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**Simple guidelines for Fasting**

Fasting is a spiritual discipline practiced by Christians to help us draw closer to God, seek His guidance, and focus on prayer. Here are simple guidelines for fasting:

**1. Understand the Purpose**

* Fasting is about prioritizing God over your physical needs and desires. It may include abstaining from food, drink or from digital media.

**2. Start small**

* Begin with a partial fast (e.g., skipping one meal) or fast for a short period.
* Gradually work up to longer fasts if you find it helpful. *(With any changes to eating and drinking habits, please take into consideration any physical or mental health issues and consult a doctor if necessary.)*

**3. Prepare yourself**

* You might want to pray before starting your fast.
* For example: confessing sins, seeking forgiveness, and inviting the Holy Spirit to guide you.

**4. Choose a type of Fast**

* **Water-only fast**: Consume only water.
  + Go for one day where water is the only thing you drink. Each time you drink your water, think about Jesus the Water of Life. Pray that he might fill you to overflowing.
* **Partial fast**: Abstain from specific foods or meals (e.g., Daniel Fast, avoiding rich foods).
  + Plan to miss one meal a week this month. Instead of that meal, pray for those in need.
* **Non-food fast**: Abstain from non-essential activities (e.g., social media) if unable to fast from food for health reasons.
  + Instead of reaching for your phone plan to spend that time praying or reading your bible. Invite God to open your mind to his truth.
  + Choose to walk or cycle or take the bus where you would usually have taken the car, for two journeys this term.

**5. Set your time frame**

* Decide in advance how long you will fast—one meal, a day, or longer.
* Be realistic and take account of any health needs.

**6. Combine Fasting with prayer and scripture**

* Use the time you would spend eating to pray and read the Bible.
* Focus on passages that encourage spiritual growth and reliance on God.
* If you have had experience of fasting before, fast for 24 hours. Keep a prayer journal during that time.

**7. Stay hydrated and healthy**

* Drink water regularly unless it’s a complete fast (and only if medically safe).
* Consult a doctor if you have health concerns or conditions.

**8. Don’t shout about it**

* Avoid drawing attention to your fasting (Matthew 6:16-18).
* Keep it a private matter between you and God unless participating in a group fast.

**9. Break your Fast gradually**

* If you have fasted for a long time start eating again with light, simple meals to avoid shocking your digestive system.
* Take some time to think about how God may have spoken to you during your fast.

**10. Keep your focus on God**

* Avoid being legalistic — fasting is not about earning God’s favour but listening to His voice.
* Be intentional in seeking God’s presence rather than just abstaining from food.

Over time you will discover what patterns of fasting work with your life and personal rhythms.