

DEEPER SPIRITUALITY: BEST PRACTICES

Fasting

Fasting is an act of humility and devotion before God. It is sacrificing something that is a valuable part of your physical existence for the benefit of your spiritual journey. On the reverse are some best practices that may help:



Fasting

Know why you are fasting.

- Go to the Lord for guidance. Observe in Scripture where fasting is practiced:
- to humble oneself before God (*Ezra 8:21, Psalm 51:17*)
- to intensify prayer regarding guidance (*Nehemiah 1:4*), protection (*2 Chronicles 20:3*), healing (*Psalm 35:13*), deliverance (*Matthew 17:9-21*), and success in the Lord's work (*Esther 4:16*)
- during special assignments from the Lord (*Exodus 34:28*), or while preparing for ministry (*Acts 13:2-3, 14:23*)

Prepare yourself spiritually.

- Before you begin your fast you are encouraged to have a time of confession and repentance. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Seek God's guidance on what type of fast.

- Regular Fast (water only)
- Partial Fast (water and juice only)
- Daniel Fast (vegetables and liquids only, abstaining from rich foods).
- It is recommended that you do not chew gum or drink caffeine during your fast. You may want to eat smaller, healthy meals prior to and after your fast. Also, breaking your fast with juice and raw vegetables may make your experience easier.

Ask medical questions.

- Please consult your physician before conducting a fast from food. A few examples of concern may be expectant or nursing mothers, diabetics, chronic illnesses, and those on certain medications. Almost everyone will be able to participate on at least one level.

Realize there may be some side effects.

- Some common side effects include headaches, bad breath, less energy, irritability, and hunger pains. Use the hunger pains as a reminder of your hunger and dependence upon God (*Matthew 5:6*).

Schedule when you will fast.

- When will you start your fast and when will it stop? If you conduct a twenty four-hour fast, then you are committing to miss 3 meals. For example, you would give up dinner one night, along with breakfast and lunch the next day.

Glorify God through prayer as you fast.

- Use this time to deliberately reflect on your relationship with God. Pray during the meals that you are missing. If possible, set aside additional time to read the scriptures and pray or dedicate an entire day to a prayer retreat. Journal your thoughts and experiences. How is God speaking to you? How is God sustaining you?

Conclude your Fast with a Grateful Heart

- Lift a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His presence and His provision.

