

What is fasting?

Fasting, in its strictest sense, is not eating for a period of time. Fasting is voluntary, purposeful, and Biblical. Jesus spoke about the practice as a regular part of our faith (“And when you fast,” Matthew 6:16-18).

Is fasting healthy?

Fasting is not harmful, and medical evidence suggests the practice may even be helpful for our bodies. We do need to exercise wisdom. Underlying health issues may prevent us from doing a fast from food. Certain medical conditions may require that you take medication with food.

What is the purpose of fasting?

The practice of fasting reminds us of our need for God. We are created by God and are ultimately wholly dependent upon him. Fasting can serve as a tune-up that sharpens our senses to see what is truly important.

So what do I do all day?

Plan and be prepared. You can use the time when you would typically eat, sit down with a Bible, a notebook with suggested prayer topics, and pray. Listen to worship music. Be still.

What matters need prayer?

The list is endless, ranging from government leaders to family members, from issues facing our neighborhood to our own private concerns.

What do I say?

Prayer is a win-win proposition. For the follower of Jesus Christ, when our words fail us, we are promised that the Holy Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26-27).

Is fasting only about food?

No, but it is undoubtedly one of our very basic needs. Fasting helps us soften our hearts and the focus of our affections. If I find I am too captivated by social media or television, I may intentionally set those aside to realign my heart.

What are some resources on fasting?

Stephen Um, The Benefits and Dangers of Fasting.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/video/stephen-um-benefits-dangers-fasting/>

David Mathis, Fasting for Beginners.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fasting-for-beginners>

Other resources -

<https://www.desiringgod.org/topics/fasting/all>