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**OAKHAM
BAPTIST
CHURCH**

FASTING

WHY, HOW AND WHAT

Contact

info@oakhambaptist.org.uk
for more information and to
discuss your fast



Why Fast?



It is Biblical

Throughout the Bible we see a clear relationship between fasting and spiritual devotion. Moses, David, Daniel, Jesus, the first disciples; they all fasted. Fasting has fallen out of popularity as a Christian devotional exercise, but it was so central to early Christianity that prayer and fasting came as one when the early church talked about devotion and growing in closeness to God.

It is counter-cultural

Western society has become synonymous with over indulgence and excessive eating. Mental health disorders centred around food consumption have increased disproportionately to other causes over recent decades and the links between healthy eating habits and mood are long established. Food has become a god to many, an idol to most and a snare to all. We are called as Christians to break those chains and live lives dedicated solely to God.

Even the mention of fasting will draw some people to instant anger- if that is you ask yourself why. In our individualistic society our diets become an expression of self; we even label ourselves based on our consumption habits. Freeing our selves from our slavish devotion to food is a life giving experience that provides us space and focus that we can fill with closeness to God.



How to Fast

Start small

Don't try to dive right in at the deep end. Do little and build it up.

More God not less food

The fast shouldn't focus on food but on the Holy Spirit. If you are fasting, replace the time you would eat with prayer or worship. The focus of your fasting time needs to be an increase of your spiritual life.

Consider your responsibilities

Do you have health related concerns that require a certain level of food?

Do you have family responsibilities or work activities? Plan accordingly as you may have low energy and be a little on edge during your fast.

Break-fast well

Plan how you would like to end your fast. A family meal, a small piece of bread in solitude, with others on a similar journey. The end of a fast is important for both encouraging and focusing us throughout the fast.

Partner up

It is great to fast with another person or a group. If you are fasting alone then let somebody know who can keep you accountable.



What to do

Here are some examples of fasting to try...

One meal

Instead of eating lunch, spend an hour in prayer and meditation. You may want to do this with another person and share some water together.

This is a great starter fast

Simplicity

Spend a day only consuming things that are naturally grown such as nuts, water, fruit and vegetables. Eat and drink simply and sparingly.

This is a good regular fast to have

Communal food

Plan 3 days where you gather with others for one meal a day and only eat at this meal. Spend the time together enjoying God's gifts of food and community.

A great fast to do as a life group/family

A daylight fast

Enjoy an evening meal and then eat nothing until the sun sets the following evening. Decide whether to drink all things or limit yourself to water only.

Hold this fast monthly, or even weekly

A full fast

Spend a set amount of time in total fasting. Drink water but consume nothing else. Remember to start small and only to progress to a full fast with experience.

Try a 1 day, or even a 3 day fast

Supernatural

Some Christians fast for 40 days and nights to follow the example of Jesus. This type of fast is only to be attempted if God has given you a clear instruction to do it.

Always have a safety partner

Always drink water, always pray. Stop if you're unwell