

## **F.A.S.T**

**FAITH • ABSTINENCE • SERVICE • THANKSGIVING**

### **JOIN US AS WE F.A.S.T. FOR 40 DAYS**

(MARCH 10 – APRIL 18, 2025)

#### **WHAT IS FASTING?**

Fasting is a spiritual discipline where we abstain from certain foods or activities for a period of time to focus on God. Through the spiritual practice of fasting and prayer, we draw nearer to God, and we are transformed in our spiritual lives.

In Scripture, we see many examples of different types of fasts. There are examples where people limited food to certain types of food (Daniel 1:8-14; 10:2-3), fasted from food and water (Acts 9:9), or from activities. We even see examples of when Jesus fasted (Matthew 4:2). Fasting has a set time limit – such as what we see in the book of Esther (Esther 4:16) – and should have a clear purpose. We should inquire of the Lord for direction, insight, and wisdom surrounding the details of our fast.

Each day spend time in reading the devotional Scriptures of the day and praying your personal prayers and our corporate prayers outlined on this guide. You may also wish to journal your experience, thoughts, and prayers during this time for later reflection.



**Please note: Before beginning any fast, please check with your healthcare professional and follow their guidelines. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health practitioner for any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.**

#### **BEGINNING YOUR FAST**

Begin your fast in prayer. Pray to the Lord, asking Him to guide and empower you by the Holy Spirit. Spend moments in silent prayer to hear God speak to you clearly and seek to recognize answered prayers during your time of supplication. Ask God to grow our church in the right directions and grow you in connection to other believers. This is a special time of drawing near to God!

## **HOW WILL WE OBSERVE THE FAST THIS YEAR?**

### **FAITH:**

- Daily Scripture reading
- 5 for 5: Praying 5 times per day, for 5 minutes (9AM, 12PM, 3PM, 6PM, 9PM) using The Model Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) as your guide for prayer

### **ABSTINENCE:**

- Engage in intermittent fasting – fast for 16 hours and only eat within an 8-hour window (see tables below for details)
- Abstain from activities that can pull us away from God – personal social media, non-essential spending\*, TV/streaming

\*Non-essential spending details:

- Support the Target Fast – consider registering at [targetfast.org](http://targetfast.org)
- Engage in cooperative economics (for essential spending) – shop and eat at black and brown owned businesses as much as possible

### **SERVICE:**

- Seek opportunities to be of service to others

### **THANKSGIVING:**

- Begin and end each day giving thanks and praise to God

## SCRIPTURE READING & ADDITIONAL FASTING GUIDELINES

DAYS 1-10 (MARCH 10-19):

<b>FAITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read Psalm 23</li><li>• Pray – 5 for 5</li></ul>	<b>ABSTINENCE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All foods permitted</li><li>• Abstain from personal social media use.</li><li>• Abstain from non-essential spending.</li></ul>	<b>SERVICE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek opportunities to be of service to family.</li></ul>	<b>THANKSGIVING:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin and end each day giving thanks and praise to God.</li></ul>
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DAYS 11-20 (MARCH 20-29):

<b>FAITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read Matthew 6:9-13</li><li>• Pray – 5 for 5</li></ul>	<b>ABSTINENCE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No added salt or sugar</li><li>• Abstain from personal social media use.</li><li>• Abstain from non-essential spending.</li></ul>	<b>SERVICE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek opportunities to be of service to friends.</li></ul>	<b>THANKSGIVING:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin and end each day giving thanks and praise to God.</li></ul>
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DAYS 21-30 (MARCH 30-APRIL 8):

<b>FAITH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read Matthew 22:36-40</li><li>• Pray – 5 for 5</li></ul>	<b>ABSTINENCE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No added salt, sugar, or fried foods</li><li>• Abstain from personal social media use.</li><li>• Abstain from non-essential spending.</li></ul>	<b>SERVICE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek opportunities to be of service to neighbors or co-workers.</li></ul>	<b>THANKSGIVING:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin and end each day giving thanks and praise to God.</li></ul>
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DAYS 31-40 (APRIL 9-18):

<b>FAITH:</b>	<b>ABSTINENCE:</b>	<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read Ephesians 4:11-16 &amp; Galatians 5:22-23</li><li>• Pray – 5 for 5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modified Daniel Fast</li><li>• Abstain from personal social media use.</li><li>• Abstain from non-essential spending.</li><li>• Abstain from watching TV/streaming (Hulu, Netflix, Disney +, Prime, etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek opportunities to be of service to strangers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin and end each day giving thanks and praise to God.</li></ul>

Modified Daniel Fast:

Foods to Eat – Beans & legumes, unsalted nuts & seeds, vegetables, fruit, oils (avocado, coconut, olive, sesame), fish, chicken, turkey, herbs, spices & seasoning (no salt), water (distilled, filtered, sparkling, spring, mineral), 100% fruit juice (on occasion)

Foods to Avoid – Starches (rice, pasta, bread, tortillas, etc.), added sugar (agave, artificial sweeteners, brown sugar, cane syrup, honey, molasses, raw sugar), salt, flour, red meat, processed food, solid fats (lard, margarine, shortening), dairy (butter, cottage cheese, cream cheese, cream, milk, yogurt), fried foods, chocolate, alcohol, coffee, caffeinated tea, energy drinks

## **FASTING FOR CHILDREN**

The ability to fast differs with age. Children should not participate in a full food restriction fast. However, they can fast from some unhealthy food items. Please discuss with your child and plan together.

Things to do every day:

- Pray
- Read Scripture
- Abstain from social media
- Increase consumption of vegetables, fruits, and water
- Reduce or eliminate consumption of candy, sweets, juice, and soda (water and sports drinks are permitted throughout)

## **ADDITIONAL FAMILY SCRIPTURES**

In addition to praying and reading the Scriptures above, we invite you to read and focus on these Scriptures with the children in your life. After reading, ask them questions from the text and encourage them to dialogue with you about what they learned. Repeat this a few times during the week. You may also have them retell what happened, make a video, or draw a picture of their favorite part. This will encourage them in Bible reading and help them to get excited in learning foundational scriptures found in the Gospels.

DAYS 1-10 (MARCH 10-19):

- Matthew 14:13-21
- Mark 10:13-16

DAYS 11-20 (MARCH 20-29):

- John 13:1-17

DAYS 21-30 (MARCH 30-APRIL 8):

- Matthew 21:1-11
- Matthew 26:17-30

DAYS 31-40 (APRIL 9-18):

- Luke 23:1-56

## **THE RESULTS**

Those who participate in this season of sacrifice will experience a transformation of their relationship with God, their physical health, and their personal areas of bondage, as well as congregational areas of need.

## **ENDING YOUR FAST**

When you end your fast, avoid heavy or greasy foods. You may wish to take time to research best ways to end your fast and incorporate eating foods that are easy to digest while your body is getting used to your usual food again. Spend time in prayer when you end your fast, reflect, and thank the Lord.