



## The Purpose of Prayer & Fasting

We believe that it is important to pray and fast as means of seeking God for direction. This is significant because although we know that we have the victory in Christ, it will not come without obstacles. We must begin with the end in mind!

Fasting – “to afflict oneself” (literally translated as “to humble one’s soul”). Fasting took place in the Old Testament as preparation for meeting God, when being oppressed by great cares, under judgment, or being chastised by God. Fasting and prayer always go together and function as twins (Ezra 8:21, Nehemiah 1:4). In the Old Testament, a fast usually lasted from morning until evening, and there are instances of the three day fast (Esther 4:16).

Jesus fasted for 40 days and did so at the beginning of His public ministry. At the end He was tempted, but He was able to stand because of His preparation. In Matthew 17:21, Jesus instructs that there are certain enslavements from which a person can only be released “through prayer and fasting.” The early church prayed and was backed with fasting (Acts 13:3; 14:23).

Prayer and fasting, performed with understanding, will break the stronghold of unbelief. Faith needs prayer for its development and full growth, and prayer needs fasting for the same reason. Fasting humbles the soul (Psalms 35:13), chastens the soul (Psalms 69:10), crucifies and shows mastery over the appetites of the flesh, shows obedience, gives the digestive system a rest, aids in temptation, and helps to achieve a greater yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit. Remember, it was FOOD that was used to cause the fall of MAN! Eating (consuming) the wrong things will contribute to your spiritual demise.

At the Epicenter Of Worship we place great emphasis on personal prayer accompanied with a light fast. It is important to understand that fasting has great value, but only if it is voluntary. One must understand its purpose and commit to seeking God through increased prayer.

Isn't it funny how Muslims and other religions pray and fast but Christians feel as if they can change the world without changing or challenging themselves?

~ Pastor Sean Holland