

## Practical tips for Fasting

Pastor Randy Sims

- If you have never fasted before, please consult your physician. If you are pregnant or have diabetes or heart problems, you should not fast from food. You can fast from other things: certain types of food only, media, etc.
- Start with fasting from one meal. Use this time to pray and meditate on a portion of God's word. You may then move to 24 hour (2 meals) fasts. Then 36 hours (3 meals). Many choose to start their fast a sundown (this was the beginning of the Jewish day). However, there is no wrong time to start your fast.
- If you fast for longer periods of time, it is helpful to detox yourself from caffeine and to eat smaller portions of raw foods leading up to your fast.
- I drink only water or fruit juice (such as grape, peach, pineapple, grapefruit, V8 Splash, etc. Avoid juice with high acid content such as orange and tomato). Drink 8-12 ounces 4 or 5 times per day. Consume water throughout the day.
- Break your fast by eating fresh fruits and vegetables and easy to digest foods (yogurt, baked potatoes, etc. for a few days following a week-long fast. I do not eat meat until my digestive system is functioning normally again (usually 3 days).
- During your fast you will notice everything about your smelling worse (breath, sweat, and other bodily functions). I am no medical doctor but I have been told this is because your body is ridding itself of unhealthy toxins that have built up in your system.
- Do not chew gum. The chewing motion tells your stomach food is coming. The body prepares your stomach to digest food. When the food doesn't come, it can be harmful to your digestive system.
- Take time to rest. You will not have as much stamina as you normally have when eating. Do not do heavy workouts or strenuous physical activity.
- You may feel a bit weak or dizzy. Slow down and try not to make sudden movements.
- The hunger pains are usually worse between days 2 and 4.
- Coming off your fast, plan to adopt healthier exercise routines and eating habits. Fasting reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and should be cared for as such. Fasting has greatly increased my appreciation for food.
- I like to meditate on one scripture passage or one topic during my fast. I also recommend keeping a journal of your times of fasting.
- Caution: you will lose weight when you fast for several days. However, the weight will quickly return unless you change your habits after you fast.
- Family considerations: I do not fast on special family days (Christmas, birthdays, Mother's Day, etc.). There are times to fast and times to feast! At times I will pull aside to pray and at other times I will visit with my family while they are eating.
- How do you handle people offering you food? "No thank you." "I'm not eating today."
- Should we not tell people we are fasting? How would we know anything about fasting unless someone told us? I think this goes back to motive. We do not talk about it to draw attention to ourselves but we can share what we have learned through our experiences.