



21 DAYS

OF

PRAYER & FASTING

FASTING GUIDE

2024

“Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life.”

- Bill Bright

FASTING

While prayer is something that every Christian has some idea of, fasting always seems like a “next level” commitment. Something for missionaries or monks to do. Only elite Christians fast, right? Fasting also seems overwhelming. The assumption is that you have to go from three square meals a day to renouncing all food and living in a desert climate with only a precious few drops a day. After all, that’s the way Jesus did it, right? For these reasons and so many more, many Christians miss out on the incredible blessings of fasting as a powerful way to seek God.

In reality, fasting is a lot more approachable than you might have thought. There are several different kinds of fasts that you may choose to participate in. Here are a few examples you may consider during these 21 days:²

SOUL FAST

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

COMPLETE FAST

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option. If you are considering this kind of fast, please consult a medical professional **first to ensure that you are physically able to participate.**

SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for **fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.**

PARTIAL FAST

This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can **either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.**

¹ Bill Bright, “Your Personal Guide to Fasting and Prayer”

² From Church of the Highlands, <https://21days.churchofthehighlands.com/fasting>

But why go to all that trouble? Can’t I simply draw nearer to God in prayer and reading the Bible? Why would I choose to fast?



WHY FAST?

Fasting does what few other spiritual disciplines can in our lives.

1 IT DECLARES THAT WE WANT GOD MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

When we abstain from food, it is saying to God that we desire Him even more than our most basic needs. It is acknowledging that there is nothing else in our life that we want more than God. This is a powerful way to worship God and invite His presence in our lives.

2 IT UNCOVERS THINGS WE VALUE MORE THAN GOD.

We have a tendency to make other things more important than God. Fasting reveals our motives and causes us to re-prioritize our lives around God. In the classic book, *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster writes, "More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us... We cover up what is inside of us with food and other things." Fasting helps do what King David wrote, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24)

3 IT EXPRESSES OUR DESPERATION FOR GOD.

When we fast, we show the extent of our desperation for God. Jesus expressed this early in His ministry when we went into the wilderness and fasted forty days and forty nights. Though the Bible says He was hungry, He chose not to eat even when Satan tempted Him to turn stones into bread. Jesus was desperate to be with the Father and to live upon God's Word. He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*.

ONLINE RESOURCES

"Personal Guide to Fasting" by Bill Bright

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/personal-guide-to-fasting.html>

"7 Basic Steps to Successful Prayer and Fasting" by Bill Bright

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/7-steps-to-fasting.html>

It leads to BREAK THROUGH. When you want to...

Experience a spiritual break though in your relationship with God

Experience God's power in the midst of your circumstances

Experience clarity in a **difficult decision**

Fasting can be the tool that God uses for break through in your life. There are examples of this all through scripture: Moses, David, Ezra, Jesus, Paul and so many others used fasting for this kind of breakthrough in their lives.

Prayerfully consider which kind of fast you would like to pursue in these 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting. If you would like more resources on fasting, please visit our website at FBCA.com/21days.

Book Recommendations:

- A Hunger for God – John Piper
- The Power of Prayer and Fasting – Ronnie Floyd
- Prayer – Dave Earley

