

PREPARE TO FAST SAFELY

1. Establish your goal

What do you expect to accomplish by fasting? What do you want God to do?

2. Choose the kind of fast you'll undertake

- *absolute* (no food or liquids – typically from sunrise to sunset – see Leviticus 16:29 and 23:32)
- *partial* (you restrict your diet versus not eating at all – see Daniel 1:15 and Daniel 10:3)
- *radical* (you abstain from food only, or from all food and water, for an extended period of time – see Exodus 34:29; 1 Kings 19:9 and Matthew 4:11. This can be harmful to your health, and in most cases, should NOT exceed three days.)
- *other* (you abstain from or restrict another activity e.g. watching movies or television, social media)

3. Prepare your heart to meet with God

- Seek forgiveness and make restitution of those you've offended and forgive all who have hurt you.
- Pray for God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14 – 15).
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master.
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition.

4. Get ready physically (if you are choosing to fast from food)

- Eat raw fruits and veggies several days before starting a fast.
- Eat smaller meals and avoid high-calorie, high-fat and sugary foods.
- Only exercise moderately, if at all.
- Rest as much as you are able.
- Expect temporary mental and emotional discomforts such as impatience, crankiness and anxiety.

5. Schedule your time with God

You and your group are fasting AND praying. Plan ample time to be alone with the Lord – this is necessary to accomplish your goals.

Some guidelines

- For medical reasons, some people should not fast, or should consult a doctor first.
- If you are used to coffee and tea every day, going without may produce headaches.
- An extended fast of over 24 hours should include drinking water.
- Often, the benefits of a fast are experienced after, not during, the fast.
- You may feel cold, weak, tired - be vulnerable in your physical need with God.
- Explore with God what it means for Him to satisfy you in your hunger



(adapted from Marlinda Ireland's *What Is God Waiting For?*)

"I started fasting because I wanted to get to know the LORD. I wanted to learn to abide with Him."
Susan Plumridge from First Baptist Church, London, on why she fasted from lunch once a week for several years.