

fasting guide

fasting

Christian fasting, put simply, is the choice to refrain from food for a specific period of time in order to grow in awareness and hunger for God. We choose to fast as a way to fight against the disordered desires of our flesh, the deception of the Evil One, and temptations that are normalized in a sinful world. Fasting is not, however, a way to manipulate God towards doing whatever we want Him to do in our lives. As Dallas Willard writes, “it is not done to impress God or merit favor...rather, it is done that we may consciously experience the direct sustenance of God to our body and whole person.”

Whether you are brand new to the spiritual discipline of fasting or you have practiced fasting for years, this simple guide can help you get started. The following guide is intended for a 24 hour fast or less.

before you fast

1. Pick a day - What day this week will you fast?
2. Be realistic- If you have never fasted before, it is probably not wise to start with a 3 day fast. Instead, try fasting from one meal on a particular day. Then let that increase to two meals the next time you practice, and then up to 24 hours. If you want to fast for any length beyond 24 hours, here is a helpful [resource](#) for you to prepare your body the right way.

during your fast

1. Start your fast by praying through Psalm 139:23-24- Ask God to reveal Himself to you as you fast.
2. Respond to your hunger with prayer- It's often helpful to have a simple phrase such as, “Lord, fill me with your presence,” or “Lord, you alone can satisfy” to combat the hunger you will feel.
3. Be ready for temptation and distraction- Satan hates any movement we make towards becoming more like Jesus, so to prevent you from growing in your faith, he will do what he can to replace food with other distractions and fill your mind with doubt or guilt. When that happens, proclaim the victory of Jesus over your life, “Jesus, you have rescued me and you are the strength I need in everything.”

pay attention

1. What is God revealing in you?- As you fast, pay attention to what God reveals inside you. This could be conviction around specific things you are pursuing for fulfillment other than God, or it could be specific ways He is being faithful in your life right now. As these come to mind, resist the urge to analyze it and instead, write them down.
2. What is God doing around you?- Another benefit to fasting is that it will take the focus off yourself and you will begin to see what God is doing around you in others and in your community. This could be something you see Him doing in your family, friendships, co-workers, or your city. As these come to mind, write them down and encourage others with what God reveals to you.