



PRAYER & FASTING

But **when you fast**, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will **reward** you.

MATTHEW 6:17-18



WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is voluntarily going without food or anything regularly enjoyed for the sake of a **Spiritual purpose**.

WHY DO WE FAST?

Fasting is a sign of obedience.

In Matthew 6:16, Jesus says "when you fast" not "if" you fast, so we know that it is a spiritual discipline that Jesus expects His followers to partake in.



Fasting disconnects us from the world and reconnects us to God

*And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. **However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.**"*

Matthew 17:14-21 NKJV

Simply put, being perverse is being connected to the things of the world not the things of God. This then disconnects us from God. BUT through prayer and fasting we can become connected to God. The disciples could not take authority over the demon because they were connecting to the things of the world instead of to the things of God.

It is very important to note that fasting is not done to make you suffer. It's to disconnect you from worldly things, that ultimately take you away from God and his purposes and cause you to suffer.

RECONNECTING WITH GOD

Whenever you give in to the desires of this world, you lose your dominion (authority) over it. Adam & Eve were called to have dominion (to rule the earth and have authority) but as soon as they fed THEIR natural fleshy appetite, they took a bite of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and lost all dominion.

If you want to get your dominion back here on earth, you need to disconnect from the world from time to time. This will allow you to **maintain your authority**.

WHEN DO WE FAST?

As a church, we partake in **2 communal fasts** per year where we disconnect from the world via fasting and connect with God through prayer. We believe this will cause us to have a powerful church that does things beyond its ability as God moves on our behalf.

WHAT SHOULD WE FAST?

As human being we consist of body, soul and spirit. If you are dominated by your body, fasting food will draw you nearer to God. If you are soul dominated, spending time alone in God's presence or fasting social media will draw you nearer to God.

FASTING WEAKENS THE BODY AND SOUL, AND THEN PRAYER ALLOWS US TO STRENGTHEN OUR SPIRITS AS WE CONNECT WITH GOD AND DRAW NEARER TO HIM.

Whilst we **fast food**, as you feel that physical hunger, let it represent your hunger for God and His purposes being fulfilled in your life.

If you fast social media, as you miss that connection with other people let it become a craving to be in God's presence and let your connection with God be strengthened.

We fast not to get things that WE want, but rather to get to know what GOD wants to do in and through our lives.

*This is an exciting time of **breakthrough** and increased intimacy with God, so let's be expectant as we trust God to do awesome, supernatural things in our lives, our church and our community!*

7 BIBLICAL REASONS TO FAST

People fast for a number of reasons. Following are seven circumstances in the Bible in which believers sought God through this discipline.

TO PREPARE FOR MINISTRY

Jesus spent forty days and nights in the wilderness fasting and praying before He began God's work on this earth. He needed time alone to prepare for what His Father had called Him to do.

| **Matthew 4:1-17; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-14**

TO SEEK GOD'S WISDOM

Paul and Barnabas prayed and fasted for the elders of the churches before committing them to the Lord for His service.

| **Acts 14:23**

TO SHOW GRIEF

Nehemiah mourned, fasted, and prayed when he learned Jerusalem's walls had been broken down, leaving the Israelites vulnerable and disgraced.

| **Nehemiah 1:1-4**

TO SEEK DELIVERANCE OR PROTECTION

Ezra declared a corporate fast and prayed for a safe journey for the Israelites as they made the nine-hundred-mile trek to Jerusalem from Babylon.

| *Ezra 8:21-23*

TO REPENT

After Jonah pronounced judgment against the city of Nineveh, the king covered himself with sackcloth and sat in the dust. He then ordered the people to fast and pray. *Jonah 3:10* says, *"When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He relented and did not bring on them the destruction He had threatened."*

TO GAIN VICTORY

After losing forty thousand men in battle in two days, the Israelites cried out to God for help. *Judges 20:26* says all the people went up to Bethel and "sat weeping before the Lord." They also "fasted that day until evening." The next day the Lord gave them victory over the Benjamites.

TO WORSHIP GOD

Luke 2 tells the story of an eighty-four-year-old prophetess named Anna. Verse 37 says, "She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying." Anna was devoted to God, and fasting was one expression of her love for Him.