

WHO SHOULD PROBABLY NOT FAST:

If any of these (or other similar) conditions apply to you, please consult your doctor before fasting:

- Women who are pregnant or nursing.
- People who are physically underweight or emaciated.
- People who are prone to anorexia or bulimia.
- People who suffer weakness or anemia.
- People with bleeding ulcers, cancer or heart disease.
- People who suffer with chronic problems with kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, or other vital organs.
- People with diabetes or hyperglycemia.

OTHER ENCOURAGEMENTS:

- Start where you are, not where you “should” be. The best practice is to “walk before you run.”
- The more fully you give yourself to this practice, the more life-changing it will be.
- In the time you’d normally be grocery shopping, cooking, eating, or cleaning, give yourself to prayer. Let your desire for food point you to Jesus as you open yourself to Him.
- As you go about your day — your morning commute, caregiving, email, errands — enjoy God’s company and attempt to open your heart to Him all through the day.
- You will get more out of the experience of fasting when you take time to reflect on it and what God is saying to you through the experience.
- Potential questions to reflect on:
 - What shifts toward sin did you notice in your heart while you were fasting?
 - What’s an area in your life where your willpower is failing and you are praying for the grace to change?
 - What’s an area in your life where you are finding more freedom from sin and more joy in God?
 - Did you sense God’s still, small voice speaking to you in any way?
 - Did you gain any clarity on major decisions you need to make?

FASTING TIPS



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CHOOSE WHEN YOU WILL FAST & FOR HOW LONG:

- There is no “right” time or length, as fasting isn’t commanded by Jesus or the NT Apostles.
- Fast in response to the Spirit’s invitation. Do not fast out of idealism, spiritual heroism, or a misplaced desire for weight loss or a spiritual high. Your motives matter!
- Pick a day/timeframe that works for you.
- Longer fasts are especially helpful when you’re in a season of discernment, crisis, or needing to make a major decision.
- It is always best to seek medical advice before any extended fast.

FASTING OPTIONS FOR BEGINNERS:

- **24 hour fast:** Stop eating after supper, miss breakfast and lunch the following day, start eating again at suppertime. **Note:** The Early Christians did this type of fast twice a week, but beginners should start with just once a week. (See Jdg 20:26)
- **36 hour fast:** Stop eating after supper, miss breakfast, lunch and supper the following day, start eating again the following morning at breakfast. (e.g. Acts 14:23)

FASTING OPTIONS FOR THE MORE EXPERIENCED:

- A three-day fast (Est 4:16; Acts 9:9)
- A seven-day fast (1 Sam 31:13; 2 Sam 12:16-13)
- A fourteen-day fast (Acts 27:33-34)
- A twenty-one day fast (Dan 10:3-13)
- A forty-day fast (Deut 9:9; 1 Kings 19:8; Matt 4:2)

PRACTICAL TIPS WHEN FASTING:

- Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
- If you drink coffee to wake up, you may still want to have coffee to avoid a caffeine headache. Coffee is 99.9% water & won’t keep your body entering the fasting state.
- The more time you can give to prayer & reflection, and the less busy you are that day, the better. Make it your goal to slow down and seek God’s face as much as possible.
- You may want to find a park on your lunch break or take a few short walks throughout your day.
- Each time a hunger pain comes, let that be a prompt for prayer where you offer your body to God and express your longing for Him over and above food.
- Fasting can be done either in community or alone. Scripture is full of examples of both.
- It is best to refrain from strenuous physical labour or exercise during a fast.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- To empathize with the poor, you may want to donate the money you’d normally spend on meals to a food bank.
- Break a prolonged fast gradually with meals that are light and easy to digest.
- Remember: fasting is not an end in itself. The goal is Jesus, not the experience of fasting.
- Great Scripture passages to read during a fast include: Psalm 27, Psalm 42, Psalm 63, Psalm 105, 2 Chronicles 7, Jeremiah 29, Lamentations 3, Isaiah 58, Matthew 5-7

THINGS TO BE AWARE OF:

- If you are new to fasting, and especially if your regular diet is high in sugar and refined grains, then at first, you may get a headache or feel dizzy.
- Don’t be surprised if you have temporary moments of impatience, crankiness, or anxiety.
- As fasting becomes a regular spiritual rhythm, your body will adapt. It may seem hard at first, but it will get easier over time as you stay with it.