

WHAT DOES GOD WANT TO ACCOMPLISH WHILE I AM FASTING?

God wants to change you (Isaiah 58:6-14). Listen to God's voice for direction for your life. Hear what is on His heart. Take extra time to repent of sin and ask God for supernatural insight and strength.

WHY FAST?

Fasting takes your attention off your everyday earthly needs and helps you focus your attention on more eternal, spiritual needs. At times God may ask you to pray and fast for a specific situation or individual. Or you may want to fast to grow closer in your personal relationship with Christ. Fasting can help you build a lifestyle of discipline.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING:

Besides Jesus, Daniel fasted, as did Moses, Elijah, Ezra, Esther, Paul and the Early Church. (Luke 4:1-14; Dan. 9:3-19; Deut. 9:7-29; 1 Kings 19:8; Ezra 8:21-23; Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9, 13:1-3, 14:23)

WHAT DO I DO DURING MY FAST?

Fasting is almost always partnered with prayer (e.g., Ezra 8:21,23; Luke 2:36-37). During times when you would normally eat you may want or need to couple fasting and prayer with one or more of the following items:

- Worship (Nehemiah 9:1-3; Acts 13:1-3)
- Petition (Daniel 9:3,17)
- Reading and meditating the Word of God (Nehemiah 9:1-3 Jeremiah 36:6)
- Humbling yourself before God (Ezra 8:21)
- Asking for direction and guidance (Judges 20:19-46; Ezra 8:21);
- Mourning (1 Samuel 31:8-13; Nehemiah 1:3-10; Esther 4:14)

- Confession of sins (1 Samuel 7:6; 2 Samuel 1:12; Daniel 9:4-18; Nehemiah 9:1-3)
- Repentance (Joel 2:12-17)

WHEN SHOULD I FAST?

Some people fast on a regular basis as a habitual discipline (Luke 2:36-37). Other people may fast once a month or on certain occasions (Esther 4:16). Times when you want to fast may include when you need direction for a major decision in your life, strength and wisdom for a special task to which God has called you or extra prayer time for you to grow in your relationship with Christ.

DO'S AND DON'TS ABOUT FASTING

Before starting your fast, get your parent's permission and doctor's approval if you have a physical condition requiring medications and/or medical treatments.

- Don't think of fasting as a way to get extra "points" with God. He loves you! You don't have to earn His love.
- Don't make it a big deal to your friends when you are fasting. Your fast is between you and God (Matthew 6:16-18).
- Keep a journal to record the things that you have learned.
- Write down what God has shown you while fasting.
- You will find yourself getting tired faster during a fast. Get extra sleep and rest. Drink plenty of water. Avoid caffeine.
- Break your fast slowly. After fasting, eat a small piece of fruit or small salad without salad dressing for your first meal.
- The basic rule is that the longer your fast, the longer you'll want to take before eating the way you did prior to the start of your fast.
- Feel like your fasting isn't working? Examine your heart and motives (Isaiah 58:1-5; Zechariah 7).