

TYPES OF FASTS

Broad Types:

Public - This is a called fast for a group or church. I Kings 21:9, Ezra 8:21, Esther 4:16.

Private - This is personal as lead by the Lord. Matthew 6:18.

Specific Types of Fasts:

Daniel's Fast - no meats or sweet foods. Daniel 10:3

Jewish - Fasting sun up to sun down. Judges 20:26; II Samuel 1:12

Partial - Fast one type of food - I Samuel 20:34, 28:20, some translations say bread.

Half-Day - Fast until 3 PM (ninth hour) This is the fast John Wesley (founder of Methodist church) participated in. Acts 10:30

One Meal - Fasting a meal usually eaten.

Complete - no solid foods, liquids only.

Total - No food and water. ONLY AS LORD LEADS; 3 DAYS MAXIMUM.

LENGTHS OF FASTS

Half-Day - Judges 20:26, Acts 10:30

One Day - most Biblical fasts were one day.

7-Day - I Samuel 31:13

14-Day - Acts 27:33

21-Day - Daniel 10:3

40-Day - I Kings 19:8

The length of the fast should be dependent on three factors:

1. Your health
2. God's leading
3. Type of fast

Using wisdom is always appropriate.

IS FASTING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

Yes, here are a few examples of fasting in the New Testament:

- Jesus fasted - Luke 4:1-2
- Paul fasted - Acts 9:9
- Whole church fasted - Acts 14:23
- Leadership fasted - Acts 13:1-3
- Church members (Cornelius) fasted Acts 10:30

Pray God's Word While Fasting

Yourself

- Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Family

- Isaiah 32:18 - My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Finances

- Philippians 4:19 - And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Healing

- Isaiah 53:5 - But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Direction

- Colossians 1:9 - To ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Materials such as *The 21-Day Fast* and *101 Reasons to Fast* by Dr. Bob Rodgers were referred to in this pamphlet. This pamphlet is intended for spiritual use only. The information in this pamphlet is not intended to be medical advice.

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THEN THEY SHALL FAST



Unlocking the Power of Biblical Fasting



by Pastor John S. Carmichael

THEN THEY SHALL FAST

Jesus spoke these words many years ago (Matthew 9:15.) He was being questioned about why His disciples were not fasting, while others were fasting. In that time period, fasting was a way of life. It was a normal practice to fast. Anyone who was religious or just wanted to draw closer to God fasted. Therefore, it surprised many people that Jesus would not have His disciples to fast.

He answered their questioning by saying that they would not be fasting while He was with them. Yet, He said the time would come when He would be taken from them and "then they shall fast." We are in that time that Jesus expects us to fast.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL FASTING?

Biblical fasting is when a person, in order to enhance their spiritual lives, eliminates or limits the consumption of food for a certain period of time.

WHY FAST?

There are many reasons people fast. Here are five important reasons to fast:

1. Repentance -

Fasting was used as an outward sign of repentance. Many cities or individuals would fast when turning from sin. Joel 2:12

2. Obedience -

Jesus said that when He left for heaven, His disciples would fast. He expects His church to fast. Matthew 9:15, Matthew 6:16-18

3. Power -

Jesus said that there are some things that prayer alone could not take care of. He told his disciples that some things need prayer and fasting. Mark 9:29

4. Step into the Call of God-

Jesus' fasts (Matt 4, Lk4) was before He started public ministry. Paul was sent out into ministry after a time of fasting (Acts 13:1-3).

5. Protection -

Ezra fasted for protection of his family and possessions. Ezra 8:21-23

HOW TO FAST?

In past cultures fasting was a part of everyday life. The methods concerning fasting were passed down to those of that culture. In today's society, this is not the case. In fact most people in the civilized world know nothing about fasting. Here are some things to keep in mind about fasting:

1. Your physical condition needs to be considered.

The type of fast and the length of a fast should be determined by your current physical condition. This is especially true if you have an illness or are taking medication. Always consult your physician.

2. Use Wisdom.

If you are ill and need medication, don't start a 21-day "complete" fast. If your job is physically demanding, a 40-day "complete" fast might not be the best thing for you. In certain cases, shorten your fast or choose another type of fast.

3. Drink Water.

Water will help your body eliminate toxins more quickly. If possible, drink only un-chlorinated water. You will need to drink at least a gallon per day.

4. Marital relations.

According to I Corinthians 7:5, marital relations should not be withheld, unless the other spouse agrees and

only for a time of fasting.

5. Never complain.

It is important to maintain an attitude of praise during the time of fasting. Be full of joy because you are preparing yourself to receive great blessings from God.

6. Hygiene.

As your body is eliminating toxins, maintain good hygiene. Body odor and bad breath are caused by the elimination of toxins, although perfectly normal on a fast, can be offensive to others. Paying extra attention to this will save you and others the embarrassment of dealing with this during the fast.

7. Pray.

Fasting is only spiritually effective when coupled with prayer. While Jesus was explaining why His disciples could not heal a child, He said that sometimes they would need to pray and fast. It has been said that fasting without praying is just going hungry.

8. Be kind.

When a person fasts they become more irritable. It becomes easy to say things or react to things differently due to fasting. Keep a kind, gentle spirit about you. Remember, faith works by love. Galatians 5:6

9. Headaches and rundown feeling are signs the fast is working.

During a time of fasting the body purifies itself and feeds off impurities and pollutants in your body. After approximately three days the headaches will begin to cease. After approximately five days hunger will also ease.

10. The victory sometimes comes after the fast.

When Jesus was fasting He was tempted by the devil. The power of the Holy Spirit came upon Christ after the fast. Luke 4:13-14