

How to Begin Your Fast

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Before you fast, I encourage you to read the book, *The Coming Revival: America's Call to Fast, Pray, and "Seek God's Face."* It will help equip you for the coming spiritual awakening.

How you begin and conduct your fast will largely determine your success. By following these basic steps to fasting, you will make your time with the Lord more meaningful and spiritually rewarding.

STEP 1: Set Your Objectives

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically.

Through fasting and prayer we humble ourselves before God so the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our churches, and heal our land according to **2 Chronicles 7:14**. Make this a priority in your fasting.

- Guidance
- Healing
- Divine Intervention
- Revival
- Personal discipline
- Family/children/nation
- Other _____

STEP 2: Make Your Commitment

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15) For Him it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, decide the following up front:

- **Duration**_____ How long you will fast - one meal, one day, a week, several weeks, forty days (Beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts.)
- **Type**_____The type of fast God wants you to undertake (such as water only, or water and juices; what kinds of juices you will drink and how often)
- **Activities**_____What physical or social activities you will restrict
- **Time**_____How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word

Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

STEP 3: Prepare Yourself Spiritually

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Un-confessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Ask God to help you make a comprehensive list of your sins.
- 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 Christ as your Lord and Master; refuse to obey your worldly nature (Romans 12:1,2).
- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11-13).
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16,17).

Step 4: Consider the Factors

- **Prior commitments**
- **Work schedule**
- **Activities**
- **Health issues or needs**
- **Medications**
- **Going solo or with your mate or a close friend?**

Step 5: Enlist Reinforcements

- **We are in spiritual warfare ...**

Eph. 5 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Eph 6:13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

- **Confession of sins**
 - **Make a list & check it twice**
 - **Ask and give forgiveness where necessary and make restitution**

Step 6: Seek for heart Change

Isaiah 58:3-10

How to go aside for a day.

Many people want to go aside and be alone with God for a day. The question is: What do I do all day? The following are a few ideas on how to schedule such a day. You can see if it will work for you for yourself. Remember these are only ideas to stimulate you. The important thing is to fill the day as it suits you.

- You can start by going aside for only a morning or an afternoon or an evening. If you can fill in half a day you can extend the period.
- Get a note book, a Bible, a pen and if you want to a good spiritual book. Pick a quiet place without telephones where you can be undisturbed. Decide for how long you want to be busy and try to stick to it.
- Start your time with the Lord with exaltation, worship and just being quiet in the presence of the Lord.
- If your mind starts wandering and you think of everything you have to do, write it down on a sheet of paper. In doing so you ensure that you will not forget and can pay attention to it later.
- Select a book from the Bible and start reading it from the beginning. For example you can start reading Psalm 1, or you can take a book like Ephesians. Don't be in a hurry. Take it verse by verse; ask the Lord what He wants to teach you from that verse, reflect on the verse, pray about it. When you have finished with that verse, carry on and do the same with the next one. Write down the important things that the Lord is saying to you in your note book.
- After 30-60 minutes of Bible study you can go into direct prayer. Take time for confession and take a hard look at your own relationship with the Lord. After this you can pray for your personal needs or for specific matters. This can be followed by intercession. It is very important not to be in a hurry. The emphasis should be on fellowship with the Lord.
- You have perhaps set this time aside to pray for certain matters specifically or to seek the Lord's guidance. In that case make time to pray specifically for that.
- Vary your time with Bible study and prayer. Also take time to read a few chapters of a spiritual book.
- You may even sleep for a while if you feel like it. At the end of the day you will be revived and ready to get to work again. If possible it is also a good idea to listen to some Christian music from time to time.
- When a whole group of people are withdrawing (going aside) for a day at the same time, you can follow the above guidelines and get together every two or three hours and share what you have experienced and also pray together.