

The Power of the Empty Plate

How to Get Full from Fasting

by

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While the statement “full from fasting” is an oxymoron it will prove to be a powerful key in your life, if you will let it. While you deny yourself from physical nourishment, you will be satisfied with spiritual nourishment. Jesus said that man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Luke 4:4).

The Lord has led me to call the church to a corporate time of prayer and fasting for 21 days with the purpose of breaking through unseen barriers in the spirit realm for personal and corporate reasons. God has given us spiritual weapons that are effective in demolishing the works of the devil. Fasting is the powder, prayer is the paper, together they make dynamite. Focused faith (the purpose behind the season of prayer and fasting) is the spark which lights the dynamite which will in turn bring down the dam that is holding back the river of God's blessing in our lives.

***Note of caution:** *If you are under doctor supervision for medication consult your physician before you undertake any type of fasting. Just because you are on medication does not mean you cannot undertake some type of physical fasting from food. Your doctor will advise you on what type of fasting is appropriate according to your unique situation. I, Joseph Arnold, am not a doctor and information included herein is based upon my personal study and experience and may not be comprehensive. Should you decide to go through with fasting after reading this material you acknowledge that you will not hold myself, Calvary Church A/G, or any other responsible for the use or misuse of these materials, nor responsible for your personal, individually unique, experiences. You acknowledge that you alone are fully responsible for your choices and the outcomes of those choices.*

When thinking of fasting you should have two things in mind. The first is what *type of fast*, and *how long*.

There are different types of fastings.

- 1). Daniel Fast (Daniel 10:3) – a loose interpretation of this fast allows you to pick and choose what you will give up, and includes other things than food. Example: soda, sugary foods, a favorite food, eating only vegetables, TV/computer/entertainment, favorite activities, etc.
- 2). Esther Fast (Esther 4:6) – no food or water. This is an extreme fast for extreme situations. This is NOT common and very dangerous. This type fast is for NO LONGER THAN 3 DAYS. You can go 40 days without food, but you cannot go longer than 3 days without

water!

- 3). Juice Fast – no food, only non-acidic fruit and vegetable juices. During this type of fast non-acidic vegetable juices should be your main sustenance with non-acidic fruit juices only now and again as fruit juices contain high levels of sugar. (notice the emphasis on non-acidic; acid is hard on your stomach when there isn't any presence of food)
- 4). Full or Complete Fast – no food, only water.

While the set time is 21 days, January 1st – 21st, you may fast as you desire; whether it's a meal a day, just 1 day, a week, 3 days, the full 21 or any combination as you feel led. The length of the fast should be determined according to how you are led by the Spirit and your faith. If the Spirit quickens to you a time period, He will supply the faith and grace to carry you through for that time. It may not be without physical distress or a spiritual fight, but His grace will be sufficient to carry you through! After this period of fasting you will realize the physical and spiritual benefits of fasting and may want to continue with routine fasting to help keep your spirit tuned to the Holy Spirit. You may decide to fast once a week, do a three day fast once a month, or seven day fast every few months, etc.; however you're led.

If you're pursuing a Full Fast and are only drinking water, regardless of the length of the fast, you'll find the following information extremely helpful. Most of what you will experience the first day of any fast is strictly psychological. Hunger pangs will come, NOT because you are starving (this doesn't happen until after 40 days!), only because your body is accustomed to your feeding schedule. Day 2 will still bring some hunger pangs and you may feel very lethargic and easily agitated and I've found this day to be the hardest of any length of fast I've undertaken. Day 3 will mirror Day 2 somewhat. After Day 3 hunger pangs subside and continuing to fast will be easier. After Day 3 some of the following symptoms may come and go. If you are fasting for more than 3 days I want to enumerate some of these so you will not be deterred, but encouraged knowing that what you are experiencing is normal. Knowing this will cause you to remain steadfast during the period ahead. These effects will vary in duration and intensity and drinking extra water, enjoying extra periods of rest and extra prayer will alleviate these symptoms. Consult your physician should you become fearful of extreme experiences.

- 1). tiredness/weakness
- 2). mild burning/pain sensation in stomach
- 3). easily agitated
- 4). light headed/dizziness
- 5). olfactory hallucinations! For lack of proper terminology...I remember when I went on a 21 day fast and towards the end the smell of car exhaust reminded me of pizza....no doubt a trick of the devil! :)
- 6). mild nausea
- 7). bad breath and even sometimes body odor will increase as well.

Most of these symptoms occur because your digestive organs are resting because they are not

being used. While you are not pumping food into your system, your body will be busy burning stored fat for fuel, consuming toxins which are prevalent in our modern society whether they be environmental toxins, or those found in foods, and even consuming harmful bacteria, viruses, and other sicknesses as the body repairs and heals itself. Drinking plenty of water will help flush these toxins and other physical contaminants out of your system. While you are not consuming food, you MUST drink, drink, drink, drink. Some have debated what type of water is the best, distilled, natural, purified, etc. For all intents and purposes anything but Proctorsville water will do, BUT if you are near death no matter what the circumstances are, it's better than an early grave! Of course I'm only kidding! (Even then I wouldn't drink Proctorsville water!) :)

Anyway, comedy break over.....I do want to mention that some going on several days of fasting may consider taking a multivitamin, but I'd advise against it. Whether a liquid or pill form, the acid in it will be too strong for your stomach and even the taste of it will be repulsive. I'd recommend either extra dosing the week before or after you're off the fast. It probably would be better for after when your body is more eager for nourishment and will be more apt to utilize it, but that's my personal opinion.

When ending a long Full Fast of no food and water only, don't rush your intake of food. The longer you fast, the more care you will need to take to gently wake your digestive system back up. You may eat healthfully, but normally if fasting 1-3 days. Longer fasts should be broken by introducing small amounts of raw vegetables, and some fruit. Do this for several meals if you have fasted up to 7 days. If you fast more than 7 days do this for a few days and then slowly introduce your regular diet (though hopefully you'll make the decisions that since your body has been cleansed that you will take better care of it and eat more healthy foods). If you have fasted the full 21 days you will want to make a beef stew with plenty of your favorite vegetables. The first few meals you might want to just sip the broth, and then add in some of the veggies (be sure to chew, chew, chew). EAT SLOWLY! Do this for a few days adding more veggies and including raw veggies and some fruits. TAKE IT EASY! DO NOT GORGE, HOG, or OVERSTUFF yourself, your stomach has not had food for a long while and it will have shrunk. You will notice that it will take MUCH less food for you to feel full, so don't load up a huge plate or bowl....you can always get seconds! You will definitely want to eat light foods for several days. Test yourself, you'll be able to tell through messages your body is sending to your brain when to return to normal eating.

Making fasting a regular part of your routine will now be easier if you start it immediately: don't wait 6 months to consecrate yourself to a fasted lifestyle. Your body will probably resist you, and it'll be easier if you start right away.

Now, with all of the extra time you have, because you won't be sitting down to a meal, you'll have extra time to pray, read the Bible, meditate on God's Word, worship, and seek the Lord. This is what it is all about anyway....Fasting doesn't move God's hand, it moves us into position to receive from God's Spirit. Yes, you can spend extra time with the Lord any time without fasting, but you won't receive them same physical and spiritual rewards any other way! When you fast, ALWAYS have a purpose. Fasting for believers should just be a religious ritual of self-

sacrifice or discipline, that one dreads, but rather a time set aside for a specific purpose, and for drawing nearer to the Lord. It could be as a spiritual conditioner, a short fast to keep you tuned in to the Lord and your spiritual pipes clean, or extended fast to enlarge your spiritual capacity to secure greater benefits whether for personal reasons or for others.

This time is comprised of a few things. First is worshipful prayer, just drawing near to the Lord through conversation and by having a listening ear. Secondly, reading the Bible and meditating on His Word is necessary to nourish your spirit and give you strength. Thirdly is petitioning prayer. Talking to the Lord about the reason you are fasting. Whether it's the Four-fold Focus of 1). Harvest of Souls (community and YOUR family member and friends), 2). Increased Presence and Power of God (in the church and YOUR own life), 3). breaking the back of Debt and receiving supernatural debt cancellation and financial blessing, and 4). personal reasons during the 21 days of prayer and fasting or for other purposes during other later fasts.

Personal reasons could be anything. Whether it's a family/relationship issue, personal finances, healing for yourself/others, overcoming a bad habit, negative thinking, seeking for greater spiritual hunger and desire, overcoming temptation, breaking sinful/negative patterns (whether from family history, or personal), baptism in the Holy Spirit, to be used of the Lord in a greater/more fruitful way, to flow in the Gift of the Spirit, to have the Fruit of the Spirit cultivated and flourishing in your life.....whatever it may be, you could even ask the Holy Spirit to quicken a focus to your spirit.

Throughout all of this you will want to pray in tongues as much as possible. Since this whole thing is spiritual and praying in tongues edifies, strengthens, etc your spirit, it would be puzzling why you wouldn't. Now, if you are not Baptized in the Spirit, let that be one of the things you are fasting for. There is nothing like fasting to remove whatever may be hindering your receiving this precious gift the Father has for every single one of His children.

Now this may throw you a bit, but there may be times you do not have the energy, or even the desire to pray. Rest assured in this: what praying is to the lips, fasting is to the body. Both are the physical instrument in a spirit practice. Prayer stops when your lips and concentration upon the Lord stops, but fasting only stops when you start eating again. The Lord hears your prayers and sees your fasting. As you maintain your fast the purpose for your fasting is still before the Lord. Pray when you can, but other than that be mindful of Jesus' victory through the Cross and as you enter into physical death (in a shallow sense) you enter into what He did, and soon that Resurrection power will be yours to raise you up!

Another vital part of what you will want to be in the habit of, if you are not already, but especially during fasting, is Proclaiming God's Word over your life and situations. This is a powerful tool you will not want to go without. Scripture teaches that in the ***mouth*** of two or three witnesses a thing is established (Duet. 17:6). There are two witnesses trying to establish their case for your life. God has good planned for you (Jeremiah 29:11) and the devil is trying to keep you from it (John 10:10). With whom will you side? **BOLDLY** testify with your mouth of God's Promises for your life! Overcome the devil by the blood of the Lamb (what Jesus DID

for you on the Cross) and the Word of your testimony (what Jesus PROVIDED through the Cross)! (Revelation 12:11). ***Declare with your mouth*** that the devil and what he brings a liar and that God's Promises are FOR you, IN you, and ACTIVE in your life! (2 Corinthians 1:20, 2 Peter 1:4).

Jesus taught us to ***speak*** to the mountain (Matthew 17:20). This is one of the things about fasting....it increases faith. Jesus told us that if we have mustard seed faith, we can ***speak*** to the mountain and it'd move. Don't pass up the confession of God's Word during this time of fasting while unbelief is being smashed and faith is soaring to new heights, there is something powerful in giving voice to God's Word with your own mouth!

How is Declaring God's Word done? You search the Scriptures for the promises it contains in regards to your situation. For example, let say you want the Lord to uproot fear in your life. Here are three Scriptures that have to deal with fear: Isaiah 41:10 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' Psalm 27:1 "The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?", and 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind."

Taking these three Scriptures and turning it into a Confession over your life would look like this:

God is with me, I will not be afraid. I will not fear what anyone can do to me, or what the devil can do against me because God is holding my life in His hand and HE will help me, protect me, and keep me strong! God has not made me fearful, but has filled me with His power, with His love, and right thinking.

Scriptures for finances:

Psalm 112:3 Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever.

Luke 6:38 "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure--pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

2Co 9:11 you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. (you may combine the preceding verses also)

Confession may look like this:

Riches and wealth are in my house because I have given, it is being given back to me pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Because I have given God is supplying all my need according to His riches in Christ Jesus and enriching me in liberally in ALL things, and I am thankful and my generosity is producing thanksgiving in others!

Healing Scriptures and Confession

1 Peter 2:24 “and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

Romans 8:11 “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

Psalms 103:2-3 Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits; Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases...

I bless you, O Lord, for through the Cross of Christ you have forgiven me of all of my sins and healed me of all sickness and disease. By the stripes Jesus bore on His back, I have been made completely whole, and the Holy Spirit that raised Him from the dead makes my body completely alive and whole right now!

Victory over Sin

Rom 6:11-18 “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone *as* slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

Confession:

I am dead to sin, but alive unto God. Sin does not have dominion over me, but I overcome sin through Jesus. I present the members of my body and my life unto the Lord as a servant of righteousness, pleasing the Lord in all things.

By now you should have gotten the picture. When you give voice to what God has said He has done for you through Jesus, or where He proclaims His goodness, you are taking a stand with Him against what the devil has or is trying to attack you with!

Victory will come as you remain steadfast; the Word *WILL* work if you will work the Word! Jesus overcame Satan using the Word of God during His season of fasting in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). God's Word is **THE final authority**. You may be facing some facts, the facts of pain, the facts of debt, the facts of marital struggle, the facts of sinful habits, but God's **TRUTH**

overrides facts when we pursue His **TRUTH**....isn't that what Jesus said? John 8:31-32 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then you are truly disciples of Mine*;and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

So the above is for your personal life, those areas you really need the Lord to breakthrough. Let's turn our attention to the other three of our Four-fold Fasting Focus of these 21 days. They are (1) Harvest of Souls, (2) Increase of God's Presence and Power, and (3) Breaking the back of Debt. Pray as you feel led concerning these, but use the following Confessions of God's Word as we smash the devil, tear down his strongholds, and see a break out of God's Spirit at Calvary Church & in our lives too!

(1) Harvest of Souls

Lord You said that if You were lifted up, that You'd draw all men unto You. I thank You that Proctorsville, Ludlow, Chester and surrounding communities are being drawn to You right now. I thank You that You broke the power of satan over the lives of people and that Your Spirit is convicting them of their sin right now. He is convicting them of soon coming judgment and revealing the Father's love through Jesus Christ. I command the blinders to come off the eyes of people right now, that they may see the Light of Christ; to see Jesus for Who He is. I command every barrier to the Gospel to be broken down now and the hearts of people would be softened and turned toward Christ. I thank You that You are waking up Your Body to be Your Hands, Feet, and Voice; that we would be busy about our Father's business, busy in the Field of Harvest!

John 12:32, Colossians 2:15, John 16:7-10, 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, Acts 2:36-47, John 9:4, Luke 10:2

(2) Increase of God's Presence and Power

I thank you Father that our hearts are filled with rejoicing, worship, and praise. You are enthroned at Calvary Church and in my life, for You dwell in the midst of the praises of Your people! I thank You that we are growing from faith to faith and from glory to glory. Calvary Church and I am arising and shining, for the Glory of the Lord has risen upon us! We dwell under the Shadow of the Almighty, in His Secret Place. The promises of Psalm 91 are ours!
(Read them to make yourself familiar with them and then personalize it!)

Thank you Father that no weapon of the enemy formed against us shall prosper and every tongue that rises up against us we decree and declare it broken, powerless, and foolish babble in the ears of the hearers. We trample upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and NOTHING by ANY means shall harm us! Lord we take our place as the Church, as Sons and Daughters of the King of Kings and enforce the victory of Jesus every where we go and in all we do. Jesus leads us in triumphal procession and every work and force of satan is demolished under our feet.

Psalm 22:3, Romans 1:16-17, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Isaiah 60:1, Psalm 91, Isaiah 54:17, Luke 10:19, 1 Peter 2:9, 2 Corinthians 2:14, 1 John 3:8

(3) Breaking the Back of Debt

I thank You Father, that we owe no man anything, but the debt of love. All of our needs are supplied through the abundant riches in Christ Jesus. We have more than enough, God has increased us and caused us to be able to be liberal in every good work. We have been faithful in tithing, therefore the windows of heaven are open to us and the devourer is rebuked by the Lord Jesus Himself. The Lord is our Shepard, we do not lack or want for any good thing. Our Father knows how to give good gifts unto His children and if He offered up His very Son for us, He will not and does not withhold any good thing from us! We cast our bread upon the waters, and it returns to us! When we give, it is returned to us pressed down, shaken together and running over. We are thankful for the goodness of God towards us, and through our liberal giving, others are praising and thanking the Lord for His goodness! We are the Righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and our houses are filled with riches and wealth. God gives us wisdom in our finances and directs us by His Spirit in every financial matter. In Jesus' Name every work and force of satan against our finances and every blessing that God has for us is brought to nothing, we thrust it aside and kick it out of the way. We speak to the mountain of debt and command it to be removed and cast into the sea. The blessings of the Lord flow freely to us and through us for the Glory of God!

Romans 13:8, Philippians 4:19, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Psalm 23, Matthew 7:11, Ecclesiastes 11:1, Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Psalm 112:1-3, Luke 10:19, Mark 16:18, James 1:5, Matthew 17:20

Not only confess the “we” and the collective “Calvary Church”, but personalize it with “I”, “my” put *YOUR* name in there! Believe the Lord not just for “us” but for “you” too!

I just want to thank you and commend you for making prayer and fasting a part of your life. Know that God will reward you richly and you honour Him and place Him first through this practice. Know that your fasting is not just for yourself, but that ALL might see and glorify God for Him making Himself known through your life.

God's Best & Richest Blessings Upon You!,

Pastor Joseph L. Arnold