

Fasting: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the main purpose of fasting?

Fasting is not "starving yourself" or a way to manipulate God into giving you what you want. It is a spiritual discipline where we voluntarily abstain from food (or other comforts) to focus on prayer and feast on God's Word. It's about trading physical appetite for spiritual hunger.

2. I have a medical condition. Can I still participate?

Absolutely. If you have diabetes, are pregnant/nursing, have a history of eating disorders, or take specific medications, you should not do a full food fast without consulting a doctor. Instead, consider a "Daniel Fast" (vegetables and water only) or a non-food fast (like social media, television, or coffee). God looks at the heart, not the stomach.

3. What is a "Daniel Fast"?

Inspired by the book of Daniel, this is a partial fast where you eat only "foods of the earth."

- **Include:** Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and water.
- **Exclude:** Meat, dairy, sugar, processed "junk" food, and caffeine.

4. What should I do when I get hungry?

When you feel a hunger pang, let it serve as a "prayer alarm." Instead of reaching for a snack, take a moment to pray: If possible, use your actual meal times to read Scripture or pray.

5. Can I tell people I'm fasting?

In Matthew 6, Jesus warns against fasting "to be seen by men." You shouldn't brag about it or look intentionally miserable to get sympathy. However, it's perfectly okay (and often necessary) to tell your spouse, your family, or a close friend for accountability and scheduling purposes.

6. What if I "mess up" and eat something by accident?

Don't give up! Fasting isn't a legalistic test that you "fail." If you slip up, simply thank God for His grace and resume your fast at the next meal. The goal is a heart turned toward Him, not a perfect streak.

7. How should I "break" a long fast?

If you have been fasting for several days on liquids only, do not start with a heavy steak dinner. Break your fast gradually with small portions of fruit, broth, or light soups to allow your digestive system to wake up gently.

Quick Tips for Success:

- **Drink plenty of water.** Hydration is key to avoiding unnecessary headaches.
- **Journal your journey.** Write down what you feel God is saying to you during these days.
- **Have a plan.** Decide *what* you are fasting from and *when* you will pray before the fast begins.