

# ✧ FASTING ✧

A Church at the Well Resource

## Scriptural Basis

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he fasted for 40 days and nights for purposes of being strengthened and empowered by the Spirit (Luke 4:1-2, 14a).

## What is the idea behind fasting?

Fasting is creating space in which to hunger and be homesick for God & His Kingdom.

## Three biblical reasons for fasting:

- 1) It prepares us for confession and repentance.
- 2) It can serve as a spontaneous expression of grief.
- 3) It helps us stand in solidarity with those suffering injustice (Isaiah 58:6 – 10).

## Three things fasting is not:

- 1) Fasting is not strong-arming God to answer our prayers.
- 2) Fasting is not a spiritual excuse to change our body image.
- 3) Fasting is not a spiritual badge we acquire to feel superior to others.

**Fasting Pointer:** Fasting isn't wise for children, people with blood sugar issues, or eating disorders. If this is you, consider an alternative fast such as from coffee, sweets, snacks, social media, etc.

**Different Kinds of Fasts** include a full fast (just water for a time), a liquid fast (fruit & vegetable juices permitted), and a partial fast (giving up certain foods or skipping a meal)

## Reflection Questions

- What misconceptions might you have held about fasting in the past?
- What are some of the barriers for you in beginning the discipline of fasting?

## Practice

In silence and solitude, ask God if he is inviting you to fast.

If you are sensing an invitation from God to fast, take time to imagine with him what your fast would look like. Think through with him why, how, and for how long this practice would be implemented.

After your fast, take time to observe what was noteworthy about your experience. What was hard about it? What was *not* hard? What surprised you? Where did God show up? In what ways were you able to pray, grieve, repent, or experience solidarity with those who are suffering?