choose to do a complete fast, you should first consult your doctor before starting.
- **Selective Fast** - A selective fast generally refers to refraining from certain types of foods. Daniel 10:2-3 says, "At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips, and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over." In Daniel 1:12, they restricted their diet to vegetables and water: "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink." Some examples of this type of fast would include a Daniel fast and a Lenten Fast.
- **Partial Fast** - A partial fast is when individuals omit specific meals from their diet. This could include skipping a meal, only eating during specific hours, or not eating from sun up till sundown.
- **Soul Fast** - A soul fast is when you intentionally refrain from things that could serve as a distraction in this time of spiritual reflection. Things often given up during a soul fast include Social Media, Television, etc.

DEVOTION

Start your new year with a focus on the spiritual discipline of fasting. This plan includes several passages about fasting and others that encourage reflections and closeness to God. For 21 days, you'll get a daily Bible reading, a brief devotional, reflection questions, and a prayer focus.

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/35-21-day-fast>

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