

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE AND POWER OF PRAYER
Principles from Dr. Myles Munroe book with same title. Another key source
used – “Fasting” by Jentezen Franklin

Understanding Fasting

Fast – a conscious, intentional decision to abstain for a time from pleasure, **usually eating** in order to gain vital spiritual benefits.

- A time set apart to seek the face of God
- Abstaining from other things that you find pleasure in for the purpose of giving your whole heart to God including prayer.
- When fasting-telling God, “My prayer & the answers I’m seeking are more important than my normal pleasure (usually eating)”

Math. 6:2 **When** you give....vs. 3 **But** when you give

Math. 6:5 And **when** you pray..; vs. 6 But you, **when** you pray..

Math. 6:16 Moreover, **when** you fast.. vs. 17 But **you**, when you fast..

Fasting—intentional abstinence from eating; not “I was too busy to eat”—count as fasting.

OT-Hebrew—fast—tsum---cover over the mouth

NT-Greek “-nesteuo—to abstain from food

1 Cor. 7:3-5 reveals that a husband/wife abstaining from sexual intimacy for an agreed period is a form of fasting.

True Fasting Involves:

- **Seeking God--** God reveals himself to those who seek Him. Jer. 29:13 “You will seek me & find me when you seek me with all your heart.”
- **Putting God First** – demonstration of your love & appreciation for the Lord (focus on Him); God alone is who you want & want to honor—not just what He has to give you; you want Him. As we put Him first—discover everything we need comes w/Him; **Math. 6:33 But seek first.....**
- **Creating an Environment for Prayer** - along with prayer—adds an environment for God to work; fosters a sensitive environment for the working of prayer or hearing God—getting clear directions from God.
- **Interceding for Others**—many times seeking God’s direction on behalf of others..family needs or national problems.
 - Jesus 40 days & night (Luke 4:1-2) consecrated himself for the task of redeeming the world.

Jentezen Franklin—fasting is a secret source of power that is overlooked by many.

- **3 duties of every Christian—giving, praying, fasting**
- **Ecles. 4:12 cord braided with 3 strands is not easily broken**
- **We could be missing our greatest breakthroughs because we fail to fast.**

QUESTIONS ABOUT FASTING

1. List several things that you already know about fasting
2. List some things you would like to know more about fasting
3. Why do you think it's difficult for some people to fast?
4. What is the purpose of fasting?
5. Should every believer fast? Why or why not?
6. When people have medical conditions and daily and timely eating is a must, how should they approach fasting?