

CITY CENTRAL

FASTING PACKET

WHY FAST?

- To demonstrate humility before God and pray, seeking God's face and repenting from sin, that God would bring revival to the Church and the City.
- For Spiritual freedom. There are many believers suffering under bondage.
- To empty ourselves of things that compromise us in our life in God.
- For spiritual breakthrough.
- To see our city experience continual revival.

A fast is a voluntary absence from food for the purpose of dedicating yourself to prayer. Going without food and not putting in prayer is not a Biblical fast.

FASTING THAT GOD DOES NOT HONOR

- In Isaiah 58 some people separated fasting from repentance and devotion to God. They skipped meals and thought they were really doing something spiritual.
- Fasting was used to cover other sinful motives or practices. Isaiah 58:41
- The Pharisees fasted for appearance rather than as a genuine act of worship to God.

PURPOSES IN FASTING

- **When face impossible circumstances.**
Nehemiah 1:4 "So it was when I heard these words that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of Heaven."

- **To change the destiny of a people, a city, a nation.**

Nehemiah 9:1 "Now on the 24th day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads."

1 Samuel 7:6, Jonah 3:5

- **To hear from God fresh and new and to seek His direction.**

Ezra 8:21 "Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions."

- **To receive God's aid in battle and to defeat the enemy.**

2 Chronicles 20:3 "And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah."

Esther 4:16

- **To get hold of God to receive specific answer to prayer.**

Acts 10:30 "So Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, "Cornelius your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God."

Hebrews 5:7

- **To seek the mind of God.**

Acts 13:2 "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away."

Acts 14:23

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- **To prepare for ministering in the power and grace of God.**

Matthew 4:2 "Jesus' ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit commenced after His season of fasting."

- **To obtain a greater degree of God's authority and power.**

Matthew 17:21 "However this one does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

- **To afflict the soul, dig down, pull out anything in our mind, will, and emotion that would hinder the life and power of God fully expressed in our lives.**

Leviticus 16:29, Psalms 35:13, Proverbs 20:27, Hebrews 4:12

- **To break the strongholds of the physical appetites.**

That your physical appetites would not rule your body, but that your spirit would rule your physical appetites.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FASTING AND PRAYING?

- Deepens humility
- Increases hunger for God to work in our lives and ministries
- Intensifies prayer concentration
- Solidifies determination
- Feeds your faith
- Sensitizes and opens you up more to the Holy Spirit's working in your life
- Fires earnestness and zeal - honest sincerity in your walk with God

TIPS ON FASTING & PRAYER

PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Be sure you are in good health, or consult your doctor prior to fasting.
- If you are taking medication, be careful and wise in your fasting.

- Professional supervision should be given to:

- ✓ Those who are thin or emaciated
- ✓ Those prone to eating disorders
- ✓ Those who suffer weakness or anemia
- ✓ Those with ulcers, cancer, blood disease, or chronic problems with a major organ(s)
- ✓ Those who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer any other blood sugar problem
- ✓ Women who are pregnant or nursing

- Begin slowly. If you have not fasted before, start out with half a day, or one day a week, then you can progress to a couple of days a week or more.

- It is recommended that you continue to drink liquids during your fast, including water and juices.

- There are several different types of fasts found in Scripture.

- ✓ Absolute fasting from foods and liquids (not recommended unless doing advanced fasting and under supervision).
- ✓ Absolute fasting from food but drinking liquids including juices (highly recommended for shorter fasts and eventually for extended fasts).
- ✓ Partial food fasts for extended fasts like that of Daniel who for 21 days abstained from everything but vegetables, fruits, and grains (recommended as you begin experimenting with extended fasts).

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Arrange for a special extended time with God, to seek His face.
 - ✓ Read His Word and pray during what would normally be meal-times (and at other times as you can).

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- ✓ Read a book that will stimulate you spiritually, especially in an area, direction, or burden that you sense God might be directing you in.
- ✓ Be aware that Satan will try to dishearten, discourage, and distract you. When you sense that being the case, immediately go to God in prayer against Satanic activity in this regard. Satan knows that this can be a powerful time between you and God, so he will bring anything into your life to compromise your time and relationship with God.
- ✓ Make time for your worship to God with good worship and praise music, readings, and prayer.
- Specifically bring your personal needs before the Lord, intercede for your loved ones, your friends, your church, spiritual leaders, your community, city, and specific issues in your life and church in carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ (use a prayer list).
- Confess and repent of your sins as God brings them to your attention, receive God's grace and forgiveness, make any commitments necessary in repentance or restitution necessary.
- Make sure you take time to listen to God. Keep a pad of paper and a pen handy to record what He speaks to you about.
- Spend time with others sharing about what God is doing in your life, share prayer burdens, and celebrate answers to prayer.

THE 4-R's & SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

• Repent of the sin.

Call it what it is. It may be a heart attitude, like bitterness, rebellion, or pride. It could be a behavior, like alcohol abuse, immorality, or stealing. It could even be a feeling, like rejection, inferiority, or shame.

Note: in the instance of abuse or wounding, the initial sin is not yours. Your sin a response anger, fear, unforgiveness, bitterness, shame, etc. Recognize this sin and confess it!

Acts 3:19 (NIV) "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

• Receive God's forgiveness and cleansing.

Ask Him to fill you anew with His Holy Spirit to strengthen you in your thoughts, behavior, and emotions.

Psalm 103:8-12 (NIV) "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will He harbor His anger forever; He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

1 John 1:9 (NIV) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

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- **Rebuke the enemy's hold on you because of this sin.**

Take your rightful place of authority through the power of Jesus' death and resurrection and renounce any comfort or "payoff" received from this sin.

Matthew 4:10 (NIV) "Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan!'"

James 4:7 (NIV) "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

- **Replace all lies with God's TRUTH!**

Galatians 2:20 (NIV) "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

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HOW TO DIRECT YOUR PRAYERS

- **Personal renewal and sensitivity on our hearts to receive more of God**

Revival followed the great British evangelist Gypsy Smith everywhere he went. When asked by a group of revival seekers, he shared with them how they could make a difference with their lives the way he had with his: "Go home. Lock yourself in your room. Kneel in the middle of the floor, and with a piece of chalk, draw a circle around yourself. There, on your knees, pray fervently and brokenly that God would start a revival within that chalk circle."

- **Revival in the Church of America**

2 Chronicles 7:14 "Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land."

- **Renewed heart to reach the 253 with the love and truth of Jesus**

Matthew 9:37–38 "He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

- **Salvation for our family, friends, co-workers, and community to have saving relationship with Jesus**

1 Timothy 2:3–4 (ESV) "This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."