

FASTING RHYTHMS GROUP GUIDE

1 HANG OUT

Time: Begin the section below 10 - 15 minutes before the group starts.

1. Engage

Start off light and ask simple questions like, how was your day?

2. Prayer of Dedication

Invite one person to dedicate your time to the Lord.

“Heavenly Father, We come to you today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support as we begin this meeting. Help us engage in meaningful discussion; allow us to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community. Amen.”

3. Connect

Questions of the day: “On a scale of 1-10, how is everyone coming into our meeting and why? One being the lowest and ten being the highest.”

2 GO DEEPER CHECK-IN

Beyond the songs and sermons of our services, we invite followers of Jesus into a weekly rhythm of personally spending time with Him and enjoying His love. This section is designed to give you a communal space to check in with each other about the fruit of your personal practice.

1. What did you learn about yourself or your relationship with God this past week?
2. How can this community support you in your faithfulness in following Jesus this week?

3

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE

Let's study together!

OVERVIEW

This week, we are looking at the rhythm of fasting. A biblical fast is a chance to temporarily say “no” to the physical food of this world, in order to say “yes” to the spiritual food from the Holy Spirit. It's an invitation to discover how our appetite for eating or drinking is also tied to our appetites for things in our daily lives. So in fasting we remove physical food as a way to address the unhealthy relationships we might have to social, intellectual, spiritual, or emotional “foods” as well.

There are four types of fasts.

Complete Fast

In this fast, you only drink liquids, typically water and/or light juices throughout the duration of the fast. Broth or soup may be considered as options, too.

Selective Fast

In this fast, you remove certain elements from your diet. The Daniel Fast is an example of abstaining from meat, sweets, or bread; drink water and juice, and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Partial Fast

In this fast, you abstain from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. Fast during specific times of the day, e.g. from sunup to sundown.

Soul Fast

This fast is common for anyone new to fasting food, those with health issues that prevent them from fasting food, or those wanting to refocus specific areas of life that are out of balance.

Suggestions: abstain from engaging in social media, TV, shopping, etc.

Read Luke 4:1- 2

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

4 ENGAGE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions to help guide your group conversation. Feel free to use one or all of them. Trust the flow of the conversation based on what the Holy Spirit is doing in your unique group.

1. Observation

What stands out to you in this passage? Who led Jesus into the wilderness? What happened to Jesus when He was in the wilderness?

2. Interpretation

Right before Jesus went into the wilderness, Luke 3:21-22 shows us that He was baptized. What can we learn from the reality that immediately after Jesus was baptized and publicly affirmed by God, He was tempted by the devil? What or who enabled Jesus to fast for forty days? How did fasting possibly inform how Jesus responded to the devil's temptations?

3. Reflection

Have you tried any form of fasting like the examples above? If so, what result did it have on your relationship with Jesus and on your life? Do you have examples of how fasting has helped you respond to difficult circumstances or temptations in your life?

4. Application

What would it look like for you to incorporate the rhythm of fasting in your life? How can you address the challenges that get in the way of fasting?

Consider setting aside time for fasting in the coming weeks. Here is an example of how to start the rhythm of fasting:

Pray and ask God to help you discern what type of fast He would have you engage in. It's okay if what and how you are fasting is different from what others are fasting. We trust God to move in our lives, even if it's not identical to how He is moving in others'.

1. Invite somebody in your life to keep you accountable to your fast.
2. Name what you are believing that God will do or reveal in your life during this time of fasting. We encourage you to write it down in a journal.

PRAY

Wrap up your group session in prayer. Take time to pray for one another's personal requests. If someone is planning to fast, pray for that person and ask that God would meet them in that time. Throughout the week, please join us to pray for our church and world for 11 minutes everyday at 11 o'clock.

If you or any of your group members have questions related to the church updates made by the Fellowship Board, please email community@madeforfellowship.com.