

INTERCEDE

# BEFORE WE PRAY AND FAST

Let's prepare for this wonderful opportunity to hear from and commune with God individually and as his church.

# WHY SHOULD WE FAST?

## **God expects us to fast.**

Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face.

—Matthew 6:16-17

## **Jesus fasted.**

And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

—Matthew 4:2

## **The early church fasted.**

Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

—Acts 13:3 (see also Acts 14:23)

## **Fasting demonstrates humility before God.**

But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer kept returning to my bosom.

—Psalm 35:13 (See also 1 Kings 21:27-29; Ezra 8:21)

# WHY SHOULD WE FAST?

**Fasting makes us sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.**

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

—Luke 4:1-2 (See also Acts 13:2, Matthew 17:21, Mark 9:29)

**Fasting is good for our health.**

**Fasting brings about personal and national spiritual revival.**

And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

—2 Chronicles 7:14

So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

—Daniel 9:3

# TYPES OF FAST



## NORMAL

a person goes without food for a predetermined amount of time; water is allowed and necessary



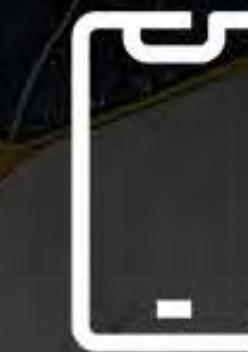
## PARTIAL

a person only eats certain kinds of food for a period of time or have just one to two meals a day



## JUICE

a partial fast specifically restricted only to juices



## OTHER

fasting from activities or comforts—like social media, television, or other distractions

# STARTING YOUR FAST

It is important to start and end your fast gradually.

Start cutting down on your food intake, especially those with caffeine (coffee, tea, soft drinks) days before you fast.

More importantly, pray in advance for God to sustain you physically, mentally, and spiritually during your fast.

# ENDING YOUR FAST

For the first few meals after your fast, do not immediately go back to your normal food intake. Taking soft food in moderate amounts is best to allow your body to adjust and get back to its normal digestion.

# TAKE NOTE

While there are benefits in fasting,  
some should not fast without  
professional medical supervision.

If you are:

**PHYSICALLY TOO THIN**  
**PRONE TO EATING DISORDERS**  
**SUFFERING FROM WEAKNESS OR ANEMIA**  
**DIAGNOSED WITH AILMENTS THAT REQUIRE CONTINUOUS NUTRITION**  
**PREGNANT OR NURSING**  
**TAKING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

Consult your doctor before you begin your fast.