

Grow in

GRACE

through fasting



Matthew 6:17–18 (KJV) — ¹⁷ But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; ¹⁸ That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Fasting:

- It restores the body
- It steadies the emotions
- It deepens the spiritual life

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (KJV) — ¹⁹ What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food.

No one should lift up his soul unto vanity, walking in pride and self-indulgence. We are living in a time that demands genuine humiliation and most earnest prayer. We are nearing the most important crisis that has ever come upon the world. If we are not wide-awake and watching, it will find us unprepared. (*The Review and Herald*, February 11, 1904, par. 6)

- Fasting should be done wisely, not recklessly
- Short fasts, such as skipping a meal or eating simply for a day, can be beneficial
- Drink water and listen to your body
- Those with medical conditions should proceed carefully and seek guidance

Psalm 35:12–13 (KJV) — ¹² They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. ¹³ But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; . . .

- Fast not only from food, but also from distractions
- Turn off the noise—media, social feeds, constant input
- Use the time to pray, reflect, and listen

- Greater emotional stability
- Increased patience
- Freedom from compulsive habits
- A quieter, more receptive mind

Joel 2:12–13 (KJV) — ¹² Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: ¹³ And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Joel 2:14–15 (KJV) — ¹⁴ Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:

Joel 2:16–18 (KJV) — ¹⁶ Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. ¹⁷ Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? ¹⁸ Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

The death of James caused great grief and consternation among the believers. When Peter also was imprisoned, the entire church engaged in fasting and prayer. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 144.2)



Spiritual Effects of Fasting

- Prayer becomes more focused and meaningful
- Scripture becomes more alive and personal
- The Holy Spirit's impressions become clearer
- Temptations lose some of their power

Matthew 4:3–4 (KJV) — 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

With Christ, as with the holy pair in Eden, appetite was the ground of the first great temptation. Just where the ruin began, the work of our redemption must begin. As by the indulgence of appetite Adam fell, so by the denial of appetite Christ must overcome. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.3)

- True fasting includes caring for others
- It involves loosening the bonds of injustice
- It calls for compassion, generosity, and humility

A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.2)

Luke 18:12 (KJV) — 12 I fast twice in the week, I
give tithes of all that I possess.

James 4:8 (KJV) — 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

