

Fasting 2022

Fasting is abstaining from anything that hinders prayer.
—Andrew Bonar

Elmer Towns- “One of the greatest spiritual benefits of fasting is becoming more *attentive* to God. Fasting helps us become more aware of our own inadequacies and His adequacy. More aware of our own contingencies and His self-sufficiency. *Fasting helps us to listen to what He wants us to be and do.*”

Fasting is not a religion act but rather it is a spiritual discipline that even **Jesus practiced**.
Prayer and fasting is an act of worship.

Elmer Towns goes on to say....”The purpose of all worship, including fasting, is to change the worshiper in ways that have social and interpersonal impact. We worship not to gratify ourselves, but also to become *empowered to change the world!*”

As we approach 2022, we are asking our church family to join us for a much needed season of **corporate prayer and fasting January 3 through January 23**. The church will be open daily for prayer from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Monday-Thursday. Please, feel free to come in the sanctuary at any time during those hours.

Fasting is an essential principle that God intended for every believer to practice. It is not a punishment; it is a privilege! Jesus said “**when you fast**” not “**if you fast**” (Matt. 6:16). The goal of fasting is to POSITION your heart and mind to HEAR from God. I have heard it said that **FASTING** disconnects us from the world and **PRAYER** connects us to God (Matt. 17:21).

I have been pondering this powerful excerpt from Pastor Devin Wallace on fasting:

“Fasting is not about moving the hand of God, it is about God moving us. It is about alignment. Fasting is about aligning our heart with his will.

It is about purging our hearts of confusion, conflicting ideas, worldly thoughts and ideas, and our heart becoming one with the Lord. It is taking consecrated time to seek the Lord and making sure that our heart is not being led by our flesh but by the Spirit.

Fasting and prayer is also an alignment of spiritual hearing and spiritual vision. Fasting is about getting on the frequency of heaven. Fasting is making an intentional effort to disengage from the distractions of the flesh. Fasting takes away the comfort of the flesh and reminds our flesh it is not in control. It is voluntarily denying the flesh to take away the steering wheel that so many of us are controlled by.”

A spiritual fast is ALWAYS accompanied by increased *prayer, meditation, reading/study of the Word of God and worship*.

Examples of Fasting and Prayer and the Purpose God Had in It

- Ezra** the priest fasted for God's protection while carrying valuable things for God's temple. We too can fast for God's protection. (Ezra 8:21-23)
 - Daniel** the prophet fasted for the fulfilment of God's promises, and received mighty revelations from God. (Daniel 10:3)
 - Jesus, Himself fasted while on this earth, as did his followers and fasting is still a powerful key to Kingdom living.**
- Jesus** fasted and spoke the Word of God to overcome Satan. (See Matthew 4:1-10; Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus fasted to begin his public ministry, and have the power of God and the anointing. (Luke 4:14)

• **Elijah** needed to fast 40 days before he heard God's voice again. (1 Kings 19:8)

• **Moses** fasted to receive the Ten Commandments and the Law of God, and to see God's glory and goodness.

• **The elders**, prophets and teachers in Antioch fasted and ministered to God, which resulted in the launching of Paul and Barnabas' apostolic ministry to the Gentiles (Acts 13:2,3). Likewise we should fast and pray before getting involved in full time ministry and mission work.

Relation to Prayer and Reading of the Word:

1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18, Nehemiah 1:4, Daniel 9:3, 20, Joel 2:12, Luke 2:37, Acts 10:30, Acts 13:2

Corporate Fasting:

1 Samuel 7:5-6, Ezra 8:21-23, Nehemiah 9:1-3, Joel 2:15-16, Jonah 3:5-10, Acts 27:33-37

God made it clear through the prophet Joel that the last days outpouring of the Spirit will be in proportion to our fasting and crying out to God in humility, hunger and repentance. (Joel 1:5; Joel 2:12)

To help you in your fast we are including some tips for food, reading and rest. Please keep your eyes on the purpose and the prize of the fast. Our ultimate goal is to become more Christ centered in our everyday life and to begin the new year with prayer, Bible reading and spiritual consecration that will set the focus for the coming year. We believe God is setting us forth into a new season and we must move forward with intention.

Suggested Daily Prayer Times:

Early morning (between 5:00-9:00 a.m.) Take at least 30 min.

During your lunch hour (11:00-2:00 p.m.) Take at least 30 min.

During the evening – Take at least 30 min.

What to Read:

* **Bible** (yearly plans at welcome center or go online for reading guides www.oneyearbible.com)

* **The Power of Prayer and Fasting** by Ronnie Floyd

* **The Pursuit of God** by A.W. Tozer

* **The Fasting Edge** by Jentezen Franklin (available for download)

* <http://www.jentezenfranklin.org/fasting/> (website for encouragement in your fast)

* **Fasting & Prayer** by Sharon & Billy Joe Daugherty (available for download)

* Anything on Prayer by Andrew Murray

(Many good books on prayer, worship, healing and hope)

Types of Fast:

There are several types of fasting. The one you choose is between you and God. He will honor your best sacrifice. –Jentezen Franklin

Full Fast - Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

The Daniel Fast - Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread. Drink water and juice. Eat fruits and vegetables.

3-Day Fast - This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Partial Fast - A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown.

Social Media/TV/Secular Radio/Computer Games -It is hard to realize how time consuming these particular activities are until we try to lay them aside. Give prayerful consideration to taking some time away for prayer and fasting to hear what God is speaking for your life in 2022.

Suggestions for the corporate fast:

We encourage you to fast something and make sure to spend time **daily** in prayer and reading the Word.

Week 1 –Daniel Fast (Some may want to continue this fast for the full 21 days. It is a transforming fast in many ways.)

Week 2 –Partial Fast (Sun up to Sun down or eat one meal a day)

Week 3 –Social Media/and a meal a day (for example social media: Facebook/TV/secular music/computer games)

Again, this is a suggestion. Many times God will lay something specific on your heart such as caffeine, sweets, breads. **Our prayer is that you will participate and make this time a priority to gaze at God and see what He is speaking over our church corporately and over us individually.**

The Modified Daniel Fast

Daniel 1:5-17

Foods to INCLUDE in your Daniel Fast:

All Fruits: Fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned.

All Vegetables: Fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned.

All whole grains: including but not limited to whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds: including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame and peanut butter.

All legumes: canned or dried. Pinto, French, black-eyed, kidney, black, cannellini and white beans.

All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut and sesame.

Beverages: Water, 100% vegetable and fruit juices.

Other: tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs and spices.

(Things to **avoid** are sodas, caffeine, processed sugars, dairy products and meats)

Remember to drink lots of water, get plenty of rest, keep a prayer journal, Pray in the Spirit often and meditate on the Word of God. Also limit television, computer and internet to give yourself to prayer.

**** Fast as you can, not as you can't. Not everyone is capable of omitting all foods, even for a few hours. In fact fasting is not recommended for pregnant woman, nursing mothers, young**

children or the elderly. For a balanced approach, try restricting certain foods and eat more simply—possibly limiting your meals to two instead of three per day. *We urge those of you who are diabetic, or who have special diets to use wisdom.*

****If this is your first time to fast, it may be difficult to participate in the full fast but we suggest that you take some time during these days to either abstain from certain foods or meals.**

Remember that it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8). May God greatly bless you as you fast!

Blessings, Pastors Ivan and Cindy