

DAY 7: FASTING

Scripture – Matthew 6:16-18

Fasting is a spiritual activity of self-denial that is described and encouraged in the Bible.

Fasting is foregoing something, usually food, which the physical body and personal appetite greatly desires. It is a spiritual act of self-denial to remind ourselves of important spiritual things. Fasting is something I offer to God as evidence of my seriousness in considering one or more spiritual matters in my life or in the lives of others. (For example, I may fast to remind myself to pray for the salvation of a loved one—even praying during the time I might normally be eating.)

Fasting can include self-denial of such things as television, the Internet or my cellphone. Maybe I abstain from any food with sugar or all solid foods. But true, Biblical fasting involves abstaining from food in some manner.

It is important to know that fasting is not my personal penance for sins, or for earning spiritual brownie points. Fasting from physical food can be for reminding me of my great need for the spiritual food in God's Word. Self-denial of the flesh by my spirit, can also make my own spirit stronger and more dependent on the Spirit of God.

More Scriptures on fasting:

- Matthew 4:2; Matthew 16:24; Matthew 17:21
- Psalms 69:10
- Daniel 9:3
- Joel 2:12
- Acts 10:30; Acts 14:23

Application

1. Why do you suppose fasting is often called a spiritual discipline?
2. How might fasting increase your desire for a greater presence of God?