

Fasting Resource

Why pray and fast?

Source: <http://www.ccci.org/training-and-growth/devotional-life/personal-guide-to-fasting/02-why-you-should-fast.htm>

If you do not already know of the power and importance of fasting, here are some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, "when you fast," not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life-and make you a channel of revival to others.
- Fasting and prayer are the only disciplines that fulfill the requirements of II Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

If you fast, you ... will discover more time to pray and seek God's face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

How should I pray and fast?

Source: <http://www.ccci.org/training-and-growth/devotional-life/personal-guide-to-fasting/03-how-to-fast-safely.htm>

You may have a physical problem that would make fasting unwise or dangerous. Also, if you are under any type of medication, make sure you talk to your doctor before changing your regime. Prudence and caution are in order. When you are assured that you are in good health, you are ready to begin your fast.

In spite of the absolute safety and benefits of fasting, there are certain persons who should NEVER fast without professional supervision. For example:

- Persons who are physically too thin or emaciated.
- Persons who are prone to anorexia, bulimia, or other behavioral disorders.
- Those who suffer weakness or anemia.

- Persons who have tumors, bleeding ulcers, cancer, blood diseases, or who have heart disease.
- Those who suffer chronic problems with kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, or other important organs.
- Individuals who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer any other blood sugar problem such as hyperglycemia.
- Women who are pregnant or nursing.

For more information, visit <http://www.ccci.org/training-and-growth/devotional-life/personal-guide-to-fasting/09-maintain-nutritional-balance.htm>

Types of Fasting

Here is the key to any fast: You're not simply saying "No" to something you like. You're allowing that "No" to become a "Yes" to seeking God, who is much more valuable and satisfying than anything we could lay aside. You're saying, "Lord, I lay this aside so that I can seek you more fully. Lord, you are the true source of my life and joy. I turn to you!"

Fasting from Food: *Here are a few ideas for you if you would like to fast from food.*

- A Chosen Days Fast: Determine a number of days during which you will only drink fluids. Please see above for information on fasting wisely.
- A Daniel Fast: Taken from Daniel's example in Daniel 1:8-16, the Daniel Fast focuses on eating only vegetables and drinking only water.
- A Designated Day Fast: Choose one day of the week that will be your day to fast, whether for a meal, from sunrise to sunset, or for the whole day.
- A Designated Meal Fast: Choose one meal that you will skip during the forty days.
- A Designated Food Fast: Perhaps there is a particular food item that you really love. Take these forty days, lay aside that food. In addition to the other prayer times you have set aside during these 40 Days, allow any cravings for your favorite food to be a reminder to pray.

Fasting from Other Stuff: *Simply put, you might want to do a media fast (no television, movies, online), a Facebook fast, or some other kind of fasting from normal activity, allowing you time to pray.*

Praying

Praying Scripture

Throughout Church History, God's people have allowed God's word to provide a vocabulary for prayer. Praying Scripture might be a new experience for you. The process is simple and, with time, will become a valuable part of your spiritual life.

Begin by reading through the passage once out loud. Then pray through each verse, allowing time between the verses for silence. During this time of silence, inwardly ask the Holy Spirit to apply the verse to your own heart. You can also specifically apply

the passage to your life in prayer. For example, when praying through verse 1 of Psalm 51, you can pray the verse then pray something like, "Lord, in spite of my sin, I ask for your mercy. Please forgive me for the way I treated _____ yesterday. Have mercy, Lord"

For Cleansing and Forgiveness

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

Psalm 66:17-20

I cried to him with my mouth,
and high praise was on my tongue.
If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.
But truly God has listened;
he has attended to the voice of my prayer.
Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me!

For a Deeper Experience of God's Presence

Psalm 36:5-10

Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep;
man and beast you save, O LORD.
How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light do we see light.
Oh, continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your righteousness to the upright of heart!

Psalm 37:3-7

Trust in the LORD, and do good;
 dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the LORD,
 and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the LORD;
 trust in him, and he will act.
He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
 and your justice as the noonday.
Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him...

For the Lord's Direction in Your Life

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command. May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

Psalm 37:23-24

The steps of a man are established by the LORD,
 when he delights in his way;
though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong,
 for the LORD upholds his hand.

Proverbs 16:9

The heart of man plans his way,
 but the LORD establishes his steps.

Psalm 31:1-5

In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;
 let me never be put to shame;
 in your righteousness deliver me!
Incline your ear to me;
 rescue me speedily!
Be a rock of refuge for me,
 a strong fortress to save me!
For you are my rock and my fortress;
 and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;
you take me out of the net they have hidden for me,
 for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
 you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.