



FASTING GUIDE

WESLEY INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATION

Message from Ps Andy

After hearing these words from God, Joshua called together the people to prepare them to cross over into the Jordan and inherit the land God had promised them! The day before they were about to cross the Jordan River, Joshua said to the people: "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you" (Joshua 3:5).

In this passage there is a deep connection between the miraculous wonders that God wants to do amongst His people and our need for consecration. To consecrate ourselves is to set ourselves apart for God. For the people in Moses and Joshua's day, it included washing their clothes and abstaining for sexual relations with their spouse. Consecration was about sanctifying and separating themselves aside for God's purpose.

Many Christians fast during the period of Lent (40 days leading to Easter Sunday) to help them reflect on Jesus' path to the cross and consider His sacrifice, life, death, and resurrection.

We encourage you to see this season of prayer and fasting as a way of 'consecrating ourselves before the Lord'.

See this as an opportunity to turn away from our self-satisfaction to surrendering ourselves to God in preparation for whatever He wants to do among us. See this as an opportunity to grow in our hunger, holiness, honour and humility toward God.

As you personally engage with this fast, be prepared that it will not be easy; but be expectant that God will do powerful things in your life and in our congregation.

We believe that this fast will help create space for God to do a fresh work of transformation in our lives, so that He might do a fresh work of transformation in our city!

Let's "Consecrate" ourselves to God with anticipation for the wonders God is preparing to do amongst us!

Love,

Ps Andy

BIG PICTURE

Firstly, it's important to focus on the big picture of our fasting journey.

Throughout this fast, we pray these four things will grow in us and in the church:

HUNGER

We want to grow a hunger for God above anything else in our lives. Our prayer is that He would be our greatest appetite. This fast will help to grow this hunger for God.

Psalm 63 says: "Your love is better than life" and "I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you". That's what we want.

HOLINESS

We want to grow in our holiness towards God. 2 Timothy 2:20 explains that our holiness makes us ready and useful for our Master, prepared for every good work. We want our bodies to be used for God's glory.

HONOUR

We want to honour God with how we treat our bodies. 1 Corinthians 6:19 explains that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and that He lives in us. Therefore, taking care our bodies is one way to honour God's indwelling presence in us.

HUMILITY

Lastly we want to grow in our humility before God. When Daniel fasted and prayed (Dan 10), God sent an angel in response. Why? Because through this act, Daniel was humbling himself before God and ready to respond (Dan 10:12). We want to humbly seek our God and not trust in our own abilities and resources.

TYPE OF FASTS

Secondly, you will need to choose which type of fast you will engage in.

This decision is entirely between you and God. Below are the various types of fasts to consider.

COMPLETE FAST

- Drinking only liquids, typically water and/or light juices.
- Broth or soup may be included as options.



SELECTIVE FAST

- Removing certain elements from your diet.
- The Daniel Fast - abstaining from meat, sweets, or bread; drink water and juice, and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.



PARTIAL FAST (A.K.A. THE JEWISH FAST)

- Abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon.
- Fast during specific times of the day, e.g. 6AM-3PM, or from sunup to sundown.



SOUL FAST

- Common for: anyone new to fasting food; those with health issues that prevent them from fasting food; those wanting to refocus specific areas of life that are out of balance.
- Suggestions: abstain from engaging in social media, shopping, watching television, etc.





Important

Be aware that you may experience fatigue or headaches in the first two to three days of the fast in response to the lack of caffeine and other stimulants. These symptoms should disappear within a few days. If you are doing an intermittent fast, avoid acidic foods that can damage your gut health. Do some research to make sure you're staying healthy. If there are medical restrictions to you following a particular fast, please be sure to follow your doctor's instructions.




Free Resource

Hunger for God is a free e-book written by John Piper which will inspire you greatly around fasting. Follow the reading plan of reading a chapter each week and be encouraged

<https://www.desiringgod.org/books/a-hunger-for-god.pdf>



If you would like to do some further study related to fasting, here are some Bible verses for you to mediate on and learn from.

 Exodus 34:28

Moses on the mountain with the Lord

 Luke 4

Jesus fasting in the wilderness

 Acts 13


The Disciples fast and pray to seek God's direction

 Joel 2:12-17

Fasting and returning to the Lord

 Daniel 9:3-5

Fasting and confession as a means to seek the Lord

 Ps 35:13-14

Fasting in mourning and grief

 Jonah 3:5-9

Nineveh's repentance marked by fasting

 Nehemiah 9:1-3


Fasting in humility and repentance

 Isaiah 58:6-7

The true heart of fasting

 Esther 4

Fasting as a group in solidarity

 2 Sam 12:16-17

David fasting for his child's life

 Nehemiah 1

Fasting and mourning which leads to action

 Ezra 8:21-22

Communal fasting

but my heart stands in awe of
your words.
I rejoice at your word
like one who finds great spoil.
I hate and abhor falsehood,
but I love your law.
In times a day I praise
your righteous
peace have
our