

REFUGEE
C H U R C H

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**2020 VISION
Corporate Fast
October 23 – 25, 2018**

Introduction to Fasting

Fasting is abstaining from food, or not eating food over a period of time. Biblical fasting is a form of self-denial for the sake of pursuing our relationship with the Lord. It is a deliberate abstinence from something for a spiritual purpose. When we fast, we choose to break with our routine in order to draw closer to God. As such, fasting demands a deep level of commitment and sacrifice. Fasting isn't a spiritual requirement; it doesn't make us better than anyone else, nor more spiritual. Fasting is a choice to seek the Lord's face and His presence in a deeper way for a short season. When we fast, we are following Jesus' example (Matt. 4:2).

As we fast, we humble ourselves before the Lord, intentionally being more prayerful and giving ourselves to a deeper study in and meditation of the Word. A corporate fast is a time to really devote ourselves to constant, consistent praying (1 Thess. 4:17). Ultimately, fasting is waiting on God. Fasting allows us to embrace emptiness and our need for God. Fasting is a way to press in, to break away from the "norm," quiet ourselves before God, and use our time to wait upon the Lord with greater intensity (Gal. 5:24). Fasting isn't about just what we put in our stomachs, but what we feed our souls and spirits as well.

Two powers are at work when we fast: our human will, and the supernatural power of God. Fasting grinds on the flesh (Rom. 8:13) because the flesh fights against the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:17). Realize that our flesh will fight back: grumpiness, headaches, stomach growling, thoughts drifting to food, getting cold, being tired from the toxins being released from your body. It takes work to get our flesh under submission! As the flesh weakens, we become more and more sensitive to the Spirit and the things of God.

Additionally, fasting has several benefits. It helps to root and ground us in faith to the promises of God (Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7). It can sharpen and hone our spiritual sensitivity to the things of God. Fasting is beneficial for spiritual cleansing as well, as times of prayer and fasting can sever the spiritual bonds of addictions. Fasting also has medical and physical benefits that the medical community has recognized for centuries: fasting allows the digestive system to rest and allows the body to cleanse itself from toxins.

Fasting brings about miraculous results (Gal. 6:8)! As we fast, we empty ourselves and weaken our flesh, that the power of God may be available to us in greater amounts. It is through fasting that God tends to reveal and release His supernatural power: God-inspired creativity (new ideas, God-given plans), His wisdom made available in certain situations, spiritual resources to endure and overcome, and even birth revival and unique outpourings of the Spirit's power!

Fasting and prayer brings us closer to God and also yields some long-term rewards. An effective time of spiritual fasting and prayer requires determining in

advance why you are fasting. During this fast, we are expecting God to speak through His written Word, dreams, Spirit-directed impressions, and God-inspired ideas. As pastor, my hope and prayer is that we would all be able to hear the Lord speak His instructions for how He wants us to invest in the Kingdom vision for the ROCCenter.

As the Lord confirms in your heart and mind what His instructions are, write it down!

How we will do this

This fast will be a 3-day, restrictive-diet fast, beginning at 6am on the 23rd, ending at 6pm on the 25th.

For the 3 days of this fast, we will spend time in a serious time of spiritual repentance and cleansing by engaging in a total fast during those twelve hours during the day by limiting ourselves to LIQUIDS ONLY. A total fast is choosing to abstain from all food and drinking water only.

During these 3 days, and whenever our bodies let us know they desire food, or whenever we seek distraction through media, we are committing ourselves to prayer, worship, and study of the Word. A growling stomach is nothing more than a call to prayer!

In addition to restricting what we eat, we are also fasting from MEDIA that is not work-related or essential. We will seek to not watch TV, spend time on Facebook & other social media platforms, excessive and superfluous texting, movies, engage in web-surfing, etc.

Finally, use the daily Scriptures and pray the daily prayers in this fasting guide, while asking the Lord to speak to your heart and spirit.

Tips for Fasting

- Pray as often as you can throughout the day, or seek to increase the frequency of daily prayer time. Fasting does not work if you do not pray!
- Unless it's a prayer partner, a spouse, or somebody who is supporting you during your fast, do not share that you are fasting with others. By talking about our fast to others, we risk losing any spiritual benefits that come from fasting (Matt. 6:16-18, NLT). Keep your fast to yourself, rather than seeking to use it as a way to impress others or get compassion for your struggle.

- If you don't already have an established daily quiet time with the Lord, then this is an excellent opportunity to do so. Starting your day with God is a habit that will support your faith and growing intimacy with the Lord.
- Integrate listening to praise and worship music before your Bible study time, after it, or as a part of your prayer time.
- Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face. Avoiding distractions of media will allow you to focus on your relationship with God.
- Reserve time in your daily schedule for Bible study.
- Do not push to extremes physically or spiritually.

HOW TO PREPARE SPIRITUALLY

Prepare spiritually by confessing your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness of those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Make some decisions about your time/daily schedule before starting the fast and figure out how to alter your routine in order to prioritize time for prayer and study of the Word. This is going to have to involve some sacrifices in order to prioritize time for God!

Keep the goal in mind; you are seeking to hear from the Lord! Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and clarity to your purpose for your fast.

Make up in your mind that you WILL succeed, you WILL hear from the Lord, that you WILL experience breakthrough, revelation, and depth in your relationship with the Lord Jesus!

What to Expect during a Fast:

PHYSICALLY

When you fast, your body detoxifies, or eliminates toxins, from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains.

Limit your activity and exercise moderately.

Expect your sleep patterns to be thrown off, so take time to rest, or even nap when/if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself if your productivity comes only in spurts!

SPIRITUALLY

Expect to experience resistance from your own body, as well as the enemy, but expect to get to know the Lord better, and for His power to increase in your life.

Be ready for the Lord to speak to you! Purchase a little journal or notebook, or use your notes app on your phone to write down what the Spirit of God has spoken to you. Put the journal or notebook close to your bed to record the things He speaks to you during the night or during your prayer times. Take it with you to work or school so that you can capture whatever He wants to communicate to you during this time of consecration!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

SPECIAL NOTE

If you have health issues, please be sure to contact your health professional for advice before committing to any fast including the Daniel Fast. If you would like a list of the foods included and excluded in the Daniel Fast to show your doctor, just copy the contents of the previous pages.

PREGNANT WOMEN AND PEOPLE ON MEDICATIONS

Pregnant women, persons on medication, with ulcers, and those under a physician's care for diagnosed medical conditions, should consult their necessary doctor for recommended foods and drinks. You can still participate in the fast by eating and drinking very lightly, or choosing something else to fast from.

PARENTS

Parents, please make sure you feed your children. Include them in your family prayer and Bible reading time. Explain to them why we are fasting. If they are old enough, allow them to express what they are hearing from God themselves.

BREAKING THE FAST

When your daily time of fasting is over, you will want to ease back into eating. Don't do too much snacking. Overdoing and over-indulging will do more harm physically and spiritually than you think.

PRAYER AND STUDY GUIDE

As we prepare for our corporate fast, we must recognize that we can all use this time of consecration to shut out some of the “noise” in our lives that drowns out the Lord’s voice in our lives. A fast ought to involve as much listening to the Lord as praying!

In our fasting, we seek to have the Lord speak to us, but we have to be ready to obey what He says and not talk ourselves out of being obedient! That’s why we want to start by ensuring we are spiritually cleansed for this encounter with the Lord.

Use the Scripture references to guide your study time, but also consider using a concordance to help you do further study on the ideas and words involved. Use the Scriptures to help frame how and what to pray for during your prayer time. Let the Holy Spirit guide you and lead you into deeper understandings of what He wants to reveal to you during this time of consecration.

October 23rd

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY:

Jeremiah 33:3

James 1:5-8

Hebrews 3:7-8

PRAYER TO PRAY:

Lord, I come to You in true repentance of my sins and ask for forgiveness for all my sins, known and unknown.

I praise You, Lord, and thank You for all the blessings that You have given me and that You continue to give me every day.

As I come to You, Lord, and humble myself before You, I ask that You clear my mind of any pre-conceived thoughts, confusion, or deception.

I ask You, Lord, to block anything that is not of You, and that I hear Your voice, Lord Jesus.

I thank You, Lord for the words of wisdom that I receive from You, and I ask You, in complete faith and confidence, that You will control my thinking and my flow of consciousness, so that I think the way You want me to, according to Your will.

Right now, my mind is open to You and what You want to speak to me or place in my thinking.

Do this in Jesus’ Name, I pray, Amen!

October 24th

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY:

Matthew 7:7

Mark 11:24

1 Corinthians 2:10-14

Colossians 1:9-10

PRAYER TO PRAY:

Heavenly Father, I come to You now in the name of my Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.

I come to You with praise and with thanksgiving.

I come to You in humility, in fear, and in trembling.

Heavenly Father, it is written in Your Word in John 10:3 that Your sheep know Your voice.

Father, I confess that I am one of Your sheep!

I ask You, Heavenly Father, to teach me to hear Your voice distinctly and clearly.

I ask You to increase Your communication with me and Your Spirit's work in my life, so that I will clearly hear and know Your voice, and so that I will not follow the voice of a stranger.

Please do this in my life and in my mind for me, in Jesus' Name. Amen!

October 25th

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY:

Deuteronomy 8:18

Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

2 Corinthians 9:5-11

PRAYER TO PRAY:

Heavenly Father, I come to You now in the Name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Holy Spirit, I pray that You will lead me in prayer.

Heavenly Father, I bow in worship before You.

I come to You in gratitude, in love, and through the precious blood of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, I pray Your Word over my finances, and I thank You for manifesting Your Word in my life, according to 3 John 2 that Your wish is that I would prosper and be in health, even as my soul prospers.

I proclaim that Your Word declares that You will grant me the power to get wealth, so that Your covenant would be established with me and my bloodline (Deut. 8:18).

I receive for my life your promise in Philippians 4:19 that You promise to supply all my needs according to Your riches in glory.

Because I have committed to give generously to the Kingdom and to my church's vision from what You supply me with financially, I speak a release of Your grace abounding toward me, so that I would have all sufficiency in all things, and abound in every good work, according to Your Word in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.

Now, Lord, I commit myself to obey Your instructions and look forward to Your abundant blessings on my life because I have obeyed, in Jesus' Name, Amen!