

FASTING GUIDE



PURPOSE

Fasting is intentionally abstaining from food or other distractions to draw nearer to God. It's a time to seek His presence, listen to His voice, and align our hearts with His will. God has led the Relentless Church family to embrace a lifestyle of prayer and fasting, not on scheduled dates each year, but as Holy Spirit leads us both individually and corporately. Fasting is the way to realign our unbelief with our faith in the presence of God in our lives. There will be times you feel prompted by Holy Spirit to fast and there will be times the leadership of Relentless calls everyone to fast together as we seek God. This fasting guide is a tool to help you have a successful fast. Whether you're a seasoned faster or trying it for the first time, this guide will equip you for a meaningful experience!

WHY SHOULD I FAST?

- Are you in need of healing or a miracle?
- Do you need the tender touch of God in your life?
- Is there a dream inside you that only He can make possible?
- Are you in need of a fresh encounter?
- Do you desire a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord?
- Are you ready to have heightened sensitivity to the desires of God?
- Do you need to break away from bondages that have been holding you hostage?
- Is there a friend or loved one that needs Salvation?
- Do you desire to know God's will for your life?
- Are you experiencing a struggle in believing for something and need to realign your unbelief with faith?

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

There is no “recipe” for fasting. Just because you see someone in the bible fasting 40 days, doesn’t mean you will get the same results in 40 days...you may get those results in 3 days! This is not a religious practice; fasting is simply seeking God and walking in to His presence intentionally! Check out the testimonies of fasting in the bible!

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

1. THE DISCIPLES FAST

In Mark 9, the disciples were frustrated because they couldn't cast out an evil spirit., Jesus said 'this kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting" Through prayer and fasting we can break free from addictions, habits, and sins that ensnare/hinder us from achieving God's purpose for our lives.

2. THE EZRA FAST

In Ezra 8, Ezra was given silver and gold to take back to Jerusalem from King Artaxerxes but he was facing a problem in the journey ahead with the threat of thieves along the way. Sometimes we feel like what belongs to us financially is stolen or has the potential of begin taken away and in that time, like Ezra, it is time to declare a fast and ask God for protection in the journey ahead!

3. THE SAMUEL FAST

In 1 Samuel 7. Samuel told the people to fast and seek God so that the presence of God would return to the nation in the face of the Philistines preparing to attack Israel. They fasted for a national revival! 2 Chronicles 7:14 says "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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land". Our nation can return to God's presence if we learn to fast, pray , and seek Him!

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

4. THE ELIJAH FAST

When Elijah found out that Jezebel wanted to kill him, he became an emotional wreck and became depressed (1 Kings 19). When this happened, an angel came and told him to get in the presence of God, so Elijah took a journey of a 40 day/night fast as he returned to the mountain of God, where God delivered Elijah from feelings of suicide and fear. His despair was replaced with feelings of hope, courage, and direction. No matter what you suffer from emotional, the presence of God can overcome any kind of emotional bondage and open your heart and mind to the fruit of the spirit of God!

5. THE WIDOW'S FAST

In 1 Kings 17, there is a story about a woman with very little who helped Elijah. She made a choice to fast so that he could eat. In other words, she fasted to meet a need! Through fasting, you can meet needs financially by using the money you would have used to feed yourself to feed others!

6. THE PAUL FAST

In Acts 9, Saul was going the wrong way in life, hunting down followers of Christ and persecuting them and all of a sudden, God knocked him off his path on the road to Damascus. For three days, Saul didn't eat or drink. He fasted for the Lord's direction and that is when God sent Ananias to Saul with guidance. Sometimes we need to fast when we need guidance in major life decisions and direction!

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

7. THE DANIEL FAST

Daniel fasted for 21 days in Daniel 10. He and three others refused to eat the king's meat and in doing so they were healthier than all the others who ate the king's delicacies. Sometimes you simply fast for health and healing or use this model for other types of fast in dealing with spiritual warfare.

8. THE JOHN THE BAPTIST FAST

John the Baptist and his disciples fasted often. He was on a Nazarite diet; eating locusts, honey, and abstaining from alcohol. He led a life of constant fasting and therefore had a greater influence on the lives of people in his generation because of his dependence on God. Fasting creates a lifestyle of dependence on God!

9. THE ESTHER FAST

Esther was in danger. Her uncle discovered a plot to destroy her family by one of the king's advisors, Haman. Haman wanted to hang Esther's uncle. It was dangerous to approach the king without being called for, so Esther fasted for three days asking for protection against danger and God granted it! In fact, Haman was hanged instead! When you fast and pray, God will extend His protection to you and your family!

TYPES OF FASTS

COMPLETE FAST

This fast calls for drinking only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option. You can establish the number of days.

SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet; giving up at least one item of food and/or beverage. You can establish the number of days.

DANIEL FAST

This fast involves removing meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume only water and juice for fluids and only fruits and vegetables for food. You can establish the number of days.

PARTIAL FAST

This fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown. You can select a complete fast, a selective fast, or a Daniel fast. You can establish the number of days.

MEDIA FAST

This fast is common for those who do not have much experience fasting food, who have health issues that prevent them from fasting food, or who wish to refocus certain areas of their life that are out of balance. For instance, someone might select to abstain from using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast, and then choose to carefully bring that element back into their life in an orderly fashion at the conclusion of the fast.

7 STEPS FOR FASTING

STEP 1: SET YOUR OBJECTIVE

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; seeking first the Kingdom of God according to Matthew 6:33.

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 how long you will fast—one meal, one day, a week, several weeks, forty days (Beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts.) Decide what physical/social activities you will restrict and how much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word. When you make these commitments ahead of time, it will help you sustain your fast when you're tempted to abandon it.

7 STEPS FOR FASTING

STEP 3: PREPARE YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Ask God to help you make a list of your sins and 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. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit and 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. 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: PREPARE YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

Fasting requires precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier. Prepare your body by eating smaller meals, avoiding high-fat/sugary foods, and eat raw fruit and vegetables. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision. Limit your activity and rest as much as your schedule will permit. Prepare yourself for temporary physical/mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.

7 STEPS FOR FASTING

STEP 5: PUT YOURSELF ON A SCHEDULE

Set aside ample time to be alone with God and listen for His leading. Begin your day in praise and worship, read/meditate on God's Word, and invite the Holy Spirit to work in you. Avoid television or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus. Drinking fruit juice will decrease your hunger pains and give you some natural sugar energy. Avoid caffeinated drinks and chewing gum or mints, even if your breath is bad. They stimulate digestive action in your stomach.

STEP 6: END YOUR FAST GRADUALLY

Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. Begin to reintroduce your normal diet. Gradually return to regular eating with several small snacks during the first few days.

STEP 7: EXPECT RESULTS

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, meditate on His Word, and seek God's face; you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

TAKE COMMUNION

- 1.** Gather some sort of bread or crackers and juice or liquid of some sort and pass it out/prepare it to be shared, whether you are by yourself or with friends/family.
- 2.** Talk/Think about what the bread represents (Jesus body being beaten and bruised).
- 3.** Talk/Think about what the juice/liquid represents (Jesus blood sacrifice to make a new covenant of life with us).
- 4.** Remind yourself/everyone of what Jesus did on the cross (He sacrificed His perfect life to pay for a debt of sin for 3 days in the grave so that he could break the chains of death so that we may live eternally and righteous in the eyes of our Heavenly Father).
- 5.** Spend time in quiet meditation, silently considering and confessing your sins before God and worshipping Jesus – tell Him in prayer and worship how much you love Him and honor Him and give Him glory for all He has done, what He is doing, and thank Him for the promise that He is coming again to redeem us.

TAKE COMMUNION

- 6.** Take the bread in your hand.
- 7.** Read – “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”
1 Corinthians 11:23-24
- 8.** Eat the bread and thank Jesus for His Body broken for us.
- 9.** Take the juice in your hand.
- 10.** Read – “In the same way, He took the cup also after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’” 1 Corinthians 11:25
- 11.** Drink the juice and thank Jesus for His Blood shed so that our sins are covered and washed away.
- 12.** Give God praise and close in prayer.

