



# **2024 Corporate Consecration**

**January 14 – February 3, 2024**

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## Introduction to Fasting

Fasting is abstaining from something (usually food), or not eating food over a period of time. Biblical fasting is a form of self-denial for the sake of pursuing our relationship. It is a deliberate abstinence from something for a spiritual purpose. When we fast, we choose to break with our routine in order to draw closer to God. As such, fasting demands a deep level of commitment and sacrifice. Fasting isn't a spiritual requirement; it doesn't make us better than anyone else, nor more spiritual. Fasting is a choice to seek the Lord's face and His presence in a deeper way for a short season.

When we fast, we are following Jesus' example (Matt. 4:2). As we fast, we humble ourselves before the Lord, being very prayerful and meditating in the Word. This is a time to really devote ourselves to constant, consistent praying (1 Thess. 4:17). Ultimately, fasting is waiting on God. Fasting allows us to embrace emptiness and our need for God. Fasting is a way to press in, to break away from the "norm," quiet ourselves before God, and use our time to wait upon the Lord with greater intensity (Gal. 5:24).

Fasting isn't just about what we put in our stomachs, but what we feed our souls and spirits as well. Two powers are at work when we fast: our human will, and the supernatural power of God. Fasting grinds on the flesh (Rom. 8:13) because the flesh fights against the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:17). Realize that our flesh will fight back: grumpiness, headaches, stomach growling, thoughts drifting to food, getting cold, being tired from the toxins being released from your body. It takes work to get our flesh under submission! As the flesh weakens, we become more and more sensitive to the Spirit and the things of God.

Additionally, fasting has several benefits. It helps to root and ground us in faith to the promises of God (Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7). It can sharpen and hone our spiritual sensitivity to the things of God. Fasting is beneficial for spiritual cleansing as well, as times of prayer and fasting can sever the spiritual bonds of addictions. Fasting also has medical and physical benefits that the medical community has recognized for centuries: fasting allows the digestive system to rest and allows the body to cleanse itself from toxins.

Fasting brings about miraculous results (Gal. 6:8)! As we fast, we empty ourselves and weaken our flesh, that the power of God may be available to us in greater amounts. It is through fasting that God tends to reveal and release His supernatural power: God-inspired creativity (new ideas, God-given plans), His wisdom made available in certain situations, spiritual resources to endure and overcome, and even birth revival and unique outpourings of the Spirit's power!

Fasting and prayer brings us closer to God and also yields some long-term rewards. During this fast, we are expecting God to speak through His written Word, dreams, visions, Spirit-directed impressions, and God-inspired ideas. Some of the things that God is going to speak are going to be crucial and critical to our walk with the Lord, or

instructions for closing the gaps in our lives this year, and even personal healing and deliverance.

An effective time of spiritual fasting and prayer requires determining in advance:

- Why am I fasting?

Determine the reason for your fast, what is your focus/reason for seeking the Lord?

Some Examples:

- *Freedom from addictions or besetting sins*
- *Provision/stewardship wisdom with financial troubles*
- *Victory over negative emotional feelings & habits*
- *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions*
- *Physical healing*
- *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture*
- *Protection and victory in spiritual warfare*

As the Lord confirms in your heart and mind what this fast is for, write it down!

- How long should I fast?
- Decide that you WILL succeed!

## How we will do this

This fast will be a 21-day fast with a new element introduced each week, beginning at midnight on January 14<sup>th</sup>, and ending at midnight on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### 1. **Financial Fast:** January 14 – February 3

For 21 Days, we will refrain from any non-emergency or non-essential spending. An emergency (or essential item) is defined as food, hygiene, school supplies, cleaning supplies, medicine/medical supplies only. This includes:

- No going to the mall, retail establishments, online or window shopping.
- No restaurant, carry out or delivery meals including fast food and coffee.
- No movies or purchasing gifts or gift cards.
- No credit card or debit card use. Use cash only.

### 2. **Media Fast:** January 21 – February 3

Beginning with the second week of the fast, in addition to abstaining from extraneous spending, we will also abstain from media that is not work related or

essential. This means that we'll cut out radio, television, podcasts, web-surfing, superfluous texting, movies and social media for a full 14 days of this fast.

### 3. **12-Hour Food Fast:** January 28 – February 3

In the final week of this fast, in addition to abstaining from spending and media, we will also only consume liquids from 6am-6pm. We can eat solid foods outside of those hours, but during those 12 hours, we will only consume liquids (primarily water, if you can help it).

During these 21 days, and whenever our bodies let us know they desire food, or whenever we seek distraction through media, we are committing ourselves to prayer, worship, and study of the Word. A growling stomach is nothing more than a call to prayer!

Finally, use this fasting guide for prayer topics, daily Scripture and devotionals to study, food lists, resources, and tips.

## **Tips for Fasting**

- Pray as often as you can throughout the day or seek to increase the frequency of daily prayer time. Fasting does not work if you do not pray!
- Fast with a cause; never fast casually (hit-or-miss attitude). Some causes include:
  - *Spiritual warfare, victory over demonic oppression (Mark 9:29)*
  - *Direction and protection (Ezra 8:21-23)*
  - *Social justice and righteousness (Isa. 58)*
  - *Guidance, protection, to hear God's voice (2 Chron. 20:3)*
  - *Revelation/illumination (Acts 10:30)*
  - *Courage, obedience, and wisdom (Esther 4:16)*
  - *Confirmation of ministry direction (Acts 13:2-3)*
  - *Physical healing (Psalm 35:13; 2 Sam 12:16)*
  - *Emotional healing, deliverance from negative emotions/habits (Ps. 139:23-24)*
  - *Deliverance from addictive behaviors and cycles (Heb. 12:1)*
  - *Financial breakthrough or provision (Deut. 28:1-2)*
  - *Revival, salvation for the lost (1 Sam 7:13; 2 Chron. 7:14; Joel 2:12-17)*
  - *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture (Neh 1:4-2:8)*
  - *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions (Est 4:16; Acts 9:9)*
- Unless it's a prayer partner, a spouse, or somebody who is supporting you during your fast, do not share that you are fasting with others. By talking about our fast to others, we risk losing any spiritual benefits that come from fasting (Matt. 6:16-18, NLT).

Keep your fast to yourself, rather than seeking to use it as a way to impress others or get compassion for your struggle.

- If you don't already have an established daily quiet time with the Lord, then this is an excellent opportunity to do so. Starting your day with God is a habit that will support your faith and growing intimacy with the Lord.
- Integrate listening to praise and worship music before your Bible study time, after it, or as a part of your prayer time.
- Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face. Avoiding distractions of media will allow you to focus on your relationship with God.
- Reserve time in your daily schedule for Bible study.
- Do not push to extremes physically or spiritually.

## **How to Prepare for the Fast**

### HOW TO PREPARE PHYSICALLY

For the final week of the fast, make your meals somewhat lighter for a few days leading up to your fast.

Make some decisions about your time/daily schedule before starting the fast and figure out how to alter your routine in order to prioritize time for prayer and study of the Word. This is going to have to involve some sacrifices in order to prioritize time for God!

### HOW TO PREPARE SPIRITUALLY

Prepare spiritually by confessing your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness of those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Start with a clear personal goal in addition to our corporate goals. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and clarity to your purpose for your fast.

Make up in your mind that you WILL succeed, you WILL hear from the Lord, that you WILL experience breakthrough, revelation, and depth in your relationship with the Lord Jesus!

## **What to Expect during a Fast:**

### **PHYSICALLY**

When you fast, your body detoxifies, or eliminates toxins, from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains.

Limit your activity and exercise moderately.

Expect your sleep patterns to be thrown off, so take time to rest, or even nap when/if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself if your productivity comes only in spurts!

### **SPIRITUALLY**

Expect to experience resistance from your own body, as well as the enemy, but expect to get to know the Lord better, and for His power to increase in your life.

Be ready for the Lord to speak to you! Purchase a little journal or notebook, or use your notes app on your phone to write down what the Spirit of God has spoken to you. Put the journal or notebook close to your bed to record the things He speaks to you during the night or during your prayer times. Take it with you to work or school so that you can capture whatever He wants to communicate to you during this time of consecration!

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **SPECIAL NOTE**

If you have health issues, please be sure to contact your health professional for advice before committing to any fast.

### **PREGNANT WOMEN AND PEOPLE ON MEDICATIONS**

Pregnant women, persons on medication, with ulcers, and those under a physician's care for diagnosed medical conditions, should consult their necessary doctor for recommended foods and drinks. You can still participate in the fast by eating and drinking very lightly or choosing something else to fast from.

### **PARENTS**

Parents, please make sure you feed your children. Change their diet and eating habits to something light and nutritious. Include them in your family prayer and Bible reading

time. Explain to them why we are fasting. If they are old enough, allow them to express what they also would like God to do regarding their own prayer requests on this fast.

## **BREAKING THE FAST**

When the fast is over, you may want to consider beginning with very light foods, like vegetables. Start by drinking some fluids to relax your intestines before having eating. Drink fluids such as light juices, warm water or warm soup. Overdoing and over-indulging will do more harm than you think.