

## BREAKING THE FAST...

"Breaking" the fast is the critical phase of fasting. While your body is in the resting mode, your stomach shrinks and your intestines become idle, so solid food must be re-introduced very slowly.

Further, if you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will linger for days. In terms of resuming any sort of exercise routine, the advice is the same.

## Fasting... A Spiritual Discipline

*Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life.*

Fasting and prayer can also work on a much grander scale. According to Scripture, personal experience and observation, I am convinced that when God's people fast with a proper Biblical motive - seeking God's face not His hand - with a broken, repentant and contrite spirit, God will hear from heaven and heal our lives, our churches, our communities, our nation and world. Fasting and prayer can bring about revival.

*The awesome power can be released through you as you fast, through the enabling of the Holy Spirit.*

## OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN PRAYER

**MONDAY & WEDNESDAY  
ZOOM PRAYER TIME**  
*praying for YFM, our community  
& Sunday's prayer requests*

Mondays & Wednesday | 9am  
request the Zoom link by contact  
the church office

## A Brief Guide To Fasting

Prayer  
&  
Fasting

**Upsilon**  
Free Methodist

1800 Packard Rd. | yfmc@ypsifree.org |  
ypsifree.org | 734.482.2055

Love God | Love All People |  
Follow Christ Together

***"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."***  
**Ephesians 6:18 (NLT)**

**Fasting is simply abstaining from food for the process of purifying oneself from sin and focusing the time of eating into prayer for a greater work of God.**

**WHY FAST?**

If you do not already know of the power and importance of fasting, here are some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast; "when you fast," not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life-and make you a channel of revival to others.

Fasting and prayer are the only disciplines that fulfill the requirements of II Chronicles 7:14: *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."* You will discover more time to pray and seek God's face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

**PREPARING TO FAST...**

**Spiritually**

In preparation for this special time with God, I strongly urge you to examine your heart, and detect any unconfessed sin. Scripture records that God always requires His people to repent of their sins before He will hear their prayers. King David said:

*Come and hear, all of you who reverence the Lord, and I will tell you what he did for me: For I cried to him for help, with praises ready on my tongue. He would not have listened if I had not confessed my sins. But he listened! He heard my prayer! He paid attention to it! Blessed be God who didn't turn away when I was praying, and didn't refuse me his kindness and love. (Psalm 66:16-20)*

In your prayers, confess not only obvious sins, but less obvious ones as well. The sins of omission as well as the sins of commission experiences. These may be experiences leaving your first love for our Lord: worldly-mindedness, self-centeredness, spiritual indifference, and unwillingness to share your faith in Christ with others, not spending sufficient time in God's Word and in prayer, a poor relationship with your spouse, your children, your pastor or other members of your church.

**Physically**

Although fasting is primarily a spiritual discipline, it begins in the physical realm. You should not fast without specific physical preparation.

If you plan on fasting for several days, you will find it helpful to begin by eating smaller meals before you abstain altogether. Resist the urge to have that "last big feast" before the fast. Cutting down on your meals a few days before you begin the fast will signal your mind, stomach & appetite that less food is acceptable.

Some health professionals suggest eating only raw foods for two days before starting a fast. It is also recommended weaning yourself off caffeine and sugar products to ease your initial hunger or discomfort at the early stages of your fast.

**FOCUSING THROUGH THE FAST...**

Receiving God's best blessing from a fast requires solid commitment. Arranging special time each day with God is absolutely crucial in attaining intimate communion with the Father. You must devote yourself to seeking God's face, even (and especially) during those times in which you feel weak, vulnerable or irritable. Read His Word and pray during what were mealtimes. Meditate on Him when you awake in the night. Sing praises to Him whenever you please. Focus on your Heavenly Father and make every act one of praise and worship. God will enable you to experience His command to "pray without ceasing" as you seek His presence.

As you enter this time of heightened spiritual devotion, be aware that Satan will do everything he can to pull you away from your prayer and Bible reading time. When you feel the enemy trying to discourage you, immediately go to God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your resolve in the face of difficulties and temptations.

The enemy makes you a target because he knows that fasting is the most powerful of all Christian disciplines and that God may have something very special to show you as you wait upon Him and seek His face. Satan does not want you to grow in your faith, and will do anything from making you hungry and grumpy to bringing up trouble in your family or at work to stop you. Make prayer your shield against such attacks.

**PHYSICAL SIDE EFFECTS...**

Although fasting can be an indescribable blessing, it is not always easy for everyone. In this time of discipline, self-sacrifice and reflection, do not be surprised if you experience mental and physical discomforts.

To begin, you may experience some inner conflict when you deny yourself the pleasure of eating delicious food. Any sort of fast may sometimes leave you feeling impatient and irritable.

During your fast, you may have your struggles, discomforts, spiritual victories and failures. In the morning you may feel like you are on top of the world, but by evening you may be wrestling with the flesh - sorely tempted to raid the refrigerator and counting how many more days are left in your fast. This is especially true if you are new at fasting. To counteract temptations like these, spend extra time with the Lord. Step outside for fresh air and a moderate walk of a mile or two, and talk to the Lord as you walk along. And in the process, always keep on sipping water or juice frequently during your waking hours.