

WEEK OF prayer/fasting

January 17-23
6:00-7:00 AM

God is leading our COTR family into a 7 day prayer & fasting period from January 17th thru January 23rd 2010. We are coming into a season that requires we heighten our sensitivity and alertness to the voice and direction of the Holy Spirit. As we set aside this season of fasting, we do so with the expectation to hear God's voice and receive His grace for the assignment He has for us. We encourage all of you to participate in this fast, minimum 3 days, as we dedicate ourselves to the Lord.

What does fasting accomplish? Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life. By denying the flesh, specifically through the abstinence of food, fasting takes our eyes off the things of this world so we can focus better on Christ. Fasting is not a way to get God to do what we want but, rather, is a form of personal sacrifice that changes us, not God. Nor is fasting a way to appear more spiritual than others. Fasting is to be done in a spirit of humility and a joyful attitude (see Matt 6:16-18).

How will this specific fast be organized? We will begin on Sunday (1-17-10) and break on Saturday (1-23-10) evening. **We will be meeting for prayer on weekday mornings, during the week at 6:00am.** We are asking everyone to participate in prayer. This is a church fast which means we suggest you participate in the like manner:

How do I fast? It is very important that you know how to fast safely. If done properly, fasting will not only prove to be a spiritual blessing, but physical blessing as well. If you have a medical condition or taking medications, we strongly recommend that you consult your physician before engaging in a multi-day fast.

There are several ways to fast ... here are the most common below:

- 1) **Water fast.** This is a 'full fast' and should be observed only if you are in good health. It is very important that you remain hydrated, so drink plenty of water.
- 2) **Juice fast.** The natural sugars in juices provide energy, and the taste and strength are motivational to continue your fast. Try to drink fresh juices, if possible. Because of their acid content, most nutritionists do not advise orange or tomato juice (these are better tolerated if mixed with equal portions of water). The best juices are fresh carrot, grape, celery, apple, cabbage, or beet. They also recommend "green drinks" made from green leafy vegetables because they are excellent "de-toxifiers."
- 3) **Daniel fast.** The concept of a Daniel fast comes from Daniel 1:8-14. A Daniel fast is eating only fruits and vegetables for a certain amount of time, abstaining from meat products.

(Foods to Eat)

Whole Grains: Brown Rice, Oats, Barley,
Legumes: Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas,
Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangerines, Watermelon
Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini
Liquids: Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices

(Foods to Avoid)

Meat, White Rice, Fried Foods, Caffeine, Carbonated Beverages, Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives, Refined Sugar, Sugar Substitutes, White Flour and All Products Using It, Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products

4) Combination fast. You may also use a combination of the above approaches in a single fast. The important thing to remember is to be committed to whatever approach you decide on and spend time in prayer!

What am I praying for during the fast? As a member of the Body of Christ in the Sarasota area, we are all coming into agreement and seeking the Lord for the following areas:

1. The Lord's will be done in our region, as it is already determined in heaven
2. The believers of our areas ...personal cleansing, for direction, deliverance and empowerment
3. The Glory of the Lord to cover our homes, businesses, government, schools
4. Wisdom for Pastor Jesse & Heather in leading Church on the Rock
5. The strategies of God be revealed to the church
6. The relief and restoration of Haiti.

How do I finish the fast? All the experts agree that "breaking the fast" is the critical phase of fasting. While your body is in the resting mode, your stomach shrinks and your intestines become idle, so solid food must be re-introduced very slowly to avoid kidney failure or digestive distress. Most experts agree that breaking a fast with vegetables, either steamed or raw, is best. Your stomach is smaller now, so eat lightly. Stop before you feel full. Stay away from starches like pastas, potatoes, rice, or bread for at least a week. Also avoid meats, dairy products, and any fats or oils for a week or more. Introduce them very slowly and in small amounts. Extended fasts are not the only fasts which need to be ended with caution. Even a 3-day fast requires reasonable precautions. It is wise to start with a little soup - something thin and nourishing such as vegetable broth made from onion, celery, potatoes, and carrots - and fresh fruits such as watermelon and cantaloupe. In terms of resuming any sort of exercise routine, the advice is the same. Start out slowly, allowing time for your body to re-adjust to its usual regime.