



LIFE IN THE FAST LANE
21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

25/2/19 - 17/3/19

WELCOME

The children of Israel finally stood on the precipice of entering the Promised Land - a promise issued generations earlier. The promise had been disrupted, delayed, but crucially not destroyed. Just before they crossed the Jordan river and headed in a direction they had never been before, their new leader Joshua issued a command:

Joshua 3:5 Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you."

As we enter a new season here at Life Church, it's our conviction that God is going to do *amazing things* amongst us. We believe some past promises are going to be fulfilled, the sphere and scope of our influence is going to be extended and, most importantly, God is going to be glorified through it all.



However, as we embark on this new adventure, we, like Joshua, want to encourage a period of personal preparation. We want to call on you to *consecrate yourselves*.

What is consecration? It means to set ourselves apart, to be wholly usable to God. In other words, we are to have no unconfessed sin in our lives and be clean vessels for Him to use. But the meaning of consecration also goes a little deeper. It also means to compose our minds and hearts to hear from God – and obey.

As such, we want to call the whole church to a 21-day period of prayer and fasting. We want to set ourselves apart and set some time aside to seek God, hear His voice and obey His Word. If we can live life in the fast lane together, we truly believe we're going to see God do some amazing things in our future! Life Church, just like the children of Israel, can start to see some dreams become destinations.

**TOMORROW'S CONQUESTS
ARE DETERMINED
BY TODAY'S CONSECRATION...**

WHAT IS FASTING?

Simply put, fasting is a spiritual discipline that is taught in the Bible whereby food is reduced or eliminated during a period of prayer.

In Matthew 6:16, Jesus is teaching his disciples some principles for godly living. When speaking on fasting, Jesus interestingly begins with, “*When you fast,*” as opposed to, “*If you fast.*” By inference, fasting should be a regular practice within the lives of people who follow Jesus.

Not only did Jesus suggest fasting, he modelled it. He undertook a lengthy fast of forty days and nights before he began His ministry (Luke 4:1-14). He spent time alone with His Father in order to prepare for what He had been called to do.



THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE, THERE ARE MANY OTHER EXAMPLES OF BOTH THE PRACTICE AND BENEFITS OF FASTING:

FAVOUR – Esther’s call for a corporate fast prepared the way for her favour with those in authority (Esther 4:16-5:3)

PROTECTION – Ezra declared a corporate fast and prayed for a safe journey for the Israelites as they journeyed from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:21-23)

REPENTANCE – After Jonah had pronounced judgment on the immoral city of Nineveh, the king covered himself in sackcloth, sat in dust, then ordered the people to fast and pray. Jonah 3:10 says, *“When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He relented and did not bring on them the destruction He had threatened.”*

VICTORY – when it seemed like they were heading for defeat against the Benjamites, Judges 20:26 tells us the Israelites went up to Bethel and *“sat weeping before the Lord.”* They also *“fasted that day until evening.”* The very next day, God gave them a great victory.

DISCERNMENT – the disciples heard from the Holy Spirit “*while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting*” that they were to commission Barnabas and Saul (Paul) into ministry – discernment preceded their decisions.

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY – after the disciples fail to cast out a spirit that had taken possession of a young boy, they are told by Jesus that “*this kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.*” (Mark 9:29)

WISDOM – Paul and Barnabas appointed elders and, “*with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord*” (Acts 14:23)

WORSHIP – Luke 2:37 tells us of an 84-year-old prophetess called Anna who, “*never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying.*” Fasting is a great way of expressing love and devotion to God.

**OUR DESIRE IS THAT ALL THESE AND MORE WILL
BE EXPERIENCED BY ALL WHO ARE PART OF
LIFE CHURCH AS WE COMMIT TO THIS SEASON
OF PRAYER AND FASTING TOGETHER!**

TYPES OF FASTING

THE COMPLETE FAST

The elimination of all food for a period of time. Some may choose to only drink water, some may choose to allow themselves fruit juices or cold or hot squash when it would normally be a meal-time. This can be surprisingly refreshing... and sustaining!

THE SOUL FAST

This is often good for those who perhaps have health issues that prevent them from fasting food; or perhaps want to refocus in some areas of life that may be out of balance. Removing elements of distraction and/or entertainment are common in “soul fasts”, such as; TV, social media, YouTube, sport, games consoles and online shopping.

THE PARTIAL FAST

Food may be eaten, but not at certain times of the day. You may choose to miss lunch, not eat between sunrise and sunset, or not eat between 6am-6pm.

THE DANIEL FAST

In Daniel 10:3, we are told that Daniel fasted from “*choice foods, meat and wine*” for a period of 21 days. Therefore, a “Daniel fast”, is where certain foods are not eaten during a period of fasting – typically meat, sweets, snacks, bread, and alcohol. In Daniel 1:12, Daniel also said: “*Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables [pulses] to eat and water to drink.*” Some suggest the Hebrew definition of “pulse” can mean a broader range of foods than those we typically refer to as “vegetables”.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE

Beverages

- **Water only — it must be purified/filtered; spring or distilled water is best**
- **Almond milk, coconut water, coconut kefir and vegetable juice**

Vegetables (should form the basis of the fast)

- **Fresh or cooked**
- **May be frozen and cooked but not canned**

Fruits (consume in moderation 1–3 servings daily)

- **Fresh and cooked**
- **Ideally low glycemic index fruits like stone fruits, apples, berries, cherries and citrus fruits**
- **May be dried but should not contain sulphites, added oils or sweeteners**
- **May be frozen but not canned**

Whole grains (consume in moderation and ideally sprouted)

- **Brown rice, oats, quinoa, millet, amaranth, buckwheat, barley cooked in water**

Beans & Legumes (consume in moderation)

- **Dried and cooked in water**
- **May be consumed from can as long as no salt or other additives are contained and the only ingredients are beans and water**

Nuts & Seeds (sprouted are best)

- **Raw, sprouted or dry roasted with no salt added**

PREPARATION

We want to encourage you to consider carefully *when* you will fast, *what* you will fast and *how* you will fast. This is not compulsory, nor is it a competition. Ask God to show you what kind of fast God might want you to sacrificially undertake. Whatever God says, pray for the courage to step out in faith!

Thinking it through and making some clear commitments will help to sustain you through this season. Here are a few helpful tips:



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Fasting is not about impressing God. Fasting is not even about what we can get *from* Him. Fasting is ultimately about experiencing more *of* Him. Ask God to show you what needs to change in your heart. Ask Him to help you to be more sensitive to the leadings and leanings of the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to reveal more of His will for your life, and commit to surrendering your life to His plan and purpose.

“He must increase and (we) must decrease” (John 3:30)

PREPARE YOUR BODY

If you are currently taking any medication, if you are pregnant, if you are still growing or if you struggle with eating disorders, we recommend you plan a soul fast and seek medical advice if you want to do more. If for any reason, emotional or physical, you normally struggle to take on board the necessary amount of calories then we again recommend you don't undertake a food fast.

If you are a regular coffee or tea drinker, it is common to experience headaches (especially during the first couple of days) if coming off caffeine during a 'complete' fast. If you come off caffeine 2-3 days before you begin your food fast it can significantly help.

During a food fast, it may feel a couple of degrees colder than usual, so be sure to wear an extra layer or two!

Finally, make sure you get plenty of rest if you undertake a food fast. Your body will be taking in far less fuel than normal, so feeling a little more tired is to be expected – be sure to get some extra rest and sleep, and it will be best to avoid exercise that requires exertion.

PREPARE YOUR DIARY

Make sure you consider your responsibilities and plan accordingly. Factor in your family and work commitments. Talk it through with those who your fast may affect and be realistic in what you can and can't do.

DEVOTION

“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.” (James 4:8)

During this fast, we want you to spend more time with God than you normally would – to substitute the time you would normally spend eating / gaming / Instagramming etc. for time in personal devotion.

Spend some time in worship.

Spend some time in contemplation.

Spend some time in the Word.

Spend some time in thanksgiving.

Spend some time in prayerful petition.

Whatever you do... spend some time with Jesus!

Be careful not to slip into the mentality of thinking you are fasting *for* God. This is about fasting *with* God. If we abstain from food without spending time in God’s presence, it ceases to be a fast and simply becomes a very extreme diet!

We believe God wants to speak to you throughout this fast and that you will experience His presence more tangibly than ever before.

We will be sending out daily devotions by email for each of the 21 days of this fast, so make sure we have your up to date details by filling in a contact form.

We will also be having some Prayer & Praise nights here at Life Church during the fast where we will seek God together and pray into some specific situations. These will be taking place on:

Tuesday 26th February, 7.30pm

Tuesday 5th March, 7.30pm

Tuesday 12th March, 7.30pm

Be sure to put these dates in your diary.

Whatever fast you choose and however much time you set aside for personal and corporate devotion, make sure it requires some sacrifice.

Let's consecrate ourselves... knowing that God is going to do some amazing things amongst us!



FEBRUARY 25TH





17TH MARCH



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