

# FASTING GUIDE

## PREPARING TO FAST

The usual fast involves abstaining from all forms of food but not from water, and commonly lasts 24 hours, from sunrise to sunrise. If you are fasting for the first time, you might begin by missing a meal or two. Over time, you can build up to a full day or more. Begin by refraining from solid food, but consuming just liquids. Water is the best, since soft drinks are unsuitable for the digestive system, and coffee and tea stimulate the nervous system. Before beginning a fast, it is best to eat lightly and cut back on caffeinated drinks. During the first few days of a multi-day fast, it is common to experience headaches as the body withdraws from caffeine. Drink plenty of water. (This is always a good idea — whether you're fasting or not!)

## DURING THE FAST

During your fast, set aside specific and significant time to worship and seek God in prayer. Plan so your time can be unhurried and conducive to enjoying the Lord. Many people begin this time by repenting of any sins the Holy Spirit brings to mind and asking for God's forgiveness. This is essential to ensure that sin is not hindering your communication with God. Then plan time to make your requests known to God and to seek His will. Take breaks to study Scripture passages you have chosen. Don't rush your time with God. Take time to listen. Keep a notebook and pen nearby to record the ideas, insights, directions, and instructions He impresses on your mind. When you turn down the "noise of Western civilization" by fasting, you can more easily hear God. Continue to drink plenty of water. Apple or watermelon juice is a great morale booster. Get to sleep early — the first few days of the fast are usually the most challenging. Persevere through this period. Consult your doctor if you are unsure of any headaches or bodily reactions.

## ENDING THE FAST

If you plan to fast only a day or two at a time, it is best to end the fast with a small glass of fruit juice as your first meal. Gradually introduce small amounts of easily digestible foods such as yogurt, soup, fresh fruit, and cooked vegetables. If your fast lasts longer than a few days, you should continue with juices for a day or more before gradually introducing more substantial foods like yogurt, soup, and fruit. Be sure you introduce new foods in small quantities and that you chew them well. You should stop eating at the slightest sensation of fullness. If fasting is only a few days at a time, ending the fast should be easier. If you have built up to and desire to fast longer, you should consult your physician and review a health book on fasting.

Fasting Guide material and other fasting resources found at

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/biblical-fasting.html>