

## 7-Day Fast for Healing, Health, and Fertility in Our Church

**Prayer Goal:** To pray over those in our church needing health and fertility at around 7AM and 7PM every day, if possible. To also prayer as the SPIRIT leads throughout the day. Prayers for health and healing include physical and mental illness, injury, surgery, conditions, and pregnancy. Please get a church prayer list to see current prayer requests. Feel free to send a note or text to a Brother or Sister on your heart.

**Fasting Goal:** To abstain from solid food (or an earthly pleasure of your choosing) beginning with Dinner on Sunday, 3/24/24 and ending with breakfast on Sunday, 3/31/2024.

**Disclaimer:** Please consult your doctor prior to beginning any type of food fast. This is especially important if you have a physical condition that is affected by your food intake, if you have any type of chronic illness, or are taking any kind of prescription medications. Please stop fasting if you feel ill, and seek medical attention if necessary. Please consult your doctor if you any health concerns. Children and pregnant and nursing women should not fast from food.

### Fasting Basics

#### What Exactly Should I Fast From?

Food. Just stop eating. Fasting is as simple as that. Yes, I understand, fasting is not always that cut and dry, especially if you have health issues or a labor-intensive job. I will give you many options for different kinds of fasts later in this handout.

If you are not be able to complete a food fast, please consider changing something about your diet, for the better, during your 7 days. This could simply be giving up sweets or eating a healthy bagged lunch instead of fast food.

I also encourage you to abstain from all alcohol, nicotine, soft drinks and beverages that contain added sugar, corn syrup, and artificial colors and sweeteners. Even if you choose to do a liquid diet for 7 days, please understand that soda is not an acceptable liquid. One of the goals of fasting is to humble and crucify the flesh by detaching ourselves from earthly pleasures. When we die to the flesh, we are more alive to the SPIRIT and the things of GOD.

Here is the golden rule for determining what you should give up when fasting: If it gives you pleasure, and isn't absolutely necessary for your survival for the next 7 days, then go without. Fasting is the time to humble yourself before GOD, crucify the flesh, identify with JESUS in HIS suffering, and identify with all believers—past, present, and future—who have suffered greatly for the cause of CHRIST.

#### If Possible, Fast From All Earthly Pleasures During This Time.

In addition to giving up food and unhealthy substances and beverages during your 7 days, I also recommend fasting from most, if not all, things that give you pleasure. This would include any addictive substances, social media, movies, video games, non-educational books, entertaining or immoral videos and television programs, unholy or immoral images, standup comedy, concerts, nonessential shopping, participation in or the watching of sports, and anything of the like.

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After fasting, you might decide of some of the pleasures, activities, and relationships you've been involved in need not ever come back into your life, especially if they are ungodly, addictive, unholy, immoral, profane, or downright sinful. If the entertainment you've been watching portrays people fornicating, committing senseless acts of violence, or cursing, then you've been partaking in sin by watching it. Even if the "bad scenes" are edited out and the curses are bleeped, you don't need to be watching that garbage. Repent of your past habits and send them packing. Good riddance.

### **Detox From Addictive Substances.**

Use these 7 days to eliminate any addictive substances in your life, such as but not limited to, drugs, alcohol, and products that contain nicotine. If you have a serious addiction to a certain substance, please see your doctor before fasting, as you will want to come under professional care as you detox.

### **What About Coffee?**

Coffee is so important that it gets its own section. I will leave the decision about whether or not you're going to give up coffee up to you. If you do an advanced fast, such as a water or clear juice fast, then you will be giving up milk products, which would mean drinking black coffee if you can tolerate it. You might also decide to make an allowance for a small amount to cream in your coffee if your conscience allows.

I have given up coffee when fasting before, but those fasts have been so miserable that I found it hard to function in life. I personally allow myself 1-2 cups of coffee with half and half each day when fasting. This little bit of milk product helps my stomach acids from aggravating me too much, and the coffee helps me to function in life.

If, however, coffee is one of those earthly pleasures you suspect you're attached to, as in, you drink more than 3 cups a day and suspect you're addicted, then I would challenge you to cut back or eliminate it for just a few days at the start of the fast. See what happens to your body. You can always go back to your coffee if your response is intolerable.

If you are a heavy coffee drinker and you cut back during the fast, then you will probably suffer from headaches as your body goes through caffeine withdrawal. I usually suffer from headaches at some point during a fast, no matter how much or little coffee I drink. If you are convicted about caffeine dependency and want to take the opportunity to detox from caffeinated beverages, then by all means, do so.

### **Exercise**

You will most likely want to stop or limit your physical activities while you fast. I recommend light walking for 5-10 minutes every day, just to keep the blood flowing and to get some sunshine. Even light walking might feel arduous by the end of a long fast. Don't push your body, especially if you feel lightheaded or dizzy.

And give up the Yoga for good. I understand this statement might hurt some feelings. Feel free to speak to me about how JESUS delivered me from the ills of Yoga. At the risk of my own reputation, I caution you, my Dear Brothers and Sisters, against every kind of Yoga—even the

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kind that claims to be “holy” or “Christian.” My warning comes from a place of love and a desire for GOD to do HIS very best work in your life. It would be unloving of me to understand the dangers of Yoga, or anything that hints at it, and not warn you. I would rather you be angry at me for telling the truth than for us to be in unity with a lie.

### **Get Others Involved in Your Fast.**

If you desire to have the support of a group while fasting, try to recruit the folks in your own home first. Ask your siblings, parents, spouse, or children to participate with you in some way. Even if your spouse can only commit to a partial day of fasting, that’s at least one thing you can do together. I will say, fasting while your spouse eats freely adds to the challenge. It’s not impossible to fast alone, though, and your spouse might be moved by your dedication to fast with you the next time.

### **Children Can Fast From Other Things.**

Children should not fast from food, as they are still developing. They can, however, give up a treasured toy, deny themselves sweets, or give up eating out for 7 days. This program could be used as a springboard to breaking a child of a certain habit or attachment to a particular item. Once the child sees he or she can do without a certain item or habit for 7 days, he or she might be more open to giving it up for good.

As your children watch you fast and participate in their own small way, you will be shocked by how easy it is for them to go without so many things and how simple it is for them to change certain problem behaviors. For example, I had a child who I despised fruits and vegetables, but when my children give up all sweets, sugary snacks, and eating out for 7 days, my “veggie hater” started to love, and even ask for, carrots, broccoli, and roasted cauliflower!

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## **Choose Your Fast.**

In this section, I will give a variety of fasting options. You can challenge yourself with an advanced fast, ease into fasting with one of the easier options, or mix and match, starting off with a challenging fast for a few days then switching to another type of fast for the rest of the 7 days. Whatever you decide on, be faithful to complete 7 days of fasting in some way shape or form.

### **Traditional Fasting Options - Advanced**

#### **Dry Fasting – NOT RECOMMENDED**

No food or water for 3 days MAXIMUM. This kind of fasting can be dangerous. I don't recommend it, and only included it on this list in case you encounter people doing it. You'll understand what they're talking about.

#### **Water Only – Extremely Difficult**

This type of fast is just what it sounds like, consuming only water for the entire time. Some people also include zero-calorie herbal teas in this fast. Zero-calorie drinks containing artificial colors or sugar-free sweeteners would be a *No*. I personally have never done a water fast for longer than three days, and I encourage you to talk to your doctor before doing any kind of water fasting.

#### **Juice Fast – Difficult**

Think clear liquids, such as water, tea, herbals, broth, and all-natural fruit juices. This is my fast of choice. I do allow myself a small amount of half and half with 1-2 cups of coffee each day, and sometimes I add honey to my tea. Please do not consume soft drinks if you choose to do juice fasting.

If you decide to do a juice fast, I recommend stocking up on store-bought fresh juice and buying a juicer if you can afford it. Nothing compares to fresh juice from the juicer. I like to mix my own juice with store-bought fresh juice, which you should be able to find in the produce section of most grocery stores. Mixing juices in this way makes juicing less laborious and saves you from having to make too many trips to the grocery store to buy more produce.

For broth, you can boil up meat scraps and bones or something like a whole chicken. You can also mix your broth with store-bought vegetable juice, such as V-8. Vegetable juice itself can make a tasty hot broth, if you're into that sort of thing.

### **Dieting Fasts – Moderate Difficulty**

#### **All-liquids Fast**

For 7 days, you would consume any and all healthy liquids, including dairy, shakes, and smoothies. This fast can be satisfyingly challenging if you go about it properly. That means keeping away from ice cream shakes, soft drinks, and drinks with any kind of artificial ingredients. The kinds of shakes you consume should be made with fresh frozen fruits and yogurt or milk as main ingredients, not ice cream and sugar. In other words, keep away from Chick-fil-a for 7 days.

#### **The Daniel Fast (Basically, Healthy Eating)**

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This fast has its origin in Daniel 1, when Daniel and his friends refuse the rich and unclean foods of Babylon and in Daniel 10 when Daniel mourned and ate plain food for 21 days. The Daniel Fast involves avoiding animal products, leavened bread, processed foods, caffeine, and alcohol. The focus is on eating whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and nuts. This kind of fast might be good for someone who has a medical condition or is too frail to follow a more traditional fast.

There are many books and websites that guide you through the Daniel Fast, and I highly recommend you check those out if you're going to do this fast. Here's one such website: <https://ultimatedanielfast.com/ultimate-daniel-fast-food-guidelines/Partial Day Fast>.

### **Modified Fasts – Less Difficult**

#### **Partial-Day Fasting**

For 7 days, you can commit to fasting in one of the ways listed above until a certain time each day. For example, you might decide to drink juice and water until noon each day and then eat solid meals. If you are able, challenge yourself, and try to fast longer on some days, not breaking fast until 4-5PM.

#### **Meal Skipping**

Skipping meals is similar to partial-day fasting. Just like the name implies, you would skip 1-2 meals per day. In my experience, it's easiest to skip breakfast or breakfast and lunch, but you might prefer to skip dinner. However the SPIRIT leads...

#### **Alternate-Day or Cheat-Day Fasting**

During this fast, you commit to fasting on certain days of the week, eating regular meals on the days in between or designating certain days as "cheat days." For example, you might do an all-liquid fast for 3 days, eat normally for 2 days, then go back to fasting for the last 2 days. You might also decide to do juice fasting for 7 days, allowing yourself to eat solid meals on certain days of the week, such as Wednesdays and Saturdays.

#### **No Sweets Fast (Kid Friendly)**

You guessed it, on this fast, you simply stay away from sweets. No candy, cookies, chocolates, desserts, soft drinks, or the like. It's nearly impossible to avoid sugar altogether, as it's in almost everything, but you can eliminate obviously sugary foods like the ones listed above.

#### **No Eating Out Fast (Kid Friendly)**

For 7 days, abstain from eating out or grabbing prepared meals at the grocery store. You can even turn this fast into a fundraiser and get your whole church involved by having participants donate the money they would have otherwise spent on prepared foods. I recommend having an easy go-to meal you can reach for when pinched for time, such as cereal or banana and peanut butter sandwiches.

#### **Specific Food Item Fast (Kid Friendly)**

You can choose to give up a single food item that gives you pleasure. It should be an item that you consume daily or frequently, such as soda or French fries. This would be similar to giving up something for lent.

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## Non-Food Fasts - For Children or People Who Are Unable to Fast From Food

### **Fast from Speaking or Using Certain Words and Phrases**

Taking a vow of silence may not work for some people, and not speaking for 7 days could drive you and everyone else up a wall. But if the SPIRIT leads you to fast from speaking, then do it. You could modify your speech-fast by choosing certain days for silence, or you could limit your speech to what is absolutely essential for work and survival.

Definitely commit to abstaining from profanity, complaining about work, complaining about people who bother you, complaining about the people in authority over you, complaining about (or to) family members and friends, complaining about the cost of things or at all about how much money you have or don't have, talking about how you wish you had a better start in life, a new job, a better house, a better spouse, or a spouse at all, how you wish you had better children, better parents, a better body, a better car, speaking about hurtful past memories, rehashing past sins, gossiping about others, or speaking negatively about yourself. In fact, you need to give up all of this kind of talk—forever. It's sin.

### **Media and Entertainment Fast**

This kind of fast involves abstaining from any kind of media and entertainment, including movies, podcasts, radio, newspapers, internet, video games, television, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). You may want to make exceptions, such emails and text messages for school and work.

### **Shopping Fast**

For 7 days, give up shopping or downloading products, save for necessities. If it isn't toilet paper and food for the family members who aren't fasting, then it's probably not a necessity. Also, fight the urge to "ghost shop," as in, filling up your Amazon cart so you can *click and buy* the minute your fast ends. In fact, try fasting from *Amazon* altogether for 7 days.

### **A Typical Day of Fasting**

To give you an idea of what a typical day of fasting looks like, here is a sample schedule someone might follow if on a juice fast. Your schedule will be unique to you. I only offer this sample to give you a sense of what to expect.

- **Breakfast:** 1 cup coffee or tea, 12 ounces orange juice, 12 ounces of clear water
- **Snack:** 1-2 bowls chicken broth
- **Lunch:** 12 ounces juice, 1 bowl chicken broth
- **Snack:** 1-2 bowls broth
- **Dinner:** 12 ounces juice, 1 bowl chicken broth
- **Dessert:** 1 cup decaf coffee or tea
- **Throughout the day as needed:** Drink plenty of water, herbal tea, and broth. To help with water intake, you might want to religiously drink a glass with each meal, or fill up a large water bottle and commit to drinking the whole thing during the day. Use honey and cream in your hot drinks at your own discretion.

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## Top Tips for Successful Fasting

I offer these tips below as the kinds of things I wish I'd known before fasting. I have learned these things the hard way, through experience, and I've recorded them here so you can have access to them the easy way, simply by reading them. You're welcome.

### **PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!**

I don't have to explain this one, right? I plan to create and expanded guide that includes information on prayer and a guide for focused prayer time. Hopefully, I can get that out before the rapture. Pray as the Spirit leads, but also set aside time to pray over those in need of healing on church prayer list and anyone else on your own personal list. You can pray over a portion of the list each day at 7AM and 7PM or break it up however you prefer.

### **Read the Bible.**

As a Christian, you should be doing this daily whether you're fasting or not. For the 7 days, set a big goal for yourself, such as reading 3 Chapters per day of the Book of John. You will finish the entire book, which is 21 chapters long, by the end of the fast. You should also have a scripture memorization goal for the fast, such as Colossians 1:15-17 or Hebrews 1:1-3.

### **Prepare and Stock Up.**

Grocery shopping and preparing food during a fast can be difficult, but it's not impossible. You can make things easier for yourself by being prepared. Have plenty of juice, tea, herbs, and broth in your house, and stock the freezer and pantry with easy to prepare meals for the dependents in your household who will not be fasting. If you plan on juicing your own fruits and vegetables, then stock up on those as well. Chewing gum, especially mint flavored, can be helpful between meals.

As per produce, you will need much more than you think if you will be making your own juice. Buy apples, oranges, and carrots by the bag, in the largest sizes available. These produce items don't spoil quickly and yield lots of tasty juice. Try supplementing your home juicing with store-bought fresh fruit and vegetable juice.

It takes about 4 pieces of fruit, such as regular-sized apples, to make one 8-ounce glass of juice. Our family also likes pineapple. One large pineapple mixed 50-50 with other juices can supply two people with juice enough for a "meal." You can also juice the core for healthy enzymes.

We have also juiced grapes, lettuce, celery, spinach, beets, lemons, mixed greens, berries, plums, peaches, and pretty much everything else you can imagine. If you juice, you will probably need to make several trips to the grocery store before you figure out exactly how much produce is needed to keep the juices flowing. As a rule, we buy several of the biggest bags of oranges, apples, and carrots that we can find.

### **Stay Hydrated!**

Drink good, clean water, tea, herbals, and broth with salt so as to get electrolytes. Raw honey can be a healthy addition to your teas and herbal drinks. Try filling up a large water bottle or thermos with water and making it a goal to drink it all by the end of the day.

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### **Make a List of Rainy-Day.**

You may not have time to complete these tasks, but have a list on hand of low-energy things you've been meaning to get done, such as deep cleaning the house, cleaning appliances, cleaning the car, organizing closets, redoing a bedroom or office space in the house, purging your book collection, painting a room, touching up the trim around the house, building something, crafting for a fundraiser, reading an educational book, writing a book, journaling, an art project for a gift, learning a new language, filing your taxes, playing educational games, and doing puzzles with your kids or grandkids. Make sure your activities are educational or industrious and that you're not using them for entertainment or wasting time.

You might find it useful and soothing to spend time around food, even though you can't eat it. To that end, your rainy-day tasks might include cooking and freezing, preserving, or finding creative ways to give away food that will otherwise spoil. For instance, you could make banana bread for the neighbors or for storing in your freezer, before the bananas go bad.

Whatever your list of tasks looks like, keep it handy, and turn to it when you find your mind consumed by food fantasies. Of course, turn to GOD in prayer first, then whip out the list.

### **Go to Bed Super-Duper Early.**

The days will pass faster if you go to sleep between 9-10PM. As a former night owl who used to think 12AM was an early bedtime, I can testify to the fact that an early bedtime really is best. An early bedtime will enable you to sleep away your hunger sooner and rise earlier for your morning Bible reading. I also find that I have more energy and a sharper mind throughout the day when I go to sleep closer to 9PM during a fast. My typical bedtime when I'm not fasting is around 10:30PM.

### **Stand Up Slowly and Move Slowly.**

After a few days of fasting, you might find that you are lightheaded, especially when you stand up after sitting or lying down for a period of time. Stand up slowly and allow yourself to move slowly. You might even want to make sure you're holding a wall or some kind of support when you stand up.

When I feel really lightheaded, I get down on my hands and knees, and crawl until I feel stable enough to stand. Getting low to the ground assures me there's less height to fall from if I do pass out. I'm not offering this information as a suggestion to you, but just as a report of what I've experienced in the past. If you're feeling that ill or light-headed, then you might want to break your fast for a snack or healthy meal, returning to fasting only if you are able.

### **Don't Talk About Your Fast.**

You may have to occasionally explain to someone why you're not eating at an event, or you may want to ask your closest friends to pray for you while you're fasting. You might also want to ask these close friends if they have any prayer requests they would like you to pray over during your fast. Outside of scenarios like these, fasting should be a private endeavor, between you and GOD. Do not talk about your fast outside of your home while you're fasting. JESUS promises that GOD sees all our secret actions, and rewards us accordingly. See **Matthew 6:16-18**.



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### **Have a Pot of Broth Going at All Times.**

If you don't want to drink store-bought broth, then save some bones and meat scraps from your last few meals prior to your fast and boil them up. You can also cook up a whole chicken, use the bones for broth, and feed the meat to the non-fasting members of your household. Another option is to freeze the meat for when your fast is over.

I like to have a pot of broth going at all times while I'm fasting. Not only can I make an easy soup dinner for the kids, by adding meat, noodles and vegetables to it, but the broth gives me another liquid from which I can get hydration and necessary electrolytes. Store-bought vegetable juice can be added to the broth or consumed as broth in and of itself. If you use vegetable juice for broth, make sure to buy the largest bottles available. You will be surprised by how much liquids you need to consume to stay hydrated while fasting.

### **Don't Yell at the Kids Too Much. Get Ear Muffs or Earplugs if Need Be.**

Lord, have mercy on me. I fail at patience often when I'm fasting. I find that after a few days of not eating, noises grate on me more than usual, and I tend to overreact to messes and spills. I lack the energy to clean up extra messes, and the sight of them makes me irritable. This is when I need to draw from the well of living water and drink of JESUS. When fasting, fight the temptation to yell and complain and make every effort to keep your eyes on GOD. I'm not suggesting that you overlook disobedience by any means. Just be aware that fasting can make you more reactive to problems than usual. The concept "hangry" is definitely a thing.

I have found that noise canceling ear muffs or earplugs help to reduce irritability to noise. I use 34 decibel ear muffs, the kind designed for minimizing the sounds of yard work and gunshots. The ear muffs are relatively cheap and can be purchased almost anywhere. I wear ear muffs when I study the Bible and pray as well. Earplugs would also work, but I find those less comfortable and more of a hassle to keep up with.

### **Plan Your Victory Feast.**

At the start of your fast, or halfway through, plan your victory meal. Will you be cooking? Going to your favorite restaurant? What will you order? What food item will you eat first? Being as specific as possible helps to create a tangible end goal. Take a minute to record your victory meal on this page or in a notebook. **Note:** I recommend eating a small portion of your victory meal at a time so as to prevent a bad bathroom situation for yourself. **When I break my fast, I'm going to eat the following:**

### **When It's Time to End, Ease Off the Fast.**

While it's wonderful to break your fast with a celebratory feast, if you have done one of the more advanced fasts, you will probably want to ease back into eating solid foods. Try starting with a simple sandwich, smoothie, bowl of pasta, or bowl of cereal. If you're hungry an hour after breaking your fast, then eat another simple food item. It's been my experience that eating small amounts of food more frequently is less of a shock to the body than gorging all at once.

If you really can't wait to hit the buffet, then please be warned that you will probably be in pain afterwards. Your bathroom routine will also be off for a few days, if not for a whole week, so plan

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ahead to break your fast over a weekend or on days when you have more flexibility with your schedule. I've never been so affected by bathroom issues that I couldn't work, but my days definitely look a little different when I'm coming off of a longer fast.

### **Make Permanent Life Changes.**

After giving up solid food and earthly pleasures for 7 days, you will realize that you can go without certain things you needed to give up anyway. Resolve to make lasting changes, such as eating less sweets, giving up dessert outside of holidays and special occasions, reducing dessert to a small treat, watching less movies, staying off certain social media platforms, shopping less, eating out less, and giving up gossiping and complaining about your life once and for all.

It's been my experience that when I resolve to make permanent adjustments like this, some last, but others don't. When too many of your good life changes start to come undone, that's usually an indication that you need to fast again. The more frequently you fast, the more power GOD gives you to overcome the indulgences that want to choke out your life and render you ineffective for Kingdom work and Gospel proclamation. Fast frequently as the SPIRIT leads to help make those good life changes stick.