

REDIRECTED

A 21-DAY FAST FOR DIVINE DIRECTION

“They passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia... And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Acts 16:6, 10

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Paul had a plan. He wanted to go into Asia. The door closed. He tried to go into Bithynia. The door closed again. It was not until he stopped pushing against closed doors that he saw the vision of a man in Macedonia calling him forward.

Sometimes God does not redirect us because we are doing something wrong. He redirects us because He is doing something better than what we planned.

For the next 21 days, Vertical Tampa is stepping back from our own noise to hear from God about where He is leading us next. We are not fasting to force a door open. We are fasting to quiet ourselves enough to notice the door He has already opened.

Fasting does not manipulate God. It does not earn His love or force His hand. Through Jesus Christ we are already loved and accepted by God. Fasting positions our hearts to hear Him more clearly and follow Him more fully, especially in seasons where the next step is not obvious.

During these 21 days, we are not only changing what we eat. We are changing what receives our attention, so that we c

an recognize God's redirection when it comes.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL FASTING?

Biblical fasting is the voluntary denial of food, certain foods, or another normal activity for a set period so that we can devote ourselves more intentionally to God.

Fasting and prayer work together. Going without food but neglecting prayer becomes little more than dieting. The purpose of fasting is to seek God.

*"So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer." **Ezra 8:23, NIV***

*"'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.'" **Joel 2:12, NIV***

Like Paul on the road to Macedonia, we are asking God to close what needs to close and open what needs to open, and to give us the discernment to tell the difference.

CHOOSE YOUR FAST

Everyone at Vertical Tampa is invited to participate, but no two bodies or seasons of life are the same. Choose the fast that requires genuine sacrifice from you while remaining appropriate for your health.

1. The Complete Fast

Abstaining from food while continuing to drink water for a limited period.

| *"After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry."* **Matthew 4:2, NIV**

A prolonged complete fast should not be attempted casually or without medical guidance. If you are pregnant, nursing, diabetic, taking medication that requires food, managing an eating disorder, or living with a chronic condition, consult a healthcare professional before changing your diet.

2. The Partial Fast

Removing certain foods or limiting your diet rather than eliminating food completely.

| *"At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips."* **Daniel 10:2-3, NIV**

During a partial fast, many choose to avoid meat, sweets and desserts, fried or processed foods, caffeine, bread or certain carbohydrates, and sugary drinks.

3. The Daniel Fast

A commonly practiced partial fast based on Daniel 1 and Daniel 10.

| *"Please test your servants for ten days. Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink."* **Daniel 1:12, NIV**

A modern Daniel Fast commonly includes vegetables, fruits, beans and legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, and water. It commonly excludes meat, dairy, sweets, alcohol, and heavily processed foods. Scripture does not prescribe an exact modern meal plan, so the emphasis stays on consecration, not legalism.

4. The Soul or Media Fast

Some people cannot safely change their diet. You can still practice intentional abstinence from what consumes your attention: social media, television, streaming, video games, unnecessary shopping, or excessive phone use.

A media fast should not simply free up time. Redirect that time toward prayer, worship, Scripture, and service.

5. Fasting Together as a Church Family

| *"Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly."* **Joel 2:15, NIV**

We are pursuing this together for 21 days, but each person should choose a method that fits their health, responsibilities, and season of life.

WHY HYDRATION MATTERS

Water supports nearly every major function of the body. During a food fast, hydration matters even more, since some fluid normally received through food is no longer being consumed.

Unless a medical provider has instructed you to restrict fluids, drink water consistently throughout the day. Do not wait until you feel extremely thirsty.

Watch for signs of dehydration: dark or strong-smelling urine, urinating less frequently, dry mouth, headaches, dizziness, unusual fatigue, or excessive thirst.

Severe dizziness, fainting, confusion, inability to keep fluids down, chest pain, or other alarming symptoms should not be ignored. End the fast and seek medical care.

Fasting is an act of surrender, not an act of self-harm. Wisdom is not a lack of faith.

WHAT GOD DOES THROUGH FASTING

1. Fasting Redirects Our Attention Back to Him

"Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Matthew 4:4, NIV

Every physical hunger becomes an invitation to acknowledge a deeper spiritual hunger.

2. Fasting Disciplines the Flesh

"I discipline my body and keep it under control." **1 Corinthians 9:27, NIV**

Fasting does not destroy the flesh, but it exposes how strongly our appetites and preferences try to steer us, the same way Paul had to release his own plan for Asia.

3. Fasting Creates Space to Hear

The time normally spent preparing meals, scrolling, or entertaining ourselves becomes time devoted to God.

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." **Colossians 4:2, NIV**

4. Fasting Brings Clarity and Direction

"While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" **Acts 13:2, NIV**

The same Spirit who redirected Paul's steps is present when we fast. Fasting does not guarantee an immediate answer, but it clears the noise so we become more attentive to His voice when He speaks.

5. Fasting Is an Expression of Humility

"I humbled myself with fasting." **Psalms 35:13, NIV**

6. Fasting Aligns Us with God's Heart for Others

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice... to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter?" **Isaiah 58:6-7, NIV**

A fast that draws us closer to God should also make us more compassionate toward people.

PREPARING FOR THE 21 DAYS

Before beginning, write down your answers to these questions and keep them where you will see them daily.

What type of fast am I completing?

Choose a fast that requires genuine sacrifice but remains appropriate for your health.

Why am I fasting?

Where in your life do you need God to close a door, open a door, or confirm the door you are already standing at? Name it specifically.

What will replace what I surrender?

Set specific times for prayer, worship, Scripture, and journaling.

What distractions have to be removed?

Consider limiting entertainment, unnecessary conversations, and environments that weaken your focus.

A DAILY RHYTHM FOR THE 21 DAYS

Morning: Consecration

Begin the day by surrendering yourself to God.

Father, my life belongs to You. Order my thoughts, desires, decisions, and actions today. Show me where You are closing a door, and give me eyes to see where You are already opening one.

Read a Scripture and write down one truth to carry through the day.

Midday: Alignment

Use your normal mealtime as a prayer period. Ask:

- What is God revealing to me?
- Where have I been pushing against a closed door?
- Is there a redirection I have been resisting?
- Who is God placing on my heart to pray for?

Evening: Reflection

End the day with worship and gratitude. Journal:

- What did I learn about God today?
- What did I learn about myself?
- Where did I experience difficulty?
- What is the Holy Spirit asking me to do next?

HOW TO END THE FAST

After 21 days, return to normal eating gradually. Begin with smaller portions and foods that are easier for your body to tolerate. Avoid treating the end of the fast as an opportunity to overeat.

The purpose is not simply to finish the 21 days. The purpose is to carry forward what God redirected in you during them.

IMPORTANT HEALTH NOTICE

This guide provides general spiritual and wellness information and is not medical advice.

Before participating in a food fast, consult a healthcare professional if you:

- Are pregnant or nursing
- Have diabetes or a blood sugar condition
- Have kidney, heart, gastrointestinal, or other chronic conditions
- Take prescription medication that must be taken with food
- Have a history of an eating disorder
- Are under 18
- Are elderly or medically vulnerable
- Perform strenuous physical labor or intense athletic training

If you cannot safely fast from food, choose another meaningful form of fasting. Your participation is never measured by how little you eat.

CLOSING DECLARATION

We are not fasting to convince God to speak. We are fasting so we can become quiet enough to listen.

We are not fasting to force a door open. We are fasting to see the door He has already opened.

We are not simply giving something up for 21 days. We are making room for God to redirect us into what He has already called us to.

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