

Fasting—Seeking the Face and Will of God

Fasting is about focus, not food.

The priority of fasting is focusing on God, seeking him and knowing his ways. Going without food has the effect of turning down the extraneous noise of our busy worlds, allowing us to focus more intently on God. Fasting and prayer heighten the sensitivity of our hearts to the will and ways of God.

Fasting is about our weakness, not our strength.

Don't allow yourself to become impressed with your ability to deprive yourself of food. Instead, be humbled by the fact that going without food for just one day can make you grumpy and irritable. You'll be surprised by how many times during the day your mind drifts toward thoughts of food—simply by missing a meal or two. Be humbled by how much of your thoughts and attitudes are manipulated by your body's selfish cries.

Fasting is about our hearts, not our bodies.

God is the only one who can satisfy our heart's desires. Fasting is about hungering for him more than for food. When we confess our sin, pour out our requests, call out for mercy, and seek God's will—God responds. He doesn't always respond with answers we understand, but he generally responds by coming near to us and relating to us more intimately.

Tips on Fasting

- Determine the reason your fasting. If you're participating in a special emphasis of our church, some prayer priorities will be provided. Use these to guide your prayer time.
- Spend some time in silence before the Lord. Read Scripture and give yourself quiet time to reflect upon it, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart.
- Determine how long you're going to fast and do your best to stick to your plan. (Start with one day. Remember the length of the fast isn't necessarily impressive to God. For longer fasts, touch base with Kirk if you'd like more information.)
- Don't cram yourself with food before or after. Fasting involves some physical discomfort, expect it.
- Plan when during the day you can have some minutes to pray. First thing in the morning is important for starting a day of fasting. Perhaps you will have time during a break or a time normally designated for a meal.
- When hunger pain hits (and it will) use it as an alarm clock reminding you of your weakness and dependence upon God. If you can't stop to pray at that moment, declare to God that you hunger for him and his will more than you do for food. Humble yourself before God.
- Drink water as often as you want—the more the better.
- Treat others kindly and honestly during your fast. When our actions do not line up with our fasting, God is angered and rejects our fasting.
- Trust God with the results. Don't judge the success or failure of a fast by your ability to perceive results—let God be God.