



21-DAY FASTING GUIDE



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| ABOUT FASTING

// Throughout history, Christians have embraced the practice of spiritual disciplines (prayer, reading scripture, meditating, solitude, silence, fasting) as a means to seek God, and deepen our relationship with God. Jesus practiced prayer and fasting himself, and in Matthew 5:16-18 Jesus gave some direction about how to fast. The question was not “do we fast or not?” But “when we fast, how should we do so?” Jesus assumed His followers would fast. Fasting is denying something physical (food) in order to feed the spiritual. There are many types of fasts, but Marion Naz will be engaging in The Daniel Fast January 7-28, 2019.

A renewed closeness with God and a greater sensitivity to spiritual things are usually the results of a fast. Do not be disappointed if you do not have a “mountaintop experience,” as some do. Many people who have successfully completed extended fasts tell of feeling a nearness to God that they have never before known, but others who have honestly sought His face report no particular outward results at all. For others, their fast was physically, emotionally, and spiritually grueling, but they knew they had been called by God to fast, and they completed the fast unto Him as an act of worship. God honored that commitment.

OUR MOTIVE IN FASTING MUST BE TO GLORIFY GOD, not to have an emotional experience, not to attain personal happiness, and not to “force” God into answering prayers in the way we want them answered. When our motives are right, God will honor our seeking heart and bless our time with Him in a very special way.

// MAINTAINING NUTRITIONAL BALANCE

The Daniel Fast is a plan on the YouVersion Bible App that can be accessed from a smart phone or computer. The app includes resources for setting goals, journaling, and includes recipes, daily scriptures, and daily devotionals. Please check this application out and seek assistance from the Resource Center if you are having trouble. There is a website you may resource as well: www.daniel-fast.com.

The prospect of going without food (or certain foods) for an extended period may be of concern to some. However, there are ways to ensure that our body is getting the nutrients it needs, so we can remain safe and healthy during a fast. The Daniel Fast is based on the fasting experiences of the Old Testament Prophet and is a partial fast (some foods are eaten while others are restricted). The following is a guideline for the Daniel Fast:

- Water is the only beverage for the 21 days
- All fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes, quality oils, and soy foods
- Condiments/cooking ingredients—Adobo sauce, cilantro, herbs, unsweetened mustard, salt, seasonings, spices, vanilla, and vegetable broth. May use small amounts of fruit juices as ingredients in dishes

We fast from: ALL meat and dairy products, sweeteners, leavened bread, refined and processed food products, deep-fried foods, and solid fats.

// PREPARE SPIRITUALLY

Unconfessed sin and unholy motives will hinder our prayers. Here are several things we can do to prepare our hearts:

- 🕊️ Ask God to reveal any unconfessed sins or unholy motives.
- 🕊️ Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9)
- 🕊️ Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4)
- 🕊️ Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you
- 🕊️ Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in Ephesians 5:18 and His promise in 1 John 5:14-15
- 🕊️ Surrender your life fully to Jesus; refuse to obey your sinful nature (Romans 12:1-2)
- 🕊️ Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, etc. (Psalm 48:9-10; 103:1-8; 11-13)
- 🕊️ Begin your time of fasting and praying with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6)
- 🕊️ Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometime intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16-17).

// PREPARE PHYSICALLY

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician prior to fasting if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment.

Physical preparation makes the drastic change in our eating routine a little easier so that we can turn our full attention to the Lord in prayer.

- Do not rush into a fast
- Prepare ahead of time by eating smaller meals before starting a fast; avoid high-fat and sugary foods
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast

While fasting

- Limit activity
- Exercise only moderately; walk one to three miles each day
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit
- Prepare yourself for *temporary* mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pains, dizziness, or the “blahs,” weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness. Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches.

The first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your fluid intake.

When possible, begin and end each day on your knees for a brief time of praise and thanksgiving to God. Longer periods of time with our Lord in prayer and study of His Word are often better spent alone.

// DEVELOP A SCHEDULE

For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Morning—Begin your day in praise and worship

- Read and meditate on God’s Word
- Invite the Holy Spirit to work in you to will and to do His good pleasure according to Phil 2:13
- Invite God to use you. Ask Him to show you how to influence your family, your church, your community, your country, and beyond
- Pray for His vision for your life and empowerment to do His will

Noon—

- Take a short walk
- Spend time in intercessory prayer for your community and national leaders, the unreached millions, Marion County, your family or special needs

Evening—

- Get alone to “seek His face”
- Avoid TV or any other distractions that may dampen your spiritual focus

// END THE FAST GRADUALLY

When your designated time for fasting is finished, you will begin to eat again. But how you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being.

Begin eating gradually. Suddenly reintroducing meat, dairy, sugar, etc. to your stomach and digestive tract will have negative, even dangerous, consequences.

It is tempting to end your fast by feasting on foods you have been denied for so long. But, the result will be a massive rebuttal from your body in the form of cramping, bloating, gas, and stomach upset. Your body will be much happier if you slowly reintroduce foods and beverages to your diet (The Daniel Plan by Susan Gregory).

// EXPECT RESULTS

When we sincerely humble ourselves before the Lord, repent, pray, seek God's face, and consistently meditate on His Word, we can expect to experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give us fresh, new spiritual insights. Our confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. We will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. We will see answers to our prayers.

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh fillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. A 24-hour fast each week has been rewarding to many Christians.

It takes time to build our spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, don't be discouraged. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honor you for your faithfulness.

The prayer committee encourages you to join us in this 21-day Daniel Fast. It is our desire that the practices of prayer and fasting become part of the DNA of Marion Naz, and that we truly experience intimacy with God and revival in our own lives, our homes, our church, our community, our nation, and throughout the world. Great things happen when God's people pray... and fast!

