

CLASS 7 || FASTING

I. What it Is: Fasting

Fasting is the spiritual discipline of partially or fully abstaining from food (and in some cases, liquids) for a period of time with a spiritual purpose.

Esther 4:12-17. Esther called a fast for the relief and deliverance of her people, the Jews.

Fasting does not "earn" us the answer to our _____. God cannot be blackmailed or manipulated, not even by sincere prayer and _____. God wants to answer our prayers and He does so out of His abundant _____. The answers to our prayers are already in the spirit realm, but fasting simply prepares us to receive from God.

The discipline of fasting enables the believer to move from a _____ relationship with God to a _____ and more intimate relationship with Him. Fasting demonstrates the depth of our _____ for something. God honors acts of faith and sincere desires. Jesus expects His followers to fast, and He said God rewards fasting.

II. Types of Fasts

1. Complete: Abstaining from food and water.

Acts 9:8-9. Saul was blind for three days, and he did not eat or drink anything during that time.

2. Absolute: Abstaining from _____ but drinking only water.

Luke 4:1-2. Jesus ate nothing for forty days.

Answers

food / surface / fasting / deeper / prayers / desire / grace

3. Partial: Varying kinds, for example, vegetables only, fruit and vegetables only, no meat, or unsweetened fruit and/or vegetable juices only.

Daniel 10:1-3. Daniel fasted for three weeks. He ate no meat and drank no wine.

4. Corporate Fast. Involves God and a _____ of believers. The group can be a family, church family, or another.

Jonah 3:4-10. The Ninevites believed Jonah's message and called a corporate fast of repentance.

5. Personal Fast. Just you and God and is often done in _____.

Nehemiah 1:1-4. Nehemiah fasted and prayed before the God of heaven when he heard that the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.

Often others do not know when one is doing a _____ fast.

Matthew 6:16-18. When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting.

Matthew 6:16-18

- a. All believers are to fast—*when* you fast, not *if* you fast.
- b. Our fasting should be obvious only to our Father.
- c. Our father who sees what is done in secret, will reward us.

Answers

private / group / personal

III. Preparing for a Fast

1. Pray for God's _____ and for strength, focus, and the resolve to be fully committed to the fast.
2. Decide on a _____ for the fast.
3. Prepare prayer _____ or issues that you will be bringing before the Lord during the fast.
4. Prepare scriptures to read and _____ upon
5. Choose a time that is free of or clear your calendar of social events or anything that will _____ you.
6. Remove _____ (i.e., if you like French fries, stay away from McDonalds).
7. Find an accountability _____, especially when doing a prolonged fast.
8. How long to fast. A complete fast is usually shorter than an absolute fast, and an absolute fast is usually shorter than a partial fast.

Several factors, such as the following, should be considered when determining how long to fast.

- a. The type of fast.
- b. Your schedule.
- c. Your family and spousal obligations.
- d. Your health. One should always take their health concerns into consideration before starting a fast and should do the same when determining the type of fast they should do and how long they should fast.

Answers

meditate / purpose / partner / distract / points / leading / temptations

IV. Benefits of Fasting

1. Positions us to _____ God more clearly when He speaks.
2. Gives us more _____ to pray and to spend more time in the _____.
3. Healing

Isaiah 58:8a. Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear.

4. Deliverance from sin and generational curses.

Isaiah 58:6. Fasting will loosen chains of injustice, untie the cords of the yoke, set the oppressed free, and break every yoke.

5. Righteousness.

Isaiah 58:8b. Then your _____ will go before you.

6. God's glory and protection

Isaiah 58:8c. The _____ of the Lord will be your rear guard.

7. Direction from the Lord.

Isaiah 58:11. The Lord will _____ you always.

8. God's elevation.

Isaiah 58:10,14. Your light will rise in the darkness. God will make you ride on the high places of the earth.

9. God's revelation, clarity.

Isaiah 58:10. Your light will rise in darkness and your gloom will become like midday.

Answers

glory / time / righteousness / hear / guide / Word

10. God's miraculous provision.

Isaiah 58:11. God will satisfy your soul in scorched and dry places and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.

11. Generational blessings.

Isaiah 58:12. You will raise up and restore the age-old foundations of buildings that have been laid waste.

V. Examples of Fasting

From each scripture, write down at least one observation that stands out to you.

1. The Israelites for victory over the Benjamites (Judges 20:26).
2. David for his son of Uriah's wife to live (2 Samuel 12:16).
3. Ezra and his followers so that they might humble themselves before God and ask Him for a safe journey (Ezra 8:21-23) .
4. Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-2).
5. The widow Anna in the temple (Luke 2:36-38).
6. Moses before he received the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28).
7. Daniel in order to receive guidance from God (Daniel 9:3)
8. Nehemiah before beginning a major building project (Nehemiah 1:4).

Notes
