



NEW BEGINNINGS FELLOWSHIP CHURCH SPIRITUAL FASTING INFORMATION

Throughout Scripture, fasting refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. Spiritual fasting is simply a tool to help us change our hearts before God. On February 17, 2010 we will begin another 40 day journey of fasting and praying. We will come together corporately and participate in a partial fast, which includes fruits, vegetables, beans, rice and nuts.

In our society today, gluttony has become a way of life for a fallen man and it affects every area of our life and opens us up to all types of temptation. We eat too much and fasting is the only way to end this unruly obsession with food. Fasting, in a nut shell, puts food in its proper perspective. We should eat in order to live, not live to eat. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Keep it clean and free from addiction. As Richard Foster states, "Our human cravings and desires are like a river that tends to over flow its bank." In every child of God are two natures, that of the flesh and that of the spirit. Peter calls them "fleshly lusts which war against the soul". Paul said, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (the spirit), but I see another law in my members (the flesh) warring against the law of the mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Romans 7:22-23.

I heard so many people say, "I failed, I could not make it through the 10th day". I heard a great preacher say, "Success is not in the finishing, but the starting and not giving up". And starting after failure takes more courage than those who seem able to slide into home base without a care or worry. I take my hat off to those who fast even one day of their 40-day goal. You have taken a bold step. If you fail, take no time for self-indulgent guilt. Do not allow self-doubt to hold you down. Welcome to the human race; seek God's grace and start again. God never grows tired of new beginnings.

During the 40 day fast you will experience some ups and downs. Crazy stuff happens in the mind when fasting. But greater things happen in the spirit.

The Downs:

It's detox time. Your body cannibalizes on sick cells and dirty fat, releasing toxins into the blood. You will experience a cleansing crisis. That's the bad news. The good news is the body is finally able to rid itself of years of accumulated toxins. This is an essential but painful stage to healing. The Downs are hard to endure. You may feel irritated, short-tempered or mildly depressed. You're in good company. Join the crowd. The Downs usually last from one to three days, and may hit day 2 or day 28 of a fast. Exercising authority over emotions during detox will develop maturity. Remember that a tug-of-war is going on in the soul between the flesh that is being inflicted, and the spirit that is being strengthened.

The Ups:

Dr. Ehret, an avid faster describes it thus. "An indescribable feeling that gave me great joy and happiness just to be alive. Greater power, energy and endurance . . . All my faculties were improved, beyond the healthiest part of my youth." His glorious presence inside and out, washes, cleanses, renews, strengthens. You will experience cleaner and clearer brain functions, every cell quivering with health. During The Ups, you will feel as if there is an endless supply of physical energy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need to fast? Jesus begins the passage in Matthew 6:16-18 by saying "when you fast". He is expecting His children to fast and He is telling us that fasting is important. He did not say; if you fast. Why should we fast? Because God loves us and He called us to! Jesus Christ after being baptized in the Jordan River withdrew into the wilderness where He spent 40 nights in prayer and fasting in preparation for His ministry. Jesus taught His disciples to fast. Jesus is our ultimate role model. God's desire is for us to draw near to Him. He paves the way for our sanctification but it is up to you and me to make the journey. When we corporately fast, we can collectively become likeminded and focused, entrenched in His word. Togetherness in prayer equals powerful spiritual synergy. (Matt. 18:19-20).

Is this fast Biblical, I can't find it in the Bible? Why this set of foods? A partial fast is eliminating or abstaining from certain foods. Our visionary, Pastor Dr. James Jackson, has chosen foods that allow our bodies to go through a natural cleanse, foods that are easily digested and eliminated. We have spent many years eating foods with empty calories and foods that require some times up to 72 hours to be eliminated. Examples of partial fasts are included in I Kings 17; Elijah ate cakes made with meal and oil. John the Baptist ate only locust and honey (Matt. 3:4). And let's not forget Daniel. (Daniel 10:3).

Should I continue my medications? It is always wise to consult your medical doctor regarding the effects of fasting with your medication. Never stop any medicine without your physicians notice.

Are there any restrictions that restrict fasting? Yes! Consult your physician before beginning a fast. Certain groups of people should not fast which includes small children, women who are nursing or pregnant. These groups of people can choose to fast from other items, for example, television, fast food, candy, shopping, ect.

How much weight will I lose? Though fasting is spiritual you will experience some physical benefits. Weight loss for some will be as high as 1-2# per day, much of it will be water. Some will not lose any weight because they will continue to overeat even with the fast foods. Portion control is very important. Your weight will level off and start decreasing at a slower rate when your body realizes that it can survive on small portions. Usually between day 15- 20 you should see a leveling off.

Will I gain my weight back after the fast? Most people, even though this is a spiritual focus, are excited to see that they have loss some weight during the fast. But the answer is up to you. If you re-introduce the same foods to your body and continue with a lazy lifestyle, then the answer is yes the weight will return. When you lose weight you not only lose fat but you have changed your body from the inside out. You have gained authority over food. Fasting is just the beginning of a new you. There has to be a continual change in your lifestyle in order to win the fight.

Can I exercise while fasting? Exercise oxygenates the blood. The pumping action of the muscles flushes the lymph and cells of metabolic waste. If you experience weakness, limit yourself to stretching or floor exercise, light walking etc.

Will fasting cause my metabolism to slow down? Basal Metabolic Rate will slow initially with any reduction or decrease in calorie. The fast will cause a cleansing which in turn will bring health increasing the metabolic efficiency. This means, you will need less food and feel more energetic. Digestion is improved with a clean colon. In order to increase your resting metabolism you need to move- Exercise.

Will I become protein deficit? Your body has enough protein stores to sustain you through 40 days of fasting. Legumes provide 6-8.9 grams of protein per ½ cup. Soybeans provide 14.3 grams of protein per ½ cup. Miso provides 16.3 grams protein per ½ cup. Tempeh provides 15.7 grams of protein per ½ cup, Nuts and seed provide 5.7-6.5 grams of protein and peanut butter provides 7.9 grams of protein per 2 tbsp. You should not have any problems if you incorporate your protein foods correctly throughout the day.

Can I eat out while fasting? Yes. Choose restaurants that offer a variety of foods. Use judgment. Do not place so much emphasis on food that you forget that the ultimate goal of fasting is to seek a greater level in God.

Why can't we have rice pasta, soymilk or soy burgers? Pastor has given us a list of foods in which to enjoy. Anything outside that is between you and God. But ask yourself; what is the point of the fast foods, if we substitute one food for another.

Remember this is not a diet, stay focused on God and His word, pray and watch God make II Chronicles 7:14 speak to us.

Humbly Submitted
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