

FASTING WITHOUT EXCUSES

“Jesus replied: – ¿Do wedding guests mourn while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast”. Mt. 9:15 NLT

STEP 1: RESULTS ACHIEVED

What specific action did you commit to take last week? What was the results?

STEP 2: REFLECTIONS

Instructions: Take turns reading the following paragraphs with your peers. As you read, underline the ideas that stand out to you.

As we review the scriptures, we realize that the People of God have always sought God's presence through fasting and prayer, and we can see this in both the Old and New Testaments. Even in several passages we see Jesus and his disciples fasting and praying. The early church frequently fasted, yet the modern church has become passive about this; therefore, it is difficult to perceive the power of God manifested in our lives, which should be a lifestyle.

What is fasting?

Fasting refers to omitting foods or activities in order to focus and connect with God. It means, to take the time to consecrate yourself and become more sensitive to the Lord's voice.

The Bible does not teach that fasting will help you “win-over” God's favor or make Him think you deserve something. Instead, fasting aligns you to what the Lord wants to tell you, so you fulfill your purpose.

While you fast, you must make time to worship the Heavenly Father, pray and read His Word. When you seek His face in intimacy, He will reveal His heart and give you the guidance to make the right decisions that will bring acceleration and changes to your life.

Fasting is not only about giving up food, but you can also choose to fast television or a daily activity, and instead use that time for praying and reading the Bible. The point is to set yourself apart from the worldly atmosphere and come closer to the Father.

The three kinds of fastings.

You need to ask the Lord what kind of fast you should do. Be careful, be wise and do it as the Holy Spirit guides you.

The natural fast. This fast was practiced by the Lord Jesus and it consists in not eating, only drinking water, and resting. The Bible doesn't say that he didn't eat or drink, like in other parts, it only says that he did not eat. It states that he was hungry, but not thirsty (Luke 4:1-2).

The total fast. You are not able to eat anything or drink any kinds of liquids. Although, this kind of fast cannot be for too long, because the body needs water. Some biblical examples are found in Ester 4:16, Acts 9:9, Deuteronomy 9:9 and 1 Kings 19:8.

The partial fast. During this fast you abstain from some foods, but you can eat legumes and fruits, choose to only have shakes or eat once a day. For example, Daniel fasted with vegetables and water (Daniel 10:2-3). He most likely did it this way, because of his job.

God calls you today to join with your church to pray and fast in order to win great battles in the spiritual world and that the miracles you are waiting for can be manifested in your life; But for that, you must first give your heart to Jesus, so that he may be your personal Lord and Savior.

Benefits of fasting:

1. **Fasting reveals the things that control you.** If there is pride, anger or fear within you, God will show it to you so that you can be free. If there is pain, resentment or unforgiveness in your heart, the Holy Spirit will teach you when you are praying so that you can be healed.
 2. **Fasting sets the weather for the Holy Spirit to guide and speak.** Fasting makes us more sensitive to hearing God's voice. If you need God's direction in a difficult decision, fasting and prayer is something that will help you.
 3. **Fasting unleashes power to overcome temptations.** When we are going through a desert it is easier for us to be tempted in our weaknesses, that is why it is necessary that you declare a fast so that the Holy Spirit gives you the strength to overcome any temptation (Mt. 4: 1-2).
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Steps to follow:

1. Decide to join the congregational fast.
2. He begins to ask God for direction in the type of fast he wants you to do.
3. Along with fasting, he prays for divine direction for this new year.
4. You can fast television and use that time to pray or read the Bible.

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STEP 3: REFLECT AND RESPONSE

Choose something that you underlined as important to you. Take a minute to share with everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

STEP 4: AUTO EVALUATION

Respond the following section of self-evaluation:

In a scale of 1 to 10: How well do you demonstrate this quality in your life? _____

Why did you give yourself this score?

What benefits would you obtain from improving your score?

What people do you know that are a good example of this quality? What do you admire the most from this person?

What specific action can you take immediately to improve your score?

STEP 5: SHARE YOUR ACTION STEPS

Take a moment to share your responses from the self-evaluation section, include the action that you plan to take to improve in that area. We ask that everyone participates.

Instructions for the host:

1. **Make the calling:**

“Lord Jesus I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and my heart so that you may be my Lord and personas Savior, amen”.

2. **Impartation:** Pray and activate what you have learned today.

3. **Pray for the offering.**

