

**Engage: Do ALL in the Name of the Lord Jesus**  
**The How and What of Fasting**  
**Matthew 6:16-18**

# Fasting is a Spiritual Discipline

All three require that we give up in order to receive back  
(1). Fasting (2). Prayer (3). Giving

**Power:** A practice that enables us to receive power from ON HIGH (The Lord) to live the life He wants us to live

**Freedom:** to live life the right way, the way God wants us to live – these disciplines allow us to be who and what God intends us to be!

# What Do We Fast?

## Food Fasts

- **A partial fast (Daniel 10:3)** a period abstaining from delicacies, meat and wine.
- **Normal (total) Fast** NO food and NO water
- **Normal (modified) Fast** NO food only water & liquids
- **Supernatural Fast**

## Media Fast

Many people seem to be to have a difficult time going through an entire day concentrating on any one single thing. Everything breaks up our sense of concentration—computer screens, printed material, the radio, podcasts, video, movies, television, magazines.

**Galatians 5:1** *For freedom Christ has set us free. Submit not again to a yoke of slavery.*

People spent an average of **10 hours, 39 minutes** each day with smartphones, tablets, TV, radio, computers and video games.

(Denver Post: 2016 (January-March) according to Nielsen Company)

## **People Fast**

We just have a tendency to devour people, like food, and we usually get severe heartburn from it. **Solitude, quiet is a way to recharge our batteries so we can serve better!**

Current World Population 2018: **7,602,756,388**

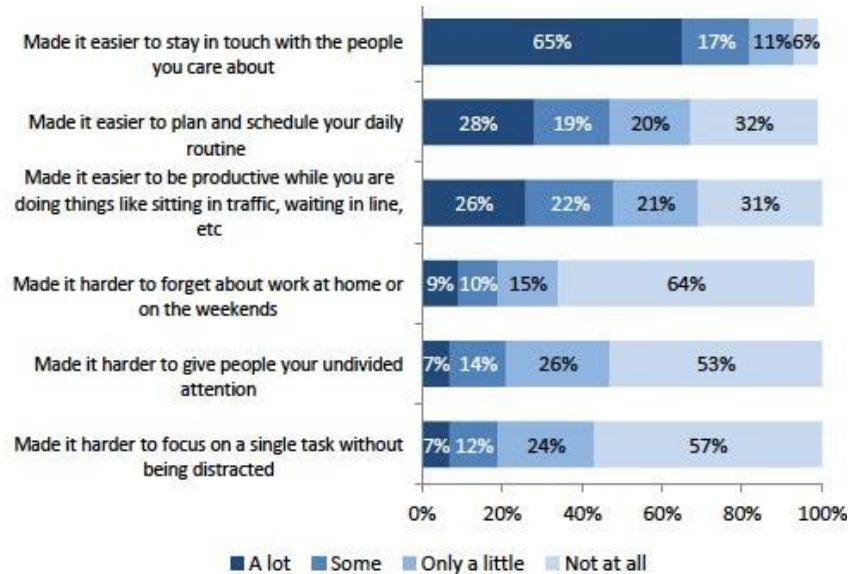
Population Growth this year: **10,829,226**

Population Growth today: **205,767**

# Cell Phone Fast

Our cell phones, iPhones, Androids are amazing useful tools. These tools can be distracting and destructive.

For the first time ever there are more gadgets in the world than there are people. 70% of the world's populations has a cell phone.



## **Conversational Fast**

The discipline of silence is an important discipline in our culture. We use our words to bless, encourage and edify. Our words can also overpower, control, and manipulate. Our words bring life and death.

We will speak 860.3 million words in our lifetime (80 years). Research by Louann Brizendine (University of California) found that women speak ~20,000 words daily compared to ~7,000 words for men. Women talk nearly 3X's as much as men.

## **Consumerism Fast**

Fasting from our gluttonous self-centered consumer culture that we find so desirable and comfortable. In this time of fasting we make the decision to not buy anything, spend anything other than the essentials for life. So shopping, going to the mall, internet shopping, Amazon, and EBay. Consumerism is stopped for a period of time.

Consumer spending increased 3.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017 to \$12.028 trillion. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that, in 2016, the average American spent \$57,311.

**(Source: 2016 Consumer Expenditures Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 29, 2017)**



## **How to Fast**

### **Matthew 6:16-18**

*Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

## **Fasting is an Act of Devotion**

People fast (go without) so that they can spend more time in prayer or interaction with the Lord. Fasting was mandatory on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:32); and they could fast individually or in groups while praying for certain requests (Esther 4:16).

The purpose of fasting is to provide time for prayer for self, loved ones, the community, to practice self-discipline, learn what controls us, to remind us that we can live with less, and to help us appreciate what God has given to us.

## Luke 18:9-14

*He told his next story to some who were complacently pleased with themselves over their moral performance and looked down their noses at the common people: Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax man. The Pharisee posed and prayed like this: **Oh, God, I thank you that I am not like other people** — robbers, crooks, adulterers, or, heaven forbid, like this tax man. I fast twice a week and tithe on all my income. Meanwhile the tax man, slumped in the shadows, his face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, **God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner.** Jesus commented, this tax man, not the other, went home made right with God. If you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face, **but if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself.***

## **Fasting Is Rewarding**

### **Matthew 6:17**

*But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

When you fast go about your normal daily routine; don't make a show of it. The Bible teaches us that acts of self-sacrifice done quietly and sincerely are the best way to do them.