

2021

**Prayer & Fasting
Guidelines**

UNITY

Begin – Wednesday, January 6 @ 6 AM

End – Wednesday, January 27 @ 6 AM

Letter from Pastor

According to the Bible, there are three disciplines most common among Christians: giving, praying and fasting. Fasting takes a lot of discipline and strength—strength which you can only receive from God. Each year at Living Life Church, we set aside time of fasting to consecrate ourselves to God in order to receive divine direction and guidance for our personal lives and for our church.

When you give God your first through prayer, fasting, and giving at the beginning of the year, you set the course for the entire year. I'm asking that you prayerfully consider being a part of our 21-day prayer and fasting movement. Whether it's for one day, three days, ten days, or the entire twenty- one days, I encourage you to seize this opportunity to prepare spiritually for what lies ahead in 2021.

Time and time again, I have witnessed the miraculous just by giving myself to prayer, fasting, and more of God's Word. Fasting can be a very effective means of spiritual breakthrough if done with a humble heart and the right intention. This is the year to strengthen unity in the Body of Christ. Wonderful things await us as we unite our faith and work towards a common purpose.

I encourage you to seek the Lord in prayer and let your decisions about your fast come from Him. Ask the Lord to show you areas to target during your time of fasting and prayer. We believe that, as we pray, seek God, and give Him our best at the beginning of the year, He will bless our ENTIRE year (Matthew 6:33).

Love and Blessings,

- Dr. John Barton, D.Th
Founding Pastor

Why should I fast?

1. Are you in need of healing or a miracle?
2. Are you facing a tough decision and need to hear from God?
3. Is there a dream in your heart that only God can make possible?
4. Do you sense a special calling upon your life to the ministry?
5. Are you in a spiritual wilderness and need a refreshing?
6. Do you desire a deeper, more intimate relationship with the Lord?
7. Are you ready to have heightened sensitivity to the Spirit of God?
8. Do you want to be free from bondages or strongholds in your life?
9. Is there a friend or loved one that concerns you in desperate need of help?
10. Do you desire to know God's will and purpose for your life?

Types of Fasting

Full Fast - Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

The Daniel Fast - Eat no meat, no sweets, and no bread. Drink water or pure fruit juice. Eat fruits and vegetables. Continue reading to find out the food guidelines for a Daniel fast.

3-Day Fast - This fast can be a Full Fast, a Daniel Fast or a sacrificial fast.

Sacrificial Fast - This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, or have health issues that prevent you from fasting food. This fast involves giving up things like television, social media, frivolous spending, and other time wasters like talking on the phone.

Partial Fast - A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown. This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or sacrificial fast.

Important Note: The type of fast you choose is between you and God. He will honor the fast that seeks to glorify Him and fulfill His purposes in the earth. Also, the focus of fasting is not so much what you give up, but what you give yourself to such as:

- Spending more time prayer.
- Reading/Meditating on God's Word.
- Refocusing on your life's purpose.
- Prayerfully writing down your goals.

- Creating a vision board.
- Focusing on being a blessing to others.
- Sacrificial giving.
- Positive thinking/speaking.

Scripture References for Fasting:

- Many people in the Old Testament fasted when they had a special need or an emergency. David fasted when his son was sick (II Samuel 12:16-23). Esther fasted before she told King Xerxes about a plot to destroy the Jews (Esther 4:16). Jehoshaphat fasted before he went into battle against the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Chronicles 20).
- Fasting was often a sign of mourning or repentance. David fasted after the Philistines defeated the Israelites and killed Saul and Jonathan (I Samuel 31:13). Nehemiah and Daniel fasted for the sins of their countrymen (Nehemiah 1:4; Daniel 9:3). The king of Nineveh commanded all the Ninevites to fast in repentance for their sin (Jonah 3:5-10).
- Some fasted to receive revelation or direction from God. Moses fasted before he received God's law on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 34:28). Daniel fasted before he received a vision (Daniel 10:2-3). In Acts, church leaders fasted to know God's purpose and direction in ministry (Acts 13:2-3, 14:23).
- Jesus fasted before he began his ministry (Matthew 4:2; Luke 4:1-2).
- Isaiah prophesied that God wanted his people to fast for the poor and oppressed (Isaiah 58:3-14). Along with Jeremiah and Zechariah (Jeremiah 14:10; Zechariah 7:3-10), Isaiah prophesied that God would reject a fast that was only ritual and not accompanied by action that would lead to justice for the poor.

Keep in mind that God will respond faithfully to those who fast with a pure heart and the right motives. Spiritual blessings and manifestations are the results of a God-ordained fast (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8). May God strengthen you each day as you draw closer to His plan, purpose, and will for your life!

ISAIAH 58:6 *"[Is] not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"*

ROMANS 12:1 *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."*

Fasting Precautions

How to Begin Start with a clear goal. 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 daily. Focus a scripture on each need.

Preparing Spiritually Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from 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 try to hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Deciding What to Fast The type of fast you go on is up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may desire to fast like Daniel, who abstained from sweets and meats, and the only liquid he drank was water.

Deciding How Long You may fast as long as you like. Most can easily fast from one to three days, but you may feel the grace to go longer, even as much as 21 to 40 days. Use wisdom, and pray for guidance. Beginners are advised to start slow.

What to Expect When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. Naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results because your faith is on another level. Spend time listening to praise and worship. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Refrain from situations of temptation, and stay focused on the results you expect.

How to End Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

How to Fast Safely If you have any health concerns **consult your doctor before you begin your fast.** But, be aware that many doctors have not been trained in this area, and so their understanding may be limited. Even so, it would be wise to ask your doctor for a physical exam to make sure you are in good health. Also, if you are under any type of medication, make sure you talk to your doctor before changing your regime. Prudence and caution are in order. When you are assured that you are in good health, you are ready to begin your fast. If done properly, fasting will not only prove to be a spiritual blessing, but a physical blessing as well.

In spite of the absolute safety and benefits of fasting, there are certain persons who should NEVER fast without professional supervision:

- Persons who are physically too thin or emaciated.
- Persons who are prone to anorexia, bulimia, or other behavioral disorders.

- Persons who suffer chronic problems with kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, or other underlying health issues.
- Individuals who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer any other blood sugar problem such as hyperglycemia.
- Women who are pregnant or nursing.

THE DANIEL FAST

Step 1: Be Specific - Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately.

1. The king's food was against dietary laws.
2. Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine.
3. The king's food had been offered up to idols/demons.

Step 2: Stay Focused - The Daniel Fast involves a spiritual commitment to God. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8).

Step 3: Discipline Yourself - Many people have an inner desire for better health, but they can't discipline themselves to avoid junk food, and other foods that are not good for their health. The physical health you seek from God requires your cooperation. You have a part to play:

Your food choices.

1. The level of your spiritual commitment as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.
2. Your time commitment. If you determine to fast for a certain time, keep it. For example, if you determine to fast 10 days, don't stop on Day 9.
3. Your testimony commitment. Your fast is a statement of faith to God that you want Him to heal your body, and faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast.

Step 4: Fast as a Statement of Faith - Daniel was making a statement of faith when he asked for only vegetables to eat and water to drink, then dared the overseer to compare the appearance of the four sons of Israel with the young men who ate the king's food.

Step 5: Learn the Effects of the Food You Eat - Why are some foods good for us and other foods not? What does certain foods do to your body? If we really knew, there would likely be some things we would never eat again.

Step 6: Yield All Results to God - Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants" (Dan. 1:13).

Other Recommendations

1. Keep a prayer journal to write your prayer requests: people to intercede for, God-inspired thoughts, Scriptures that impact your heart, songs that God will give during this time, word of exhortation, word of knowledge, and/or word of wisdom for your own life and the life of others.
2. Restrict television and entertainment. It will be easier to focus on spiritual things.
3. If you have extreme difficulty with the fast, such as impairment of your ability to work at your job, you will have to make adjustments. This is not a failure of will but applied wisdom. Seek God as to what to do and how to proceed. It is not so much the works of fasting but the heart of fasting – praying and seeking God.
4. During the fast, do not overindulge in foods you may eat, but drink as much liquids (water or 100% fruit juices) as you require.
5. Avoid spending so much time with negative people. These can be gossipers, fault-finders, critics, skeptics, doubters, or anyone that may hinder your focus or your prayers from being answered (Be prayerful and wise when dealing with negative people in the home).
6. Spend time reading your Bible and meditating on the Word (God speaking to you); praying and praising (You speaking to God); then you will find good success – Joshua 1:8
7. Dedicate time for church fellowship or corporate prayer when possible (In person service, Facebook Live, prayer calls).

Food Guidelines for a Daniel Fast

Foods You May Eat:

- **Whole Grains:**
Brown Rice, Oats, Barley
- **Legumes:**
Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas
- **Fruits:**
Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon
- **Vegetables:**
Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes,

Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini, veggie burgers are an option if you not allergic to soy.

- **Liquids:**

Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices. You may also drink protein drinks.

- **Others:**

Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts

Foods to Avoid:

- Meat, Fish, Poultry, Dairy Products, Eggs
- White Rice
- Fried Foods
- Caffeine
- Carbonated Beverages
- Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives
- Refined Sugar
- Sugar Substitutes
- White Flour and All Products Using It
- Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products
- Fast Foods

21 Scriptures on UNITY:

Day 1 - Psalm 133:1 (KJV)

“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!”

Day 2 - Matthew 18:20 (KJV)

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Day 3 - Ephesians 4:3 (NIV)

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

Day 4 - 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)

“I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.”

Day 5 - Philippians 2:2 (KJV)

“Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.”

Day 6 - 2 Corinthians 13:11 (NIV)

“Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.”

Day 7 - John 17:11 (NIV)

“Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.”

Day 8 - 1 John 4:20

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”

Day 9 - Mark 3:24-25 (NIV)

“If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”

Day 10 - Galatians 3:28

“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Day 11 - Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

“Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”

Day 12 - Hebrews 10:24 (NLT)

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.”

Day 13 - 1 Peter 3:8 (AFV)

“Now the goal *is that* all of you be of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate and friendly.”

Day 14 - Romans 12:4-5 (GWT)

“Our bodies have many parts, but these parts don't all do the same thing. In the same way, even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other.”

Day 15 - 1 Corinthians 12:21 (NIV)

“The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

Day 16 - John 13:35

“Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Day 17 - Ecclesiastes 4:9

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.”

Day 18 - Galatians 6:2 (GWT)

“Help carry each other's burdens. In this way you will follow Christ's teachings.”

Day 19 - Galatians 5:15 (NLT)

“But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.”

Day 20 - Philippians 2:3 (NLT)

“Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.”

Day 21 - Acts 2:1 (KJV)

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”