



# FASTING GUIDE



## Fasting Guide

The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God. Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating distractions for a spiritual purpose; it hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out. It also enables us to celebrate the goodness and mercy of God and prepares our hearts for all the good things God desires to bring into our lives.

Remember, your personal fast should present a level of challenge, but it is very important to know your body, your options, and, most importantly, to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

## Types of Fasts

- **Complete Fast:** This fast calls for drinking only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.
- **Selective Fast:** This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, or bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.
- **Partial Fast:** This fast is sometimes called the Jewish Fast and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.
- **Soul Fast:** This fast is common for those who do not have much experience fasting food, who have health issues that prevent them from fasting food, or who wish to refocus certain areas of their life that are out of balance. For instance, someone might select to abstain from using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast, and then choose to carefully bring that element back into their life in an orderly fashion at the conclusion of the fast.

## Timing of a Fast

At Encounter Church, we encourage fasting for 21 days each year in the months of January and February. This is part of a season of focused prayer as a church family.

You may also choose to fast at other times during the year for your own spiritual development. It's very typical to fast a single meal a whole day, or three days or more. The timing of your fast is not as important as the strength of your focus on Him as you fast.

## Scripture References

### **Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)**

16 When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### **Matthew 9:14-15 (NIV)**

14 Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" 15 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast."

### **Luke 18:9-14 (NIV)**

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' 13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' 14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

### **Acts 27:33-27 (NIV)**

33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food— you haven't eaten anything. 34 Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." 35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. 36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. 37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board.

### **Nehemiah 9:1-3 (NIV)**

On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. 2 Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. 3 They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the Lord their God.

## Suggested Resources

AWAKENING - Book by Stovall Weems

GUIDE TO FASTING AND PRAYER - Article by Bill Bright

7 BASIC STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL FASTING AND PRAYER - Article by Bill Bright

## Testimonies and Prayer Requests

If you have a testimony about what God has done through prayer and fasting, we would love to hear about it and celebrate with you. Simply send an email to [admin@encounteridaho.com](mailto:admin@encounteridaho.com)

If you have a prayer need, our team will be honored to pray with you. Just send an email to [admin@encounteridaho.com](mailto:admin@encounteridaho.com)

