



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

“FEAST OR FAST”

P.U.S.H. – Part 2

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A feast is to dwell upon something with delight while a fast is to abstain from food or eat less, especially for religious or medical reasons. Fasting can be beneficial spiritually and physically but it only helps the person doing it. God wants our service to go beyond our cross to acts of kindness, charity, justice, generosity, and truth. Moreover, prayer and fasting are partners in the spirit and they go hand in hand to put the power of God to work. Hence, fasting needs prayer and works of mercy.

1. Benefits of Prayer and Fasting

- 1.1 to manifest repentance (Acts 27:9).
- 1.2 to show submission (1 Kgs. 20:31-32).
- 1.3 to answer our needs (Joel 2:12).
- 1.4 to comfort and help us in hard and trying times, misfortune, and bereavement (1 Sam. 1:5-7).
- 1.5 to avoid the prospect of a threatened judgment of God (2 Sam. 12).
- 1.6 to be repentant of a grievous sin (Ezra 10:6).
- 1.7 to avert heavy calamity (Est. 4:1-3).

2. Benefits of Fasting. We fast to

- 2.1 sanctify and to humble ourselves (Ps. 35:13).
- 2.2 “afflict our souls” (Ezra 8:21-23).
- 2.3 change the mind of God (Jonah).
- 2.4 free the oppressed and lose the bonds of wickedness (Isa. 58:6) and be liberated from besetting sins (Heb.12:1)
- 2.5 heed the revelation through the Holy Spirit.
- 2.6 solve issues and be protected (Ez.8:21-23).
- 2.7 prepare for major changes (Acts 13:2).
- 2.8 break bad habits (Isa. 58:6).
- 2.9 mortify lusts (1 Cor. 9:27).
- 2.10 strengthen our faith and prayer (Acts 10:30).
- 2.11 seek the Lord (2 Cor. 20:3-4; Dan. 9:3).
- 2.12 prepare for spiritual warfare (Mt. 17:21).

In addition, we fast for

- 2.1 health and healing (Isa. 58:8).
- 2.2 revival (Jl. 1:14-15; 2:28).
- 2.3 divine intervention (Est. 4:16).
- 2.4 desperate needs (1 Sam. 1:7-8).
- 2.5 demon deliverance (Mt. 17:21).
- 2.6 our concern for others (Ps. 35:13).
- 2.7 guidance (Acts 13:21-23).
- 2.8 ordination of men into the ministry (Acts 14:21-23).

3. Elements of Fasting. Fasting should be

- 3.1 done discretely and with humility (Mt. 6:16)
- 3.3 about our soul and our standing before God.
- 3.4 realized that we have a void that the physical will could not fill.

4. Measured Steps to Fasting. We should

- 4.1 vow to God that we will fast
- 4.2 prepare for fasting
- 4.3 fulfill our resolution

5. How do we fast safely? We should

- 5.1 keep the fasting period short.
- 5.2 eat small amounts on fasting days.
- 5.3 stay hydrated.
- 5.4 go for walks or meditate.
- 5.5 not break a fast with a feast.
- 5.6 stop fasting if you feel unwell.
- 5.7 eat enough protein.
- 5.8 eat plenty of whole food on non-fasting days.

Conclusion:

Fasting is a vital spiritual discipline for all believers. The Bible teaches us the value of fasting so that we will be able to focus on prayer and seeking God’s will. Jesus himself fasted for 40 days in the wilderness without food (Mt. 4; Lk. 4). We should feast on Him and fast from the world.

Reflection:

What are you asking God now? Have you tried praying and fasting for your petitions?

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