

# FASTING GUIDE

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Fasting is something we do out of our love for God and our desire to draw closer to Him. The driving idea is that we give up something we love for something (or someone) we love more. Fasting brings a new level of intensity to our prayers. We need this practice. We all need to practice saying “NO” to our bodies so that we may say “YES” to something of greater importance. Something of greater significance. By saying no to our bodies we open ourselves up to pay special attention to the leadings of Jesus. What to expect when you fast: hunger, clarity and peace.

Here is a helpful way to remember what to do when you FAST.

## F - FOCUS

It is important to have a specific focus during your time of fasting. What major decision do you need the Lord’s guidance on? What are you facing that you desperately need Jesus to enter into? Who are you hoping will encounter Jesus in a real, life-changing way?

Esther gives us an example of instituting a time of prayer and fasting because the people of God were in danger and a potential genocide was on the horizon.

*Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”*

**ESTHER 4:15-16 ESV**

## A - ABSTAIN

When we fast, we give up something we enjoy or something we are dependent on for the sake of growing in our dependence on God. This is what Daniel did in Daniel 10:1-3, when he fasted from “choice food... meat... and wine” desperately seeking understanding concerning a vision he had. There are a few different types of fasting.

### SOUL FAST

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

### SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

### PARTIAL FAST

This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00am to 3:00pm, or from sun-up to sun-down.

### COMPLETE FAST

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

## S - SMILE

Don't mope around and look pitiful. Pick your head up and smile ! Fasting can become source of pride if you are not careful. However, it is designed to be one of those special exclusive secrets that stays between you and Jesus.

*“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”*

**MATTHEW 6:16-18 ESV**

## T - TRUST

This is going to be hard, but it is worth it. When you feel like it's too much to keep going it is important to remember that God is at work. Trust Him.

*The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.*

**MARK 1:12-13 ESV**

During a complete fast, your physical body will be looking for sustenance. This serves as a tangible reminder that you can trust God to provide in all things - whether body or spirit.



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