

Practical Guidelines for Fasting:

It is NOT unspiritual or unscriptural to recognize that there are functional and practical considerations to Fasting at a physical level that one must understand:

- 1) DO NOT fast, if there are medical or dietary reasons that prohibit fasting. When a congregation fasts, we must learn to be in the '*spirit of the fast*' (Isa.58:6-7). Do NOT violate medically directed dietary requirements. Those who are under medically directed dietary requirements can still move in the ministry of prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit with practical wisdom.
- 2) Our bodies NEED water. As a normal requirement, you should drink at least eight glasses of water daily - ESPECIALLY when you are fasting. Water is NOT a violation of your fast. When Jesus fasted for forty days, the Bible states: "in those days He ate nothing" (Luke 4:2). This specifically indicates no abstinence from fluids. Therefore, keep in mind that even our miracle working Savior needed water. Incidentally, a squeeze of lemon in a glass of water during fasting is helpful. It helps the body cast off impurities during the fast, assisting the body's cleansing.

- 3) Some individuals whose regimen cannot tolerate a complete fast may find drinking fruit juices will help them remain in the spirit of the fast. When Daniel went on a 21-day fast, the Bible states that he took 'no pleasant food' (Dan.10:3). The concept is that Daniel did not satisfy his appetite; he only ate enough to sustain himself. This was a voluntary reduction of food intake, denying himself the delicacies, yet answering the basic need for energy. This is an acceptable fast - observed in the '*spirit of the fast*.' For those who are unable to fast meals when the whole congregation is fasting, can still sustain a partnership in the fast by giving themselves to regular times of prayer beyond their usual pattern. NO condemnation should be felt by the one not fasting due to certain physical limitations.
- 4) Fasting MUST be joined to special times of prayer, praise, and intercession. Therefore, spend extra time in the Word of God when fasting. David said, "Your Word is sweeter than the honeycomb" (Psa.19:10). Fasting reminds us that we are sustained "by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Food does not sustain us; our Father-God sustains us. The Word of God is the nourishment to the soul. So feed on it!