

Preparing to Fast and Pray

Preparation reveals expectation. For example, when you spend the whole morning preparing a huge feast on Thanksgiving Day, your preparation reveals the expectation that there will soon be a hungry crowd ready to feast.

How you prepare to pray and fast will ultimately reveal what you expect to experience.

Six Steps for Getting Ready to Pray and Fast

1. Set your objective.

Begin by asking God to help you understand why you are fasting. We have some congregational reasons for this day of prayer and fasting that will inform our prayer time. But what other reasons does God have for you to participate? Choose as many as apply:

- Spiritual renewal
- Guidance from God
- Discernment in a certain area of life
- Physical healing
- Revival in the church
- Salvation of the lost
- Other _____

2. Choose your Fast

You may have already filled out a commitment card. If not, be specific about the kind of fast and the duration of the fast that you'll practice. Remember that spiritual growth happens when we make and keep commitments.

Decide in advance if you will abstain from food at breakfast and/or lunch. You can choose one or both.

If you cannot abstain from food, decide what you will give up during the fast. ie. Social media, television, music, video games

3. Prepare Yourself

Prepare your mind. Fasting is just as much a mental exercise as it is physical. Begin asking the Lord to mentally prepare you for the day of fasting.

Prepare your body. No matter what kind of fast you're preparing for, it will require some adjustments for your body. Drink plenty of water leading up to and during your fast. Avoid the urge to overeat leading up to the fast for this can actually make it more difficult.

Prepare your heart. Fasting is about your commitment to the Lord. Enter the fast by confessing your sins to God and repenting where necessary. Ask God to purify your heart and prepare you to be in his presence and hear from him.

Prepare your community. The Christian life is a community life. Our church family is joining in the time of prayer and fasting together so encourage others and be encouraged. You may choose to spend the lunch hour alone in prayer on our day of fasting. But you may also decide to spend in prayer with others in our church family who are also fasting and praying. We will break our fast together on January 1st at the Holsberry's house at 6:00. We will continue and prayer and worship and share with each other what we have experienced in the Lord.

4. Make a Plan

Plan in advance how you will spend the day. How will you start the day with the Lord? How will you spend your lunch hour?

What will you read? Will you journal? Will you do this alone or with others? Again, preparation reveals expectation.

5. Keep Your Commitment

Quite simply, you will grow in discipline by making and keeping this commitment. If this is your first fast, be prepared to be hungry. When you are hungry, let that be a sign to stop and pray for a moment. If you break down and give in to hunger, pray. Either way, get back up and keep moving forward toward God. Fasting is an exercise in grace and one you will grow in as you practice it more.