

Fasting A Neglected Discipline

- Dietary discipline
- Spiritual self-denial

Biblical fasting embraces both the outer man and the inner man, involving the mind, spirit, and body.

Fasting - *“To abstain from food as a religious observance”* -Oxford Dictionary

- To afflict the soul
- To practice self-denial

What is a partial fast?

- Refraining from eating 1 or 2 meals a day
- Refraining from eating certain foods
- Should I fast without water?
- Is fasting commanded?
- Is fasting a religious duty?

Some may object to fasting, saying...

- It is more important to fast from sin than from food.
- God doesn't demand this kind of burden today.
- It is unnatural to go without food.
- It is a Roman Catholic doctrine.

- I fast only when the Spirit tells me.
- I tried it before and it didn't work."

What is the purpose of fasting?

- Turns away the wrath of God
- Helps us attain spiritual objectives
- Is an aid to prayer
- Helps us mortify the flesh
- Is an evidence of desiring special mercy from God
- Is an act of worship

Did the early believers fast?

- Jesus said his disciples would fast
(Luke 5:33-35; 2 Corinthians 6:5; 11:27)
- Early believers were in fastings often
(Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; 1 Corinthians 7:5)

What is the proper method of fasting?

- Preparation *(Matthew 6:16-18)*
- Duration (from 1 day to 40 days)
- Participation
- Cessation

What are some dangers of fasting?

- Ritualism (*Zech. 7:5-12; 8:16-19; Rom 14:6*)
- Asceticism (*Colossians 2:18-23*)
- False fasts (*Acts 23:12-14*)
- Hypocrisy (*1 Kings 21:9-14; Matt. 6:16-18*)
- Extremism (*Matthew 17:21; Jonah 3:7-8*)
- Judgmentalism (*Luke 18:9-12; 1 Corin. 8:8*)

What are some natural and spiritual oppositions to fasting?

- Hunger pangs (*Matthew 4:2*)
- Weakness (*Psalms 109:24; Isaiah 40:31*)
- Headaches
- Halitosis
- Persecution
- Temptation (*Matthew 4:3-4*)

What are some benefits of fasting?

- Spiritual liberty
- Divine guidance
- Growth in grace
- Increased faith

- Anointing of the Spirit
- Physical well-being
- Overcome carnal lusts
- Coping ability