WHY FAST?


Purpose:

1) Loose strongholds.
   Bands of wickedness/sin
   Ezra 10:6/I Sam.7:6/Matt.19:21

2) Undo heavy burdens.
   Psalms 55:22 / I Peter 5:7

3) Break yokes, oppression,
   depression and possession off
   of people and yourself.
   Acts 10:38/John 14:12/Matt.10:8

4) Help the hungry.
   Psalms 146:7

5) The poor and destitute.
   Gal.2:10/Matt.19:21

6) Those who need clothes.
   James 2:2-8

When we fast, we often fast for
personal breakthroughs and to be
more surrendered. Let's remember to think about others.
The flesh dies more and more when
we strive to please and obey God's
Word, and serve others with a good
attitude. When was the last time
you fasted for someone else's soul
or needs?

Other Reasons To Fast:

1) Draw closer to God.
   Joel 2:12
2) To receive direction, guidance, and preparation.
   Acts 13:2 & 3 (leaders in the church at Antioch); Acts 14:23 (Paul & Barnabas); Ex. 34:28 (getting the 10 commandments);
   Acts 9:9 (Apostle Paul on the Damascus road); Daniel 10:2 & 12 (Daniel's preparation...his gift from God to receive and interpret visions and dreams).

3) To resist temptation.
   Luke 4:2 (Jesus)

4) To humble yourself.
   Psalms 35:13

5) To change negative circumstances.
   1 Sam. 12:16 (This is the story about King David. Actually, David's fasting didn't help in this particular situation.

Notice in II Kings 20:1-6, Hezekiah's prayers (which by the way didn't mention fasting) changed God's mind. Hezekiah could have fasted. The Bible doesn't make it clear, if so. Fifteen years were added to Hezekiah's life, because of his deep intercession. Notice verse #2 - "...he turned his face to the wall and prayed unto the Lord..."

Most of the time deep intercession and fasting go hand in hand. Why? Because fasting causes us to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit, and the spirit world around us.
Fasting causes us to block out the natural senses and be more in tune to hear God speak.

Fasting draws us closer to God, if done with a pure heart and motive, not for selfish reasons.

Fasting is not a form of dieting. It has nothing to do with losing weight. Nothing.

Fasting forces our natural flesh to be hungry. It reminds us that even though food is important for nourishment, spiritual hunger is just as important.

Our spiritual hunger supercedes our natural desire for food.

Spiritual food (Bible reading, prayer, meditation, fasting), feeds our spirit. Every believer needs to fast from time to time. Only fast as you are led by the Holy Spirit.

Even medical science tells us that fasting is good for your body. It cleanses out any impurities.

Here is an example when fasting and praying DID CHANGE GOD'S MIND:

Jonah 3:5-10.

Jonah was used by God to warn the people in the city of Nineveh, to
repent and turn from their sins.
If the people hadn’t repented,
fasted and prayed, in 40 days, the
city would have been overthrown.

In this instance, the fasting was
used to humble the people to genuine repentance to God.
God saw their changed heart. The
people needed to fast in order to
have their hearts changed. The
fasting wasn’t for God. It was for
them.

This whole turn around in the heart's of the people of Nineveh,
did, in fact, change God’s mind.

See: Jonah 3:9 & 10.

Over the years, I’ve heard ministers teach on fasting. They
explain the purpose is not to
change God's mind or your cir-
cumstances. These teachers of the
gospel go on to relate that fasting is for our benefit to
hear God’s voice more clearly and
draw us closer to Him. They are
partly correct. Fasting does have
the opportunity for us to draw
closer to God. We will become more
sensitive to the spirit world.
But, I do conclude that fasting
can put a damper in the devil’s
plans against us and our circum-
stances. Fasting, no doubt, will
draw attention from God and satan.
God will be glad. satan will be
mad.

Never fast about something that is
contrary to the Word of God.
God will not answer if it’s against His Word, what is already
written in the Bible.

Fasting is self-sacrificing. It’s
our delight and pleasure to consume food and fellowship with
family and friends at meal time.
It's a sacrifice to push the plate away and press into prayer to God.

II Cor. 5:7 - "...for we walk by faith and not by sight."

TYPES OF FASTS:

1) Jesus - NO FOOD.

Luke 4:2 - "...He did eat nothing..."

It's clear in this passage that Jesus did not consume any food. None of the scriptures found in Matthew, Mark or Luke, mention Jesus going without water, though. He could have, but these portions of scriptures do not mention it.

Jesus went without food for 40 days and nights. This had to be supernatural.

2) Moses - NO FOOD OR WATER.

Deut. 9:18.

Moses fasted 40 days and nights the first time he was on the mountain with the Lord, receiving the 10 commandments. Then, Moses did it a 2nd time! He was fasting again, 40 days and nights. The Bible says he "neither ate bread nor drank water..." (Deut. 9:18)

This same story is also recorded in Exodus 34:1-4;28.

NOTE: In both examples of Jesus and Moses, they fasted 40 days &
40 nights. In the story of Nineveh (recorded in Jonah 3), the people had 40 days to change their sinful ways.

The Bible doesn’t make it clear if the people of Nineveh fasted that long. It does record the inhabitants and their animals neither ate food or drank water for a certain period of time. They changed their sinful lifestyle and repented.

3) Daniel - ONLY WATER & PULSE.

Daniel 1:12 - "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink."

What is pulse?

Pulse is the seed of leguminous plants. Such as: beans and peas. Pulse is eaten as a vegetable.

Read: Daniel 1:12-21. Ten days later (verse #15) the four Hebrew men were better in countenance and healthier than those who ate otherwise.

Verses #18-#20 explains at the end of the three years, when Daniel and his three friends stood before the king, they were ten times better. Yes, better in wisdom, and understanding than the magicians and astrologers in that realm.

Isn't God AWESOME?

Verse #17 describes how Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. God rewards those who separate themselves from the
world and put God first.

II Cor. 6:17 - "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate ..."

Matt. 6:33 - "Seek first the kingdom of God..."

We can also fast other things besides food.

Examples: T.V., radio, videos, the computer, shopping in stores, sleep, sweets and sugar!

NOTE: When Jesus went to the wilderness (Matt. 4:1) to be tempted of the devil, why do you think it was in the wilderness?

Possibly because He wasn't distracted by the outward surroundings.

John the baptist, spent a lot of time in the wilderness.
See: Matt. 3:1.

Moses was in the wilderness for a number of years, in preparation for his next assignment from God (to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt). Moses had to be prepared and hear from God before he was promoted from being shepherd of the sheep, to shepherd of thousands of people.

See: Exodus 3:1 - "...backside of the desert..."

Moses spent 40 years in that desert.

Remember Moses had fasted two different times for 40 days and nights, when he was with God to receive the ten commandments.
ALL THREE MEN (Jesus, John the Baptist, and Moses), were called to withdraw into quieter atmospheres where God could minister and speak to them. The normal distractions from the world, could have hindered them.

For us to draw closer to God, there must be times we fast.

Again, we can fast activities and entertainment for a short season. Try it. You'll become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

It's wise to put the Word of God before you, when you fast, meditate and pray. God will most definitely minister to you. You will also be ministering to Him, by your surrendered heart that is hungry to go deeper with God as you praise and thank Him.

Do these things, and you'll see how you will be more aware of His presence, power and anointing. God will surely meet you on the level of your spiritual hunger.

OTHER VERSES ON FASTING:

Matt. 6:16/ Psalms 35:13/ I Cor. 7:5.

May you be challenged and enlightened today as you study, ponder and put into practice the lifestyle of fasting.

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