

Fasting & PRAYER

“Fasting”

Isaiah 58:3-8

Fasting is defined as: primarily a movement of willing abstinence or reduction from certain or all food, drink, or both, for a period of time.

You can pray without fasting but your fasting without praying is useless!!!!!!

1. Fasting to get freedom from addictions

v. 6 “loose the bonds”

“I’ve tried to quit smoking, but I can’t!”...Try fasting!

Porn/alcohol/cussing/thought life...try fasting!

2. Fasting to solve problems

“undo heavy burdens” (v. 6)

Messed up finances/marriage in shambles/job solution?

When it seems hopeless, no way out! Fast

3. Fasting for revival and soulwinning

v. 6 “let oppressed go free”

No one is more oppressed than someone under the yoke of sin, but Jesus can free them, I challenge you to do this! Fast for soul winning.



4. Fasting to conquer mental and emotional problems

v. 6 “break every yoke”

People are stressed out, under such emotional strain, and so forth...fast and conquer those things.!

5. Fasting to meet the physical needs of others

v. 7 “share” ...to cut back once in a while and give that food or \$ to feed the poor **special blessing in scripture!** Luke 14:13-14, “But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

Mark 14:7, “For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good...”

6. Fasting for clearer insight in decision-making

Different than problem-solving...this is when you're seeking God's will in a major area of life...you're at the fork in the road and don't know which way to go.

Job offers, transfer, dating, ministry, college.....etc.

v. 8 “light break forth”...

It's like God turns on the lights and now you know what to do!

7. Fasting for health reasons or healing

Have a loved one that's terminal? Get serious and fast for them! When there's no hope from a human perspective, put it in God's hands...it may be His will to honor that.

v. 8 “thy health shall spring forth speedily”

8. Fasting for a more righteous life and influential testimony

v. 8 “thy righteousness shall go before thee”

It's easy for a Christian to grow cold...so say, Lord, light a fire under me! Make me like I was when I was first saved!

If you get serious enough to deny yourself in the physical realm, it will be amazing what God will do in your soul spiritually!

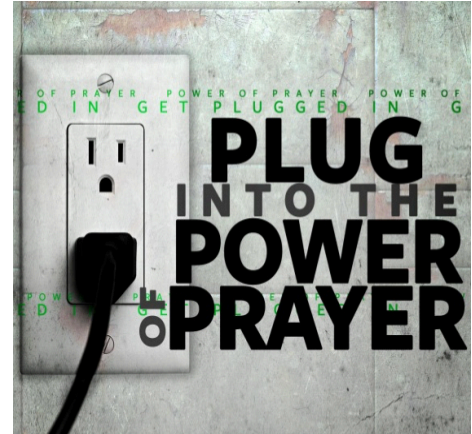
9. Fasting for the glory of the Lord, to protect us from the evil one

v. 8b “rear guard” = protection

3 Types of Fast:

1) The regular fast: is done by abstaining from all food, both solid and liquid, except for water.

This is the type of fasting Judah's King Jehoshaphat called for when his country was confronted with invasion (**2 Chronicles 20:3**). The Lord defeated their enemies, and the men of Judah blessed the Lord (**2 Chronicles 20:24–27**). After the Babylonian Captivity, the people returning to Jerusalem prayed and fasted, asking God for His protection on their journey (**Ezra 8:21**). The Lord Jesus fasted during His forty days in the wilderness being tempted by Satan (**Luke 4:2**).



2) The partial fast.

The prophet Daniel spent three weeks fasting from certain foods. In Daniel 10, the prophet says, **“I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over”** (**Daniel 10:2–3**). Note that Daniel's fast to express his grief on this occasion only omitted **“choice”** food, and it also involved relinquishing the use of oils and “lotions” for refreshment. Today, many Christians follow this example and abstain from certain foods or activities, or television or whatever for a short time, looking to the Lord for their comfort and strength.

3) The absolute fast, or the full fast, where no food or water is consumed.

When Esther discovered the plan for all the Jews to be killed in Persia, she and her fellow Jews fasted from food and water for three days before she entered the king's courts to ask for his mercy (**Esther 4:16**).

Another example of an absolute fast is found in the story of Saul's conversion. The murderous Saul encountered Jesus in His glory on the road to Damascus. **“For three days he was blind and did not eat or drink anything”** (**Acts 9:9**). Immediately following that time of blindness and fasting, Saul dedicated his life to preaching Jesus Christ.

When you do something good there is always a word of caution.

1) Don't try to manipulate God

2) Don't fast in order to impress others

3) Don't become legalistic about your fasting

4) Don't become prideful about your fasting.

