



A Call to Fasting and Prayer



January 4 - February 12, 2023

A TIME OF PRAYER AND FASTING

“Declare a holy fast; Call a sacred assembly.

Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, cry out to the Lord.”

- Joel 1:14

A TIME OF CONSECRATION:

“Then Joshua said to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.’”

- Joshua 3:5



THE POWER IN FASTING IS IN PRAYING

The generally accepted definition of fasting is to “refrain from eating certain foods and drinking certain liquids for a designated period of time.” However, if fasting is to have a lasting effect on our spiritual growth, it must be more than that.

What gives fasting spiritual significance? Prayer does. Prayer connects fasting to the power of God. The feeling of being hungry, desiring certain foods, and longing for fellowship that accompanies eating is too strong for the average Christian to overcome without the help of God. Through prayer, we can sacrifice the physical comfort of food (and other things) for the spiritual goal of a closer relationship with God.

One of the most important things you can do before beginning this fast is to commit to it with your whole heart. Read the entire manual and determine which fast you will observe. Then, determine the best time of the day for you to spend in Scripture reading, meditation and prayer.



KEY REASONS TO FAST AND PRAY

1. To follow Bible teaching.

Fasting is all throughout scripture. The prophets fasted. Jesus and his disciples fasted, so should we. See Isaiah 58:3-7; Matthew 6:17-18; I Corinthians 7:5.

2. To grow in intimacy with God.

We grow closer to God as we hunger and thirst for His presence through fasting. See Luke 2:37.

3. To repent and mourn for sin.

All of Nineveh fasted and prayed as they repented for their sin. See Jonah 3:10.

4. To seek Divine guidance and vision.

Jesus fasted in preparation for his ministry. The church leaders fasted before commissioning others. See Matthew 4:1-17; Acts 13:2-3.

5. To gain victory and breakthrough.

Esther called for a solemn fast as she sought deliverance for Israel. See Esther 4:16.

“I humbled my soul with fasting...”

Psalm 35:13

WORDS OF COUNSEL REGARDING FASTING

- 1. If you have never fasted before**, it may be wise to start with the **Entry Level Fasting Plan**. Fasting is designed to feed your soul and to help you hear and obey the voice of God. Ask God to guide you in this process.
- 2. You may be restricted** from participating because of your physical condition. **Please consult your physician**. You should not participate in this fast if you have diabetes mellitus ("sugar diabetes"), hypertension ("high blood pressure"), or any other medical issues that require a special diet.
- 3. Prepare for the transition** from eating regular meals. Do not overload with high sugar and high fat foods before the fast begins. Try to eat more fruits and vegetables and drink more water. Hunger pangs will occur, especially during the first few days of the fast. Let them be a reminder of your sacrifice. One author said fasting is "starving the body while feeding the soul."
- 4. Finalize your personal plan** for accomplishing your goals and submit them to the Lord. Give Him the power to revise them during this time. Ask Him to give you a heart to see what He wants you to see and to change what needs to be changed in your life.

A FINAL WORD BEFORE WE GET STARTED

Remember, this time is all about seeking God, not impressing people. Go out of your way to keep this time of fasting between you and God. It's not the time to brag about your food choices, your weight loss (which may happen) or YOU at all! Let's seek God's face! Let's increase our faith. Let's finish these fasting days with love and joy! Blessings and Peace to you as you go before the Lord in fasting.

THREE TYPES OF FASTS

Several types of fasts are used by Arlington Church of God.



1

THE ENTRY LEVEL/ALL-CHURCH LIQUID-ONLY FAST

24-hours, one-day-a-week

Some individuals are not able to participate in a regular fast for lengthy times, due to medical issues. This entry-level fast may allow that individual to join in fasting at some level.

WHEN: from 1:00PM Wednesday until 1:00PM Thursday.

WHAT: Drink nutritional liquids during this 24-hour period, preferably whole juices or no-sugar-added nutritional drinks and water. This liquid fast is to be observed for whichever fasting plan is chosen.

THEN WHAT: Eat regularly, as desired by your medical personnel on all remaining days.

ALSO: Abstain from a personal pleasure each day of the Fast. This may include things such as a favorite television program, or no television at all; a favorite daily pastime, abstaining from shopping, except for dire necessities. Be creative. The point is to find a way to join the Church during the full fasting time.

2



THE “DANIEL FAST”

21-Day Fast

(remaining days - **Entry-Level Fast**)

This is a partial fast based upon Daniel's own experiences as recorded in the Bible: “*...I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled*” (**Daniel 10:2-3**). **Also observe the All-Church 24-hour Liquid Fast.**

3



THE “NORMAL FAST”

40-Day Fast

This is a variation on the fast that Daniel and the Hebrew boys used when they abstained from eating the “King’s meat.” In this fast, we will abstain from certain foods and liquids for forty days. It includes fruits, vegetables, certain meats, breads, juices and water. **Also observe the All-Church 24-Hour Liquid-Only Fast.**



The “Daniel Fast” Food Chart

FOODS	DANIEL FAST – 21 Days	
	YES	NO
BREAD	Any sprouted grain breads	Any other breads or crackers
VEGETABLES & FRUITS	ALL	Buttered veggies
MEATS/SEAFOOD /POULTRY	Seafood & fish	Beef, lamb, poultry (chicken, turkey) or pork
PASTAS & GRAINS	Whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortilla, brown rice cakes and popcorn	White rice, white flour or processed pastas and grains
DAIRY PRODUCTS	NONE	ALL - including milk, cheese, butter
BEVERAGES	Spring, distilled or pure water	ONLY DRINK WATER
DESSERTS	NONE	ALL
SEASONINGS	All quality oils	Butter, margarine, ham hocks, bacon, salt pork, meat drippings, white sugar or artificial sweeteners
MISCELLANEOUS	Nuts & seeds all kinds	Nothing deep fried, with additives & preservatives



The “Normal Fast” Food Chart

FOODS	NORMAL FAST – 40 Days	
	YES	NO
BREAD	Bread/crackers made with rye, whole wheat, rice, oat or bran	Bread/crackers made with processed white flour
VEGETABLES & FRUITS	ALL	Buttered veggies
MEATS/SEAFOOD /POULTRY	Seafood, poultry, lamb	Beef or pork
PASTAS & GRAINS	Pastas, brown rice	Junk food, potato chips, pretzels, etc.
DAIRY PRODUCTS	ALL	Frozen dairy items
BEVERAGES	Water, milk, fruit juices, herbal & decaffeinated teas, decaf coffee	Caffeinated or carbonated; Added sugar or artificial sweeteners
DESSERTS	Made without white sugar	Made with white sugar, candy, caramel popcorn
SEASONINGS	Olive oil, herbs, lemon juice, vinegar, brown sugar, cane sugar or honey	Butter, margarine, ham hocks, bacon, salt pork, meat drippings, white sugar or artificial sweeteners
MISCELLANEOUS	Potatoes, yams, popcorn	Junk food, potato chips, pretzels, etc.

The S.O.A.P. Method



Set aside time for daily prayer and Bible reading. Allow the word of God to speak into your life and stretch the boundaries of your thinking. On the seventh day write what you are hearing in a notebook or journal using the **S.O.A.P. method**.

(S) Scripture - read the passage. You may need to read it two or three times. Select one verse that really speaks to you. Write that scripture down in the journal.

(O) Observation – what grabs you about this verse? What might this verse have meant to the original writer or reader? Write your observations of the verse in your journal.

(A) Application - how does this verse impact you? How should it change you? Remember, God's revelation isn't just to increase your knowledge; it is given to bring about transformation. Write out the action or change you will make.

(P) Prayer - Respond to God with a prayer. Write as though you were writing a letter expressing how you think and feel about the scripture to God. Ask for help to apply the Scripture to your life. Your prayer doesn't have to be long or deep, just try to make it speak from your heart.

Journal Your S.O.A.P. Like This:

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer



2023 PRAYER FOCUS

WE WILL FAST AND PRAY...

- that ACOG will **lift up Christ** in all that we do.
- that ACOG will **equip each member** for ministry and maturity.
- that God will help ACOG **enable and provide healthy and effective ministries** to a hurting world.



“Consecrate Yourselves!”

2023 SCRIPTURE READING SCHEDULE:

Week One: Jan 4 - 10

Read: Romans 12:1-2

Week Two: Jan 11 - 17

Read: Romans 12:3-5

Week Three: Jan 18 - 24

Read: Romans 12:6-8

Week Four: Jan 25 - 31

Read: Romans 12:9-13

Week Five: Feb 1 - Feb 7

Read: Romans 12:14-16

Week Six: Feb 8 - 12

Read: Romans 12:17-21

