



St. Joseph's  
Episcopal Church

# How to Pray Effectively: A Biblical Way to Pray for Results

**Week 7 | Praying with Fasting**

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St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, Queens Village

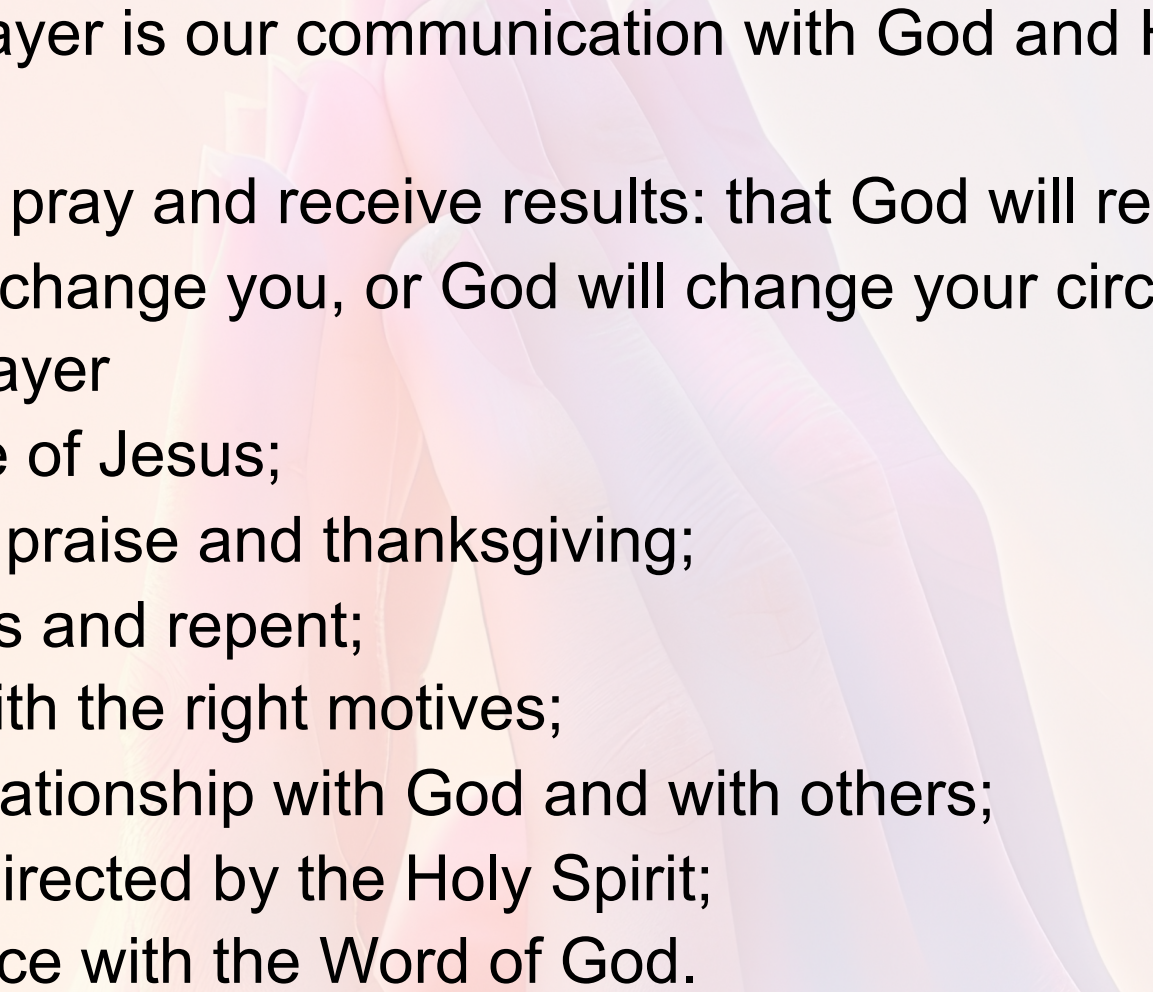
# Prayer Before Bible Study

Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which You have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

— Collect for Proper 28:  
Book of Common Prayer, p. 236)



# Week 1: Keys for Effective Prayer

- 
- We pray because prayer is our communication with God and He delights in our prayers.
  - Effective Prayer is to pray and receive results: that God will reveal Himself, God will answer, God will change you, or God will change your circumstances.
  - Keys for Effective Prayer
    1. Pray in the Name of Jesus;
    2. Pray to God with praise and thanksgiving;
    3. Confess your sins and repent;
    4. Approach God with the right motives;
    5. Be in the right relationship with God and with others;
    6. Prayer must be directed by the Holy Spirit;
    7. Pray in accordance with the Word of God.

# Week 2: Components of Prayer

- There are 4 key components of prayers that you should follow. Each component can be its own prayer and put into different orders. The acronym ACTS (or CATS and CAST) helps us to remember these four areas.
  1. A | Adoration  
Adoration is giving praise and worship to God, who is worthy of our praise.
  2. C | Confession  
We must confess our sins to God as the first step in cleansing our soul.
  3. T | Thanksgiving  
We must thank God in all our circumstances, high and low, as he has blessed us with life and continues to bless us.
  4. S | Supplication  
We can never be too proud to beg God for ourselves and for all who surround us.

# Week 3: Praying in the Name of Jesus

Praying in the Name of Jesus is a powerful way of aligning ourselves with God's will.

1. Jesus has authority over demons, illness, and all circumstances;
2. We must be aware of the presence of Jesus, maintain a personal relationship with Jesus, and know the will of Jesus for us;
3. We can claim God's promises of salvation, healing, and victory over evil in Jesus' Name;
4. We must be wary of false prophets and cults using Jesus' Name as a talisman or magic formula.

# Week 4: Using Scripture in Prayer

The use of scripture is the number one resource for effective prayer.

1. Scripture reveals God's will as the bases of prayer, provides instructions for how to pray; show us how not to pray; give us God's promises that we can claim in prayer; show us the condition for effective prayer; give us examples of prayer; and give us examples of answered prayers.
2. We use scripture in prayer because: God's Word is our spiritual weapon against evil; God's Word cleanses us spiritually; God's Word prepares our hearts in righteousness for effective prayer.
3. The apostles used scriptures to compose prayers; the epistle to the Hebrews uses scripture in prayer and admonition; Jesus used scripture in His prayer.
4. In prayer, allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of verses relevant to your prayer needs; pray according to the promises and conditions laid out in the Word of God; be careful not to use scripture without understanding the meaning.

# Week 5: Praying in the Spirit

1. Faith is based on God, Jesus' teachings, and God's promises.
2. Faith is important in prayer because: without faith it is impossible to please God; we need the shield of faith in spiritual warfare, we need the power of faith to move us.
3. Practical guidelines for praying in faith
  1. Ask without doubting;
  2. Establish confidence in God;
  3. Persevere in prayer;
  4. Develop an obedient heart;
  5. Practice positive thinking;
  6. Practice speaking positive words;
  7. Practice doing actions.

# Week 6: Praying in the Spirit

Praying in the Spirit means to pray with the mind of the Spirit according to the will of God.

1. The Holy Spirit: ushers us into the presence of the Father; enables us to pray; helps us to pray according to the will of God; equips us for spiritual warfare; and builds up our faith.
2. We pray in the Spirit by: receiving the Holy Spirit; being continually filled with the Holy Spirit; being obedient to God; worshipping the Lord in spirit; not grieving the Spirit; and not quenching the Spirit.
3. Practical guidelines in praying in the Spirit are to: pray with the Spirit, pray with the Mind; sing with the Spirit, sing with the mind; be full of thanksgiving; be subject to one another; listen and follow the Lord; discern the mind of Christ; and to pray with a renewed mind.



## Word of Thanks

Before we proceed to the new topic “Praying in the Spirit” may I pause to give thanks to some of you who sent a donation to this teaching ministry. Your donation will go to the Clergy Discretionary Fund, helping missionaries, causes, and people in need.



This course is free but if you are moved to support my teaching ministry at St. Joseph’s, you may donate by scanning this **QR Code**, sending payment **via Zelle to treasurer@stjosephqv.org**, or visiting our website at **www.stjosephqv.org/donate**

The background of the slide features a soft, ethereal image of several hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture. The hands are rendered in a semi-transparent, pastel color palette of pinks, purples, and light blues, creating a gentle, spiritual atmosphere. The lighting is soft and diffused, highlighting the contours of the fingers and palms.

# Fast

verb

1. *: to abstain from food*
2. *: to eat sparingly or abstain from some foods*

noun

1. *: the practice of fasting*
2. *: a time of fasting*

# Fasting

Fasting is giving up food (or something else) for a period of time in order to focus your thoughts prayer or on God. Found throughout the Old and New Testaments, the spiritual practice of fasting is mentioned over 50 times in the Bible.



# Fasting

From the earliest days of the church, fasting has been recognized as an important way to draw near to God, deepen one's relationship with Him, and seek His help in times of special need. Nearly all of the great spiritual leaders of the church, as well as ordinary believers who have been noted for their devotion to God, have practiced fasting.

– Thomas Tarrants III, D. Min



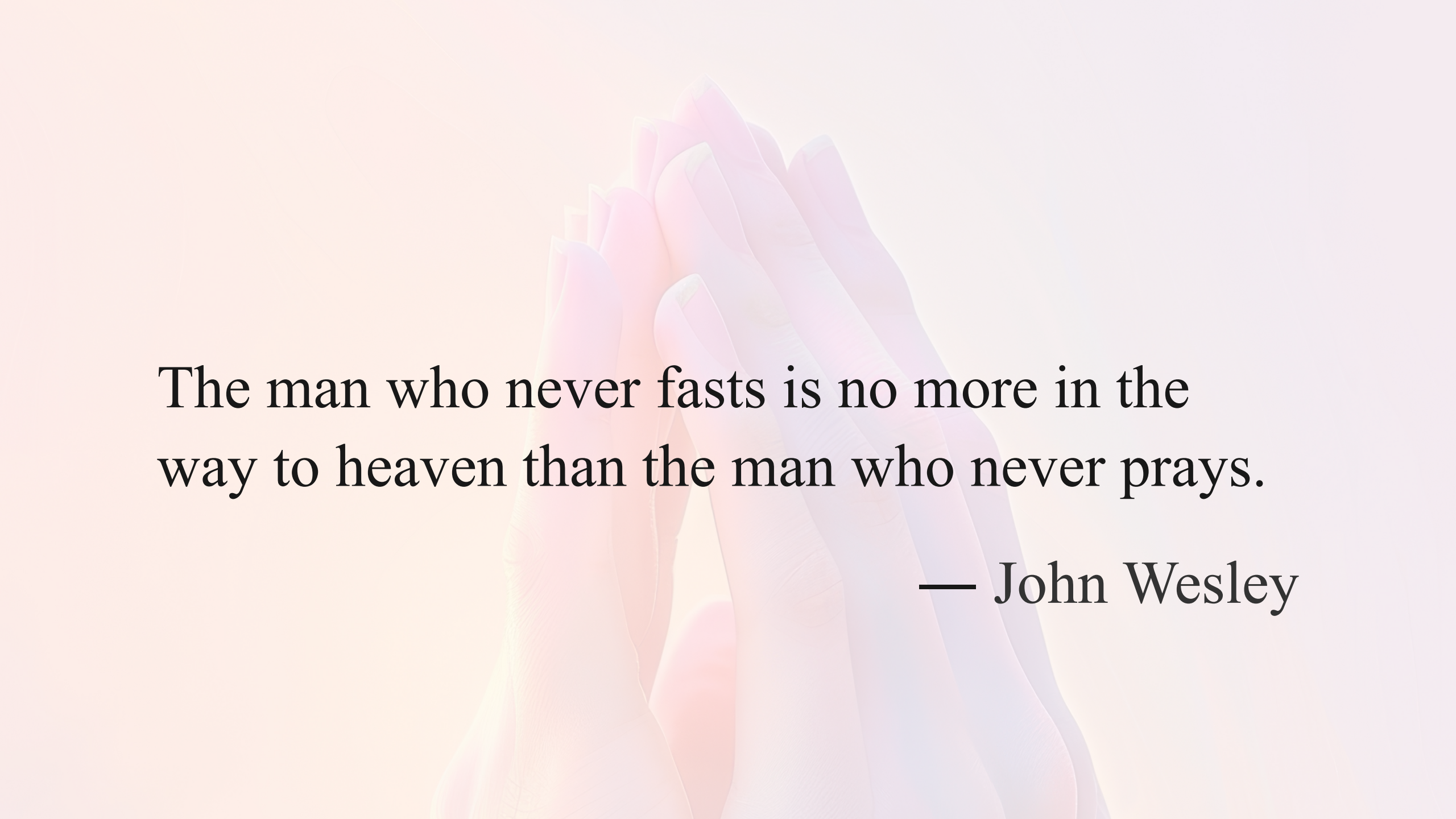


# Fasting

Fasting as a spiritual practice is found in all major religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. In the Bible, fasting means to give up food for the purpose of seeking, help, answers, or atonement from God.

Nowadays, many people fast in order to lose weight. Although there may be many physical benefits of fasting, we will focus on fasting as a spiritual practice. Fasting demonstrates our commitment to God; it is a sacrifice that helps us to focus on God. Jesus fasted, and practicing this spiritual discipline is one way we can follow Him.

During a spiritual fast, we read the Bible, pray, or worship.



The man who never fasts is no more in the  
way to heaven than the man who never prays.

— John Wesley



# Types of Fasting

# Types of Fasting

## 1. Partial Fast

A type of fasting that involves abstaining from certain foods or drinks while still eating or drinking others. It can involve omitting a specific meal, abstaining from certain types of food, or fasting during specific times of the day.

I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth, and I had not anointed myself at all, for the full three weeks.

— Daniel 10:3





# Types of Fasting

## 2. Total Fast | Absolute Fast

Abstaining from all food and water for a period of time.

Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he spent the night. He did not eat bread or drink water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles. — Ezra 10:6

Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. — Acts 9:8-9



# Types of Fasting

## 3. Supernatural Fast

Abstaining from food for an extended period of time. With no food or water, the maximum time the body can survive is thought to be about one week. With water only, but no food, the survival time may extend up to 2 to 3 months. (Wikipedia)

When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the Lord made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water.

— Deuteronomy 9:9



# Types of Fasting

## 3. Supernatural Fast

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished.

— Matthew 4:1-2



# Types of Fasting

## 4. Corporate Fast

A joint fast by a group of believers for a specific purpose.

After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites, came against Jehoshaphat for battle. Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, “A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; already they are at Hazazon-tamar” (that is, En-gedi). Jehoshaphat was afraid; he set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

— 2 Chronicles 20:1-3





# Types of Fasting

Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. Humans and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish."

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it. — Jonah 3:4-10



# Reasons for Fasting



# Reasons for Fasting

What are the reasons and occasions when we may fast?

## 1. Repentance

Fasting is a Biblical way to seek God's forgiveness.

Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the Israelites were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth and with earth on their heads. Then those of Israelite descent separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. They stood up in their place and read from the book of the law of the Lord their God for a fourth part of the day, and for another fourth they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God.

— Nehemiah 9:1-3

# Reasons for Fasting

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— Jonah 3:5-8





# Reasons for Fasting

## 2. Intercession

Fasting can be a way to express concern for the work of God and to minister to the needs of others.

Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”

— Esther 4:15-16



# Reasons for Fasting

## 2. Intercession

I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah, must be fulfilled for the devastation of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. Then I turned to the Lord God to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “Ah, Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with those who love you and keep your commandments, we have sinned and done wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

— Daniel 9:2-6



# Reasons for Fasting

## 3. Worship

Fasting is an act of worship that declares God as the one who sustains us.

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

— Luke 2:36-38



# Reasons for Fasting

## 4. Guidance

Fasting can be a way to seek God's guidance.

Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles. — Luke 6:12-13

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. — Acts 13:2-3



# Reasons for Fasting

## 5. During Trials and Temptations

Fasting can help us overcome trials, overcome temptation, and help us dedicate ourselves to God.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished.

— Matthew 4:1-2



# Reasons for Fasting

## 6. During Spiritual Warfare

Fasting can be a way to seek deliverance and protection.

After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” He said to them, “This kind can come out only through prayer.”

— Mark 9:26-29



# Reasons for Fasting

## 7. During Commissioning for Service

Fasting can help prepare us to do God's work in the world.

After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God." And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

— Acts 14:21-23





# Benefits of Fasting



# Benefits of Fasting

## 1. Spiritual Cleansing

Our physical diet is often affected by unhealthy foods like junk food, and so our spirits may also be affected by unhealthy practices we can call spiritual junk food. Just like the body, our soul needs occasional cleansing. The practice of fasting and prayer can be like a spiritual detox. Rebecca Butler, a yoga\* teacher identifies 11 signs that you may need a spiritual detox. *\*Yoga is a spiritual discipline with the Hindu religion that encompasses mental, physical, and spiritual practices.*

- a. Scrolling through social media seeking negativity.
- b. Being unintentionally sarcastic, even when trying to be more mindful of your speech.



# Benefits of Fasting

1. Spiritual Cleansing | 11 Signs You Need a Spiritual Detox
  - c. Your friends do not want to be around you.
  - d. Your heart hurts or worse, you are emotionally numb.
  - e. Schadenfreude: You find pleasure in others' misfortunes.
  - f. Happy people anger you; you don't want to hear about joyful things, or even the word joy.
  - g. You don't sleep well; you have bad dreams and grind your jaw a lot.
  - h. You feel like a victim in many circumstances.
  - i. You shy away from prayer, meditation, or any inspirational or spiritual practices.
  - j. You are bored—all the time.





# Benefits of Fasting

1. Spiritual Cleansing | 11 Signs You Need a Spiritual Detox  
k. You can't remember the last time you took a walk, watched the sunrise or sunset, walked barefoot in the grass, or appreciated simple moments in nature.
2. Spiritual Discernment  
Discernment is a process by which God helps an individual reach the best decision in their life. The Latin root of discernment means to separate or set apart. In Christian life, it is the ability to separate good from evil, truth from falsehood, and wisdom from foolishness. Discernment is a useful gift in various situations in our lives.

# Benefits of Fasting

## 2. Spiritual Discernment

It's the ability to evaluate situations and choose courses of action while staying aware of the moral implication of all options. In discernment for vocation, the person seeking discernment asks three basic questions:

- a. What gives me the greatest joy?
- b. What am I good or best at?
- c. Does my best spiritual gift meet the world's greatest need?



# Benefits of Fasting

## 3. Spiritual Growth

Fasting encourages us to divorce ourselves from the physical world live from the spiritual world.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

— Philippians 3:12-14



# Benefits of Fasting

## 3. Spiritual Growth

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.

— Colossians 1:9-10



# Benefits of Fasting

## 4. Increase in Faith

Jesus said, “when you fast,” not “if you fast.” In other words, Jesus considered fasting to be normal in our spiritual life and growth. When you fast while praying, it helps to break open your spirit to the miracles of God.

*And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting.*

— Matthew 6:16



# Benefits of Fasting

## 5. Spiritual Discipline

The goal of Christian discipline is godliness and prayer with fasting is one of the methods towards godliness.

Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

— 1 Timothy 4:7b-8 NRSV

Rather, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily training is *just* slightly beneficial, but godliness is beneficial for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

— 1 Timothy 4:7b-8 NASB





# Benefits of Fasting

## 5. Spiritual Discipline

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

— Galatians 5:22

The fruit of the Spirit is the manifestation of spiritual discipline.





# Right Attitude for Fasting

# The Right Attitudes for Fasting

## 1. Genuine love, avoiding hypocrisy

The goal of Christian discipline is godliness and prayer with fasting is one of the methods towards godliness.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers. You fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? — Isaiah 58:3-6



# The Right Attitudes for Fasting

## 2. Humility, not spiritual pride

Fasting, if it develops self-righteousness, does not count.

And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

— Matthew 6:16-18



# The Right Attitudes for Fasting

## 2. Humility, not spiritual pride

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

— Luke 18:9-14





# A Call to Fast

# A Call to Practice Fasting

On your chosen day to fast:

- Begin by setting aside one lunch hour for prayer.
- If needed, have a warm drink or a glass of milk.
- Use the time you would have had your meal for prayer; you may do this alone, or with a prayer partner or prayer group.





# Summary



# Summary | Praying with Fasting

Fasting, or abstaining from food is a common spiritual discipline.

1. There are different types of fasts including partial fasts, total fasts, supernatural fasts, and corporate fasts.
2. We fast for many reasons including repentance, intercession, worship, seeking guidance, during trials and temptations, during spiritual warfare, and during commissioning for service.
3. The benefits of fasting include spiritual cleansing, spiritual discernment, spiritual growth, increase in faith, and to create spiritual discipline.
4. The correct way to approach fasting is with love and humility, not hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

The background of the slide features a soft, ethereal image of hands clasped in prayer. The hands are rendered in a semi-transparent, pastel style with a color gradient from light pink to light blue. A faint, glowing halo surrounds the hands, and the overall background is a light, warm gradient. The text is overlaid on this background.

# Discussion Questions

What lessons have you learned today and how will you apply it in your prayer life?