

21 days of fasting

FASTING - JANUARY 2019			
DAY	DATE		WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?
1	THU	3RD	
2	FRI	4TH	
3	SAT	5TH	
4	MON	7TH	
5	TUE	8TH	
6	WED	9TH	
7	THU	10TH	
8	FRI	11TH	
9	SAT	12TH	
10	MON	14TH	
11	TUE	15TH	
12	WED	16TH	
13	THU	17TH	
14	FRI	18TH	
15	SAT	19TH	
16	MON	21ST	
17	TUE	22ND	
18	WED	23RD	
19	THU	24TH	
20	FRI	25TH	
21	SAT	26TH	

These are the dates some of us are fasting, feel free to work out your own plan or join with others for some “tag-team” fasting. Remember you can fast from things other than food. If you are diabetic or pregnant check with a health professional first!

Some notes on Fasting

Spiritual Disciplines are tools which help us grow more like Jesus. They enable us to do things by indirect effort what we are unable to do by direct effort.

To fast is to purposefully not eat. It is to choose to focus attention on God rather than our belly's. Fasting is not Dieting for Jesus! You don't get more points if you fast.

In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus said, "*When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*"

Jesus expected his followers to fast.

When we fast... we are hungry, now. Fasting sets us in the present. In the here and now

When we fast... we focus our attention on God. Every time our stomach rumbles for food. We can take that as a prompt to pray, as a physical indicator of our spiritual hunger. Our hunger for God is awakened

When we fast..., we feast on the greatness of God

When we fast... we remove ourselves from the centre of everything. Instead of thinking that the world revolves around us. Instead of behaving like a spoilt toddler, always wanting our way and not thinking about the needs of others. When we pray and fast, we put God in the centre, instead of putting ourselves in the centre,

When we fast... we are saying that it is God who sustains us not food. We are saying to God you are more important to me than food or coffee or chocolate or TV. It should always be God-ordained and God-initiated. We should not let it become legalistic.

When we fast... we become more thankful

Get the motive right. It should not be used to coerce God into giving us something. Fasting is simply going without something, in order to seek God. We do not use fasting to get what we want, or to gain God's approval.

Fasting is not...

- ... A divine weight loss plan.
- ... Self punishment, you are not punishing your body.
- ... A hunger strike.
- ... An excuse to be grouchy, grumpy and gripey.
- ... A way to show others how spiritual you are.

A note on Intercession

Intercession enables us to put the needs of others ahead of our own wants and desires. Intercessory prayer is where we spiritually act out our love for our neighbours.

Richard Foster says that when we move from petition to intercession we are shifting our centre of gravity from our own needs to the needs and concerns of others. Intercessory prayer is selfless prayer, even self-giving prayer.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:18

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

1 Timothy 2:1-3

What should I pray for?

Family

Parents
Partner
Children
Siblings
Others

Friends

Neighbours

Those to your left
Those to your right
Those across the road

Work Colleagues

Your boss
Your peers
Your customers

Church

Leaders
Life Group
Ministries (e.g, CAP)

Neighbourhood Initiatives
Kids, youth & students
Families & marriages
New leaders
Sunday Morning
People coming to faith

City

Council
Hospital
Police
Schools
Community
Other churches

Country (1 Tim 2:1-3)

Government
Issues

World

Mission organisations
Countries

Enemies -Matthew 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies[a] and pray for those who persecute you,