

## Fasting and Prayer

**WHAT:** Spiritual fasting is a form of self-denial and an exercise in discipline and self-control. NOT twisting God's arm! It is a spiritual principle revealed in Scripture. Fasting somehow increases spiritual awareness and a release of God's presence and power. It shouldn't be considered "radical" but rather Christianity 101. It's not just about becoming hungry... It's about being more satisfied in God.

**WHO:** All Christians who are physically able to do so.

**HOW:** It should be connected to prayer, reading the Word, and seeking God.

**Types of fasting:** Total fast, partial fast, special fasts, and any type which includes self-denial and potentially frees up time for spending with God. \*\*Food, media, technology, social networks, relationship, hobby... (not personal hygiene ☺)

### Important points:

- Time and focus; Fasting frees up time you would otherwise use for something else and when that time is spent with God it sharpens your spiritual focus and cultivates a hunger for God!
  - **Matthew 5:6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- Fasting can release the power of God for protection!
  - **Ezra 8:21-23** There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, "The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him." So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.
  - Also **Esther**- awesome piece of literature! Fasted... invited others to join her... for protection and favor.
- Fasting can help us discern the "mind of the Lord" when making important decisions! (Wisdom and guidance)
  - **Acts 13:2-3** While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.
  - **Acts 14:23** Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. NIV
- Fasting can release an empowering from the Lord to help you in your battles! It can bring breakthrough in difficult and challenging situations! (Empowering)
  - (Boy with demonic spirit- disciples tried but could not expel the spirit) **Mark 9:28-29** And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." NKJV
  - **2 Chron 20:2-3** Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar" (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.
  - \*\*Healing, sinful habit, marriage or relationship problems, financial crisis, emotionally or spiritually paralyzed...
  - If not you, a loved one, family member, our community (drugs, suicide)...

## **Daniel Fast** *Corporate Plan*

**Weekend of 12/28- 12/29-** Brief meeting after each service to summarize principles of fasting and specifically the “Daniel Fast.”

**Planned fasting dates will be January 5<sup>th</sup> to January 25<sup>th</sup> –**

**Wednesday prayer times:** Open sanctuary on 1/8, 1/15, and 1/22 from noon until 1 PM for prayer times. Also begin Life Group on prayer on 1/8 at 6:30 PM- *Battle Plan for Prayer*

### **WHAT IS THE DANIEL FAST?**

The Daniel Fast is a Biblically based 21 day **partial fast** based on two instances of Daniel’s fasting experiences. *“Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.”* (Daniel 1:12)

*“In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”* (Daniel 10:1-2)

### **Preparing for the Daniel Fast**

In addition to spending time in prayer to decide on the focus of your fast you should take the time to **prepare your body as well**. Start easing off things that you feel you cannot live without: ease off caffeine, sugar, and processed foods. Try to do it before the first day of the fast, otherwise you might experience mild-to-strong detox symptoms: headaches, cramping, nausea, etc

### **YES FOODS**

- **Fruits & Vegetables:** fresh, frozen, dried, canned
- **Whole Grains:** barley, brown rice, bulgur wheat, millet, popcorn, oats, whole wheat flour
- **Pseudograins** (seeds that are used the same way as grains): amaranth, buckwheat, quinoa, wild rice
- **Legumes:** beans, lentils, peas, peanuts
- **Nuts & Seeds:** raw, sprouted, dry-roasted
- **Unrefined Oils:** avocado, coconut, flax seed, olive, red palm, sesame seed, walnut
- **Beverages:** water, fresh-pressed juice, nut milk
- **Seasonings:** herbs, spices, soy sauce, tamari, liquid aminos, vinegar
- **Other:** nutritional yeast

### **NO FOODS**

- **All Animal Products:** dairy, eggs, fish, meat, poultry
- **Sweeteners:** natural and artificial
- **Leavened Breads:** anything with baking powder, baking soda or yeast
- **Refined Grains:** white flour, white rice
- **Processed Foods:** those containing artificial flavors, chemical additives or preservatives
- **Refined Oils:** canola, corn, soybean, vegetable
- **Beverages:** alcohol, coffee, tea
- **Other:** deep-fried foods, gum, mints