

5 WHAT TO EXPECT

- Hunger, thoughts of God
- Spiritual attack - temptations, thoughts, etc.
- Body reactions - headaches, nausea, heartburn, bad breath, etc.
- God to move, expect in faith

6 SPIRITUAL RESULTS

- Increased spiritual authority
- Affirmation or new directions from the Lord
- Deeper communication with God
- More spiritually sensitive ears more tuned to hearing from God
- Victory over bondages, sin etc.
- Sense God's presence, peace, power

7 FASTING IS MEDICALLY BENEFICIAL

- Our bodies form addictions, especially to sugar, fat and caffeine
- Our bodies need rest and were designed for that i.e. breakfast
- Diabetes people with heart problems and pregnant women should not fast
- Fasting can reduce cholesterol, blood pressure and bring relief from arthritis
- Drink lots of fluids

8 WHAT FASTING DOES

Read Isaiah 58: 6 – 8.

- 'loose the chains of injustice' – social transformation
- 'untie the cords of the yoke / undo heavy burdens' – solving problems
- 'set the oppressed free' – revival
- 'break every yoke' – victory over bondages
- 'share food with the hungry' – ministry to the poor
- 'your light will break forth' – joy, illumination
- 'your healing will quickly appear' – healing
- 'your righteousness will go before you' – evangelism, witnessing
- 'the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard' – protection and guidance
- 'you will call on the Lord and He will answer' – answered prayer

9 PEOPLE WHO FASTED

- Moses - Fasted in the presence of the Lord (*Exodus 34:28*)
- Hannah - Fasting for a child (*1 Samuel 1:7-8*)
- Daniel - Fasting was for his people (*Daniel 9:3*)
- Anna - Fasting was part of her service to God (*Luke 2:36-37*)
- Jesus - He fasted before He began His public ministry (*Luke 4:1-2*)
- Cornelius - Fasting led to a supernatural encounter (*Acts 10:30-31*)

WHAT IS FASTING



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1 INTRODUCTION

Fasting is a Biblical practice found in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Although it is not a command, Jesus assumed His disciples would fast, the same way we are called to pray and give. Fasting was done by Jesus and practiced by the early Church.

Essentially fasting is abstaining from food as a form of self-denial and self-control. This in itself is not enough - it is more than just a diet. The purpose is to focus on the Lord, and a willingness to deny your body food indicates your desperation before the Lord and how serious you are. Hunger reminds us to pray, and is a physical expression of what we are feeling spiritually.

John piper "The birthplace of Christian fasting is homesickness for God".

Fasting denies our flesh what it wants so that we can focus more clearly on strengthening our spirits.

2 THREE KINDS OF FASTING

- Absolute - no food or water (not longer than 3 days)
- Normal - liquids, no food (not longer than 40 days)
- Partial - some basic foods allowed (i.e. Bread, vegetables)

3 PURPOSE FOR FASTING

- For humility Psalm 35:13
- To seek the Lord 2 Chronicles 20:3,4
- Victory in warfare Matthew 17:21
- Repentance Joel 2:12
- Grief 2 Samuel 1:12
- When facing danger Ezra 8:21-23
- For a breakthrough Esther 4:15,16
- When commissioning ministries Acts 13:2,3

4 PLANNING A FAST

1. Be led by the Spirit
2. Let God set the agenda
3. Determine purpose, duration, kind of fast and what you plan to do
4. Keep a journal - record what you sense God is saying
5. Be open, prepared for anything - don't expect fireworks, you may even be attacked
6. Stay focused...don't give up, unless you have to
7. Try not to think about food too much - distraction
8. Use the opportunity to really connect with God, go deeper
9. Break your fast gently, with praise, in faith
10. Watch what happens in the weeks following