

TRUSTING THE FATHER FROM FASTING TO FEASTING

WHY WE FAST

We fast to remember and cultivate spiritual hunger – to awaken our body and soul. Too often, our daily lives and habits are bent on physical and emotional needs – we are literally hungry, thirsty, and tired. We're over-scheduled and over-stimulated, and in the spiritually numbed chaos of our daily life, we often hardly notice our deeper, truer, spiritual hunger pangs. This shows up in exhaustion, moodiness, bitterness, unhealthy habits of physical, emotional, and spiritual intake, and in sin. Fasting exposes our true needs, shows God we're aware of our deep need for Him, and makes space for new and better hungers.

When we hear about fasting, we often think about removing something (fasting from something). But we're learning to fast for something. We intentionally fast from things we love and cling to (at times good things) but for a purpose: to expose and encounter our deepest, truest, most critical hunger pang — which is for Jesus. Our physical and emotional hunger pangs remind us of our dependence on the Maker and rekindle the senses to pray, read scripture, and seek our God.

WHEN WE FAST

Christians around the world are in a season called Lent – beginning every year on Ash Wednesday and lasting until Easter morning – a time of fasting representing Jesus's 40 Days in the Desert (just before He launched His ministry). But wait – Lent is 46 days! Yes! Because the Church gathers on Sundays to sing praise and hallelujah to our King Jesus – and because there are 6 Sundays during Lent – tradition often breaks fast on Sundays. So, we're fasting Mondays through Saturdays so our Sundays together might feel like a cold drink of water in the desert – a small feast of provision. Hallelujah!

IN THE HUNGER

Fasting for Spiritual Strength (Matt. 4:1-11)

Mon Mar 31 thru Sat Apr 19

The Daniel Fast

In the book of Daniel, we see Daniel fast as a way to mourn the brokenness around him, humble himself before God, and seek God's wisdom and understanding. Several families on Whitewater's staff team have seen God move in significant ways through past seasons of practicing this fast.

How It Works

It's tough. Those who commit to Daniel Fast with us abstain from meat, fish, eggs, and dairy (foods sourced from animals), as well as all processed foods, wheat, added sugars, caffeine, and leavened bread. So what can we eat? We eat simply. Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, seeds, water, and herbal (non-caffeinated) tea. Staff families can vouch that there are lots of fun, simple ways to enjoy this challenge!

Your Next Step

Make a plan, and consider starting now and starting slow (e.g. weaning from caffeine). Try ultimatedanielfast.com to explore simple, straightforward food lists, recipes, and more. And remember, it's about your heart and soul, not about perfection! Collaborate with your people. Share meals. And pray!

Other Ways to Participate

We get it. The Daniel Fast is really tough. Groceries are expensive! Here are a few worthwhile fasting options that anyone can participate in:

- Skip one meal every day
- Remove caffeine, sweet drinks, and alcohol
- Remove sweetened and processed foods
- Remove the meat (we'll leave the fish up to you!)

IN THE WAITING

Fasting for a Focused Mind (Matt. 26:36-46)

Mon Apr 7 thru Sat Apr 19

How It Works

For our second week of fasting, we're fasting from all non-work-related digital media such as social media, news platforms and channels, video gaming, television, movies, and other online video sources and materials. Maybe there's just one of these you should really focus on – one that really reaches into your time and heart. The purpose of this is to create space to be still, listen, pray, love the people around you well, and find healthier inputs. Because to grow deeper into the mind of Christ and satisfy our better hungers, we may need to find a better feed, right?