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CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

TWENTY ONE DAY FAST

A Guide for Fasting

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Purpose, Options & Tips

Why Should We Fast?

Purpose



Fasting is a Biblical practice of worship intended to strengthen your faith, commitment, and dependence upon God. By fasting we express worship to God, practice a reliance on God, and pause to examine our lives and repent of any ways that may be leading us away from God's purposes for our lives. A fast can take many forms. The most traditional form is to fast from food or certain foods. Other options include fasting from technology, from the internet, from tv, or any other regular habit of life. Choose an option that is both challenging and realistic as you seek to honor God with your fast.

Biblical Reasons to Fast:

- Humbling yourself before God – 1 Kings 21:27
- Expressing passionate devotion to God – Psalm 69:9-10
- Being open to the Lord speaking to you – Acts 13:2
- Asking for healing – 2 Samuel 12:16; Psalm 35:13
- Seeking guidance for conflict or danger – 2 Chronicles 20:3; Judges 20:26
- Asking for protection from danger or affliction – 2 Chronicles 20:1-9; Ezra 8:22-23
- Asking the Lord for favor with someone – Esther 4:16; Nehemiah 1:3-11
- Mourning a loss, death or defeat – 1 Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:12; Esther 4:3
- Entrusting appointed leaders to God's care – Acts 14:23
- Expressing regret for sin and commitment to change – 1 Kings 21:27; Nehemiah 9:1

“Daniel Fast” — In the Book of Daniel (chapter 10) we are told that Daniel fasted for 21 days. In verse 3, Daniel says, “All that time I had eaten no rich food. No meat or wine crossed my lips.” From Daniel’s example, you could choose to eat only vegetables, and fast from meat, bread, and sweets. For many who are unaccustomed to fasting, this is good option for a 21 day fast, and will facilitate plenty of opportunity to grow in faith, commitment, and dependence on God.

Partial Fast — There are many ways to do a partial fast. For instance, you could choose to fast from sunrise to sunset, or from 6am to 6pm. As a partial fast, you could choose to give up one kind of food, or drink. You could choose to fast on weekends or certain days of the week. The point of a partial fast is to participate in a realistically challenging way with some freedom to adjust for your circumstances. Remember that fasting is not a way to prove yourself, but a way to give your attention to God.

Media Fast — This kind of fast is a great option if you have health issues that prevent you from fasting from food or certain foods. In this option, decide to refrain from all or specific forms of media. Take a 21 day break from Facebook, Instagram, and other social media sources. Decide not to watch TV, News Programs, Netflix, or other forms of on-screen entertainment. At the end of the fast, you can choose how to return to those forms of media.

Other Options — Fasting can take many forms. Other options include not making any non-essential purchases for 21 days, or refraining from following sports (games, news, etc.). Ask the Lord to give you another idea of what you might fast from in order to more deliberately devote your attention to him.

Complete Fast — A complete fast is only drinking liquids (water or juice) while abstaining from all food. **To be clear, we are not calling you to fast from all food for 21-days.** However, one option is to do a complete fast for 1 day per week (for example, maybe Saturdays) and then possibly a partial fast (e.g. fasting from lunch) then other days of the week. You should only choose this option if you do not have any health reasons that would preclude you from doing so. If you are uncertain, then either choose a different form of fasting or speak with your doctor. Be sure to consider the health tips given below under the heading, Be Healthy. Please remember that whatever option you choose is intended to facilitate worship, not prove your physical or spiritual abilities.

You can make the most of fasting by having a plan. While fasting, you will recognize your appetite, desire, or impulse to do the things you have committed not to do; when that happens, take a moment to acknowledge your devotion and dependence on God. Plan to spend extra time praying, reading scripture or journaling. The point of fasting is not to experience emptiness, but to receive a greater fullness of what God offers you. Consider the following actions that can help you make the most of fasting:

Pray— Spend time praying instead of whatever you are fasting from. In place of a meal, pray. Instead of checking your news feed, pray. Instead of watching tv, pray. Take advantage of the increased time you have to pray while fasting. Follow the 21 Day Prayer Guide provided to you. A weekly prayer guide gives you a variety of prayer requests concerning several areas of life. In addition, you are given a daily prayer guide to help you pray with the words of scripture straight from the Daily Reading Plan.

Read the Bible— While you are fasting, spend time feeding your soul with the Word of God. When Jesus fasted for 40 days, He responded to temptation by speaking truth from the Bible. Choose to follow a plan that will keep you engaged in scripture. Consider one of the following plans:

- Read the CA Daily Reading Plan provided for you. You can also find this plan on the CA App, and on cachurch.com under the “Resources” tab.
- Read the Gospel of John (the fourth book in the New Testament). There are 21 chapters in that book. Read a chapter a day during the fast.
- Follow along with the “Daily Touch Points with CA Staff” on Facebook, YouTube, and on cachurch.com also under the “Resources” tab.

Journal— Keep a record of what you experience and observe while you are fasting. Trust the Lord to take this opportunity to speak to you, reveal truth to you, encourage you, or even correct you. Keep track of what you are praying, reading in the Bible, or noticing in your time spent with Jesus.

- Write about what you are praying (write out a prayer or list prayer requests)
- Write out a verse of scripture you want to remember.
- Write a name or idea you have, and ask the Lord for a reason or action to take.
- Write a list of concerns you want to share with God.
- Write a list of reasons you are thankful.

Important Guidelines Tips

Be Prepared

There are responsible ways to fast. Pay attention to how you are responding physically, mentally, and emotionally.

- Prepare for physical strain. When you fast from food your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Be sure to drink plenty of water.
- Prepare for emotional strain. You may find emotions rise while you are fasting because you are denying your body the comfort of food. Be careful not to burden others with those emotions and instead offer your thoughts, emotions, prayers, etc., to God.
- Wean yourself off of caffeine a few days prior to the fast to reduce headaches while fasting.
- Identify a place of solitude [a bedroom, patio, or a quiet route to stroll in your neighborhood] where you can periodically retreat for quiet moments while fasting.
- Share your plan for fasting with at least one person who is close to you if only for them to be aware in case unexpected health concerns arise.
- Identify, as best you can, where in your life you would most like to know God more - being one with him and with other followers of Jesus. Share your hopes with God in prayer telling him why you are fasting and what you are hoping to experience.

Important Guidelines Tips

While Fasting

- Once you begin to fast, expect your body to give you signals of hunger mostly at mealtimes. This is a good time to go to a solitary place and pray.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the fast. Being well hydrated will reduce headaches.
- Limit your activity and exercise only moderately.
- If you begin to experience health concerns during your fast that cannot be remedied simply with a little rest, then stop fasting, begin to slowly eat some fruit and/or vegetables and consider contacting a health professional.
- Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God.
- Pray as often as you can throughout the day.
- Expect God to move in your heart as you draw close to Him.

Ending Well

- Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. No Double Doubles from IN-N-OUT! Start with something light — a salad, or fresh fruit are good options.
- Begin eating solid food gradually and start with small portions.
- Reflect on how fasting allowed you to draw closer to God and to rely more on Him. Review any words, prayers or memories you captured in your journal.
- Consider any change or action you recognize God is urging you to take.
- Share with someone you can trust to help confirm what God has spoken or revealed to you, and what change or action you want to take.
- Make a commitment to follow through in response to God.

Important Guidelines Tips

Be Healthy

If you have concerns about your physical ability to fast, please consult a physician before you choose an appropriate form of fasting. Your doctor can provide advice on how you can participate in a 21 day fast.

Reasons NOT to Fast from Food:

- Pregnant
- Nursing a baby
- Diabetic
- Suffer from a heart condition
- Poor health

You can choose a form of fasting that does not require altering a healthy diet.

Reasons to Stop Fasting from Food: If you experience any of these symptoms, stop fasting and consider talking with a doctor.

- Becoming abnormally dizzy
- Having chest pains
- Your heart begins to race, or you feel jittery
- Severe health conditions arise such as vomiting, diarrhea or shortness of breath.

Weekly Prayer Guide

Repeats Every 7 Days

TWENTY ONE
DAY FAST

Sundays

Christian Assembly — unity of the church; Men's Ministry; Women's Ministry; Fusion (young adults); leadership (pastors, elders, group leaders, etc)

Mondays

Government Officials — city, county, state and national leaders; guidance and wisdom for elections; peace in our nation; protection from wildfires

Tuesdays

Work — co-workers; the unemployed seeking jobs; productivity; provision; joy at work

Wednesdays

Youth & Children — students; schools; teachers; parents; Kids Church; CA Student Ministries; the foster care system

Thursdays

Evangelism — the lost to be saved by the power of the gospel; the unconvinced to accept Jesus; the unbelieving to trust God's offer of forgiveness and new life; our church planters and their churches; our Kingdom partners in Eastern Europe, Nigeria, Tanzania, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.

Fridays

Healing — those who are sick; those who are grieving; those suffering mental illness; the medical community and first responders; healthy recovery from pandemic (useful treatments and/or vaccines)

Saturdays

Biblical Justice — needs in our cities; homeless, poor, or disadvantaged neighbors; safety in our neighborhoods; our Kingdom partners serving the needy in Mexico, Kenya, the Philippines, Central Asia, and Los Angeles

Day 1 || Sept 16 || Romans 16

Lord, help me be aware of anyone (including myself) who cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things contrary to what I have been taught. Lord, help me to be obedient to you. Give me wisdom to choose to do what is right and to stay innocent of any wrong. I receive the grace of our Lord Jesus that you offer me. Now all glory to you, God. You are able to make me strong. That is what the Good News of the gospel tells me. All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever! Amen.

Day 2 || Sept 17 || Colossians 1

Lord, the same Good News that came to me is going out all over the world and it is for everyone. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed my life from the day I first heard and understood the truth about your wonderful grace. Help me to live in ways that always honor and please the you, Lord, and in my life produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, I want to grow as I learn to know you, God, better and better. Strengthen me and my fellow Christ followers with all your glorious power so we will have all the endurance and patience we need. May we be filled with joy, always thanking you, Father. You have enabled us to share in the inheritance that belongs to your people, who live in the light. For you rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of your dear Son, 14 who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

Day 3 || Sept 18 || Colossians 2

Lord, I want my life rooted deeply in you, and my life built on you. Then my faith will grow strong in truth, and I want to overflow with thankfulness. Help me not be captivated with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from you, Christ. For in Christ can be found all the fullness of who you are, God, in a human body. So, I am complete through my union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. For I was buried with Christ when I was baptized, and with him I was raised to new life because I trust your mighty power, God. It is you who raised Christ from the dead. I was dead because of my sins and because my sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then, God, you made me alive with Christ, for you forgave all my sins. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

Day 4 || Sept 19 || Colossians 3

Lord, you chose me to be holy along with the people you love. Help me to clothe myself with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. I know that I will need to make allowance for other's faults just as others will need to make allowance for my faults. Help me forgive anyone who offends me. I remember, Lord, that you forgave me, so I must forgive others. Above all, I want to clothe myself with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. Thank you for helping me. Amen.

Day 5 || Sept 20 || Colossians 4

Lord, please help me to live wisely among those who are not believers and help me to make the most of every opportunity. I want my conversations to be gracious and attractive so that I can have the right response for everyone. I need your help to show and tell others the love you offer. In Jesus' name, I ask for help. Amen.

Day 6 || Sept 21 || Galatians 1

God, my Father and my Lord, Jesus Christ, give me grace and peace. Jesus, I believe you gave your life for my sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue me from this evil world in which I live. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

Day 7 || Sept 22 || Galatians 2

Lord, help me to trust and remember that my old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So, I live in this earthly body by trusting you, Jesus, who loved me and gave yourself for me. Thank you for new life with you, Jesus. In your name I pray. Amen.

Day 8 || Sept 23 || Galatians 3

Lord, along with all who believe, I am one of your children through my faith in Christ Jesus. And those of us who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile (insiders and outsiders) slave or free, male and female. We are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to live out this truth in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 9 || Sept 24 || Galatians 4

Lord, you have me and other believers your children, and you have sent the Spirit of your Son, Jesus, into our hearts, I call out to you, "Abba, Father" (which means you accept me as a beloved child who can call you daddy). I am no longer a slave of any kind. God, I am your own child. And since you I am your child, God, you have made me your their. Help me to receive all that you have for me in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 10 || Sept 25 || Galatians 5

Lord, let the Holy Spirit guide my life. Then I won't be doing what my sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what your Spirit wants. Holy Spirit, give me desires that are the opposite of what my sinful nature desires. I know these two forces are constantly fighting each other, so I am not free to carry out my good intentions. But I believe that you, Jesus, have nailed the passions and desires of my sinful nature to your cross and crucified them there. I am now living by the Spirit, and I want to follow the Spirit's leading in every part of my life. I trust you to help me do that in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 11 || Sept 26 || Galatians 6

Lord, if I know any brother or sister in my church family is living in an ongoing patter of sin, give me the courage and compassion to gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And help me to be careful not to fall into the same temptation myself. Teach me and enable me to bear other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ, to love one another. Help me to recognize that I am capable of needing someone to do the same for me, and I need others to bear my burdens, too. Help me to not fool myself into thinking that I am above that. Thank you for loving me in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 12 || Sept 27 || Ephesians 1

Lord, you have placed me in a church family in which there are people who live with strong faith in you and your love for God's people everywhere. I am so thankful, God, for my church. God, you are the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I ask you to give us your spiritual wisdom and insight so that we might grow in our knowledge of you. I pray that our hearts will be flooded with light so that we can understand the confident hope you have given to us. You have even called us to be your holy people. Lord, I also pray that you help us understand the incredible greatness of your power for us who believe. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at your right hand in the heavenly realms. Now, Jesus, you are far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. God, I trust that you have put all things under the authority of Christ and have made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is your body, Lord, made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself. Fill us, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 13 || Sept 28 || Ephesians 2

God, you saved me by your grace when I believed. I can't take credit for this; it is a gift from you, God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things I have done, so I can't boast about it. For I am your masterpiece, God. You are making me something new in Christ Jesus, so I can do the good things you planned for me long ago. With all who receive your grace, I am carefully joined together in Jesus, becoming a holy temple for, you, Lord. Through you, anyone who receives Jesus, is being made part of this dwelling where you live by you Spirit. I trust that you live in me in Jesus name. Amen.

Day 14 || Sept 29 || Ephesians 3

Lord, when I think of all you have done for me — all you have given me and all you offer me — I fall to my knees and pray to you, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from your glorious, unlimited resources you will empower me with inner strength through your Spirit. Then, Jesus, I welcome you to make your home in my heart as I trust in you. Lord, I want to be deeply rooted in your love. Lord, empower me to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep your love is. I want to experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then I will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from you, God. Now all glory to you, God, who is able, through your mighty power at work within me, to accomplish infinitely more than I might ask or think. 21 Glory to you, Lord, in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Day 15 || Sept 30 || Ephesians 4

Lord, I want to lead a life worthy of my calling, for I have been called by you, God. Help me to be humble and gentle. I need your help to be patient with others just as they will need to be patient with me, making allowance for each other's faults because of the love you have give us for one another. Give me strength to make every effort to keep myself united with my fellow believers —united in the Spirit — binding ourselves together with peace. For, Lord, I believe there is one body and one Spirit, just as we have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. And Lord, you given each one of us a special gift through your generosity that we know because of Christ. In his name we pray. Amen.

Day 16 || Oct 1 || Ephesians 5

Lord, help me to carefully determine what pleases you. I don't want to take part in any worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, Lord, I ask that you expose them so I can be aware. Show me any evil intentions — like shining a light on them — for the light makes everything visible. I want to be careful how I live — not like a fool, but like those who are wise. I need your help and I trust you for it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 17 || Oct 2 || Ephesians 6

Lord, give me strength from your strength and mighty power. Protect me with your armor, God, so that I will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For I am not fighting against flesh- and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, God, cover me with every piece of your armor so I will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle I will still be standing firm. I trust you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 18 || Oct 3 || Philippians 1

Lord, I pray that my love will overflow more and more, and that I will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want to understand what really matters, so that I may live a pure and blameless life until the day of Christ's return. May I always be filled with the fruit of my salvation—the righteous character produced in my life by you, Jesus. Lord, I want to bring you much glory and praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

Day 19 || Oct 4 || Philippians 2

Lord, help me today to work hard at showing the results of my salvation, obeying you, God, with deep reverence and fear. For you, Lord, are working in me, giving me the desire and the power to do what pleases you. Help me to do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one has reason to criticize me. I need your help to live a clean, innocent life as your child, God, shining like a bright light in a world full of crooked and perverse people. Lord, I'm holding firmly to your word of life. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

● **Day 20 || Oct 5 || Philippians 3**

Lord, thank you for making me right with you — and accepting me — by my faith. I want to know you, Jesus, and experience the mighty power that raised you from the dead. I'm willing even to suffer with you, sharing in your death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead! I know that I have not already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which you, Christ Jesus, first possessed me. I am yours in your name. Amen.

● **Day 21 || Oct 6 || Philippians 4**

Lord, help me to not worry about anything; instead, help me remember to pray about everything. I am so thankful, God, that I can tell you what I need, and I thank you for all you have done. I am trusting you to let me experience your peace, God, which exceeds anything I can understand. Guard my heart and mind with your peace, Lord, as I live in Christ Jesus. All day help me fix my thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Help me to think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Lord, help me keep putting into practice all I have learned and received from the truth of your word—everything. God of peace, I trust you to be with me. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

This completes our 21 Day Fast. We have expressed our devotion and our need for God. Trust that the Lord has heard our prayers. Look with hope for what God will do in your life and in our church family. To God be all the glory. Amen!