

DANIEL FAST

Jan. 11th - 20th, 2010



CrossPointe Church

THE DANIEL FAST

Culture draws us out to sea like a riptide, seeking to make us dependent on everything and anything but God. At the start of this very important year for our church, we are going to swim against this current by joining together in a Daniel fast.

Many if not most of us may have never done anything like fasting before. And if you haven't, that's okay. But you may be asking, what exactly is a fast and why do people do it? Great question. Here's a simple definition:

*A **fast** is a period of time in which we go without food or drink—or some comfort or convenience—so that we might set our hearts, minds, souls, bodies and life more fully **on God**.*

In Matthew 4 we read that Jesus began his earthly ministry by being baptized and then led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil. To prepare himself for this great trial, Jesus fasted for forty days. If Jesus, being God the Son, made fasting part of his preparation for ministry, *then we also* should make fasting part of our preparation for what God wants to do through us.

But fasting, like any spiritual discipline, can become a spiritual box that we check on the dead road of religion. So, it is very important that we examine our hearts and understand why we are doing this.

SO WHY ARE WE FASTING?

1. To reveal our hearts. When we go without something that is routine, whether it be meat, sweets, TV, Internet, Facebook, or caffeine, we may come to realize just how much of a grip these things have on us. Much of what we consume is excessive, whether it be food or conveniences. This has made us in many ways ungrateful consumers of goods, rather than grateful worshipers of God who supplies all our needs. Going without these things for a time will reveal our addicted hearts and give us opportunity to confess and repent to God.

2. To help us pray more effectively for God's purpose and wisdom. In Acts 13 we read about the early church at Antioch. Resources and gifted people were abundant for the young church, much like they are for us. God has been very gracious. Jesus says to people like us that much will be required. We need God's wisdom on how we are to leverage His blessing to spread a passion for Christ in our day.

3. For more of God, not merely His gifts. We are not doing this to manipulate God. That's religion, and it always ultimately fails. We're not fasting and praying so that God will give us something for our efforts. Instead, our heart in this is to draw nearer to God, from whom all blessings flow.

HOW ARE WE FASTING?

1. The Daniel Fast. In the book of Daniel, we read where Daniel abstained from the king's delicacies and instead ate only vegetables for 10 days and again later in the book for 21 days. There are many variations, but to keep it simple we are asking everyone to abstain from meats and sweets. (See dietary lists and suggestions that follow).

In addition, here is a list of things you may want to consider fasting from:

- TV, Internet, Facebook, Texting, Recreation, Caffeine, Non-essential purchases.
- Don't be confined to this list. Ask the Lord to give you direction on what you may need to fast during these ten days.

2. For 10 days (January 11-20).

3. Combining it with prayer. Fasting just for the sake of denying food is not the point. The goal is for us to hunger and thirst for God. So, it is vital that we fast and pray together. We are planning four times of gathered prayer:

- Sunday, January 10, 5:00-6:00 pm @ the Pointe
- Wednesday, January 13, 6:30-8:00 pm @ Joe & Rhonda Narde's
- Sunday, January 17, 5:00-6:00 pm @ the Pointe
- Wednesday, January 20, 6:30-8:00 pm @ Reynold & Danielle Counts'

4. Reading through John together. In addition to fasting and praying, we also will set our minds together on Scripture. Starting on January 11, read a chapter of the Gospel of John each day. There are 21 chapters in John and this will take us through the end of January. We will post reflections on each chapter daily on the blog.

Be careful to avoid legalism. We will fail. Let our failures remind us how much we need Jesus' perfect obedience as a substitute for our frail efforts.

DAILY PRAYER GUIDE

DAY 1 (Mon): HUMILITY & REPENTANCE

DAY 2 (Tue): HUNGER FOR BIBLICAL TRUTH & GOSPEL CLARITY

DAY 3 (Wed): MISSIONS

DAY 4 (Thu): RADICAL GENEROSITY

DAY 5 (Fri): OUR CITY & SISTER CHURCHES

DAY 6 (Sat): OUR NATION & MILITARY

DAY 7 (Sun): THE PERSCUTED CHURCH WORLDWIDE

DAY 8 (Mon): SOULS

DAY 9 (Tue): NEEDS OF CROSSPOINTE

DAY 10 (Wed): GOD'S BLESSING ON US FOR HIS PURPOSE & GLORY

*“Our seasons of fasting and prayer at the Tabernacle have
been high days indeed;
never has Heaven’s gate stood wider;
never have our hearts been nearer the central Glory.”
-Charles Spurgeon*

*“The weakness of hunger which leads to death brings forth the
goodness and power of God who wills life. Here there is no extortion,
no magic attempt to force God’s will. We merely look with confidence upon
our heavenly Father and through our fasting say gently in our hearts:
“Father, without you I will die; come to my assistance, make haste to help me.”
-Joseph Wimmer*

DIETARY SUGGESTIONS

FOODS TO ABSTAIN FROM:

- All meats
- All deep fried foods (potato chips, fries, etc.)
- All sugars/ sweets & desserts (refined sugar, honey, artificial sweeteners)
- All solid fats (lard, butter, margarine etc)

FOODS TO EAT:

- All fruits
- All vegetables
- All whole grains (whole wheat, oats, barley, brown rice, couscous, etc.)
- All nuts and seeds
- All legumes (beans and peas)
- Water
- 100% juices (fruit or vegetable)
- Soy or Rice milk
- Vinegar, salt, herbs, spices
- Quality oils (olive, peanut, sesame etc)

FOODS YOU MAY CONSIDER AVOIDING:

- Dairy/Poultry products (milk, cheese, eggs)
- Processed foods (artificial flavors, preservatives, white flours,)
- Caffeinated, alcoholic, or energy beverages

FASTING TIPS:

- In days leading up to fast, try to lighten your meals and increase your water intake.
- If you start feeling badly during the fast, make sure you are drinking enough water. This will help to flush toxins and particularly help with caffeine headaches.
- Stock up your pantry with appropriate foods.
- Cut up fresh fruit and vegetables to make them more accessible.
- Be sure to read food labels- you don't know what you are eating unless you do.
- Prepare to eat smaller meals but more frequently during the day.
- Search the Internet for recipes- there are so many out there!

MEAL AND SNACK SUGGESTIONS:

- Fruit Smoothies
- Salad w/ avocado, nuts & dried fruit
- Hummus on plain Triscuits
- Rice cakes & peanut butter
- Popcorn
- Whole wheat spaghetti w/ meatless sauce
- Soups (butternut, 7 bean, vegetable etc)
- Stir fry veggies w/ brown rice
- Grilled veggie kabobs &/or mushroom caps
- Baked potatoes w/ fresh salsa
- Whole wheat noodles w/ sautéed garlic, spinach, & sun-dried tomatoes
- Tofu, stir-fry w/ any combo of onion, tomato, peppers, carrots, snow peas, corn, sesame seeds, ginger, garlic, & sea salt
- Celery w/ peanut butter & raisins (or nuts) on top
- Quinoa (grain similar to rice or pasta)
- Vegetarian Chili
- Trail Mixes w/ nuts, raisins, sunflower seeds, coconut, & dried fruit
- Oatmeal w/ chopped apples & raisins, topped w/ almonds
- Ezekiel Cinnamon Raisin bread, toasted, smeared w/ unsweetened applesauce & sprinkled w/ cinnamon
- Red beans & brown rice topped w/ avocado, sweet corn, tomatoes, & cilantro
- Baked sweet potatoes topped with chopped pineapple and nutmeg
- Spinach salad w/ peach or mango chutney

VEGETABLE IDEAS (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned):

artichokes, asparagus, beets, bell peppers, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, collard greens, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, ginger root, jicama, kale, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsley, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, spinach, sprouts, squashes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, yams, zucchini, etc.

FRUIT IDEAS (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned):

apples, apricots, avocado, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cantaloupe, cherries, coconut, cranberries, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew melon, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, pomegranates, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon, etc.