



January 11th, 2026  
Pastor Josh McPherson  
"THE CONSECRATED LIFE"

## "FASTING"

**Biblical Fasting is:**

"A Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes."

## How We Make War:

By **intentionally, persistently, aggressively** drawing nearer **to Jesus**.

## What is Consecration?

A **lifelong yielding to the Holy Spirit**, for **ever-increasing freedom** from sin's dominance, and **ever-increasing likeness of Christ** in our lives.

## **CONSECRATION IS THREE THINGS:**

- 1) Separation.
- 2) Dedication.
- 3) **Preparation.** (THIS WEEK)

## Jesus On Fasting:

16 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."  
(Matthew 6:16-18)



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## 4 THINGS JESUS TAUGHT ON FASTING:

### **#1: An Assumption:**

Christians Following Jesus Will Fast.

"And **when you fast...**" (v16)

14 "Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?'

15 Jesus answered, 'How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; **then they will fast.**'" (Matthew 9:14-15)

### **#2: A Warning:**

Don't Make it About You Looking Good.

"...do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, **they have received their reward.**" (v16)

### **#3: An Instruction:**

Do it for God, Not Man.

"... But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may **not be seen by others** but **by your Father** who is in secret..." (v17-18)

### **#4: A Promise:**

Fasting is an Act of Obedience Which God Rewards.

"... And your Father who sees in secret **will reward you.**"..." (v18)



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## WHAT KINDS OF BIBLICAL FASTS ARE THERE?

### Normal Fast:

"And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry, for **he ate no food**." (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:2)

### Partial Fast:

"But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank... 'Test your servants for ten days; let us be given **vegetables to eat and water to drink**.'" (Daniel 1:8, 12)

### Absolute Fast:

"Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And for three days he was without sight, and **neither ate nor drank**. (Acts 9:9)

"Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, 16 'Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and **do not eat or drink for three days**, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.'" (Esther 4:16)

### Supernatural Fast:

"When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that the Lord made with you, I remained on the mountain **forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water**." (Deuteronomy 9:9)

### National Fast:

"Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord, and **proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah**. And Judah assembled to seek help from the Lord..." (2 Chronicles 20:3)

"Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God. **They called for a fast and put on sackcloth**, from the **greatest of them to the least** of them." (Jonah 3:5-6)

### American Fasts/Prayer:

President John Adams, President James Madison, President Abraham Lincoln, President Franklin Roosevelt (prayer), President Donald J. Trump (prayer)

### Congregational Fast:

"Blow the trumpet in Zion; **consecrate a fast**; call a solemn assembly; **gather the people. Consecrate the congregation...**" (Joel 2:15)

"While **they were worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then **after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them** and sent them off." (Acts 13:2-3)



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## **Pitfalls:**

1. **Legalism:** "the works I do make me right with God." No, faith in the blood of Jesus makes you right with God.
2. **Perfection:** "If I don't do it just right it won't work." No, don't focus on doing it wrong, focus on connecting intentionally with the Lord.
3. **Religiosity:** Fake Piety.

## **WHO FASTED IN THE BIBLE?**

Moses, the lawgiver	Nehemiah, the wall builder
Elijah, the prophet	Paul, the apostle
David, the king	Jesus, the savior
Esther, the queen	The Church, God's people
Ezra, the Priest	Israel, God's People
Daniel, the seer	

## **Fasting Quick Facts:**

1. Fasting is a journey, not a destination.
2. Fasting is disposition & discipline, not a duty.
3. Fasting weakens the fleshly man in order to build up

## **THE BIG IDEA:**

**Don't Be Weird.**

## **STEPS TO FASTING:**

- 1) **Set Your Objective.**
- 2) **Make a Plan.**
- 3) **Give The Lord Your Yes NOW.**

## **THE PURPOSE OF FASTING**





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## **Discussion Questions:**

### **Getting to Know Me**

1. What are you looking forward to about Church Camp this week?
2. What have you enjoyed about *The Consecrated Life* series so far?

### **Into the Bible/Sermon**

1. Read Matthew 6:16-18. Why is Jesus' statement, "when you fast..." so significant?
2. Review the "4 things Jesus Taught on Fasting". Which of Jesus' teachings about fasting was most encouraging or challenging for you?
3. How is fasting related to consecration?
4. Pastor Josh taught about 6 different kinds of fasts found in the Bible. What did you learn? Were any of these types of fasts new or surprising to you?
5. Of the 3 "Pitfalls" Pastor Josh mentioned, which one do you think you're most likely to fall into? Why do you think that is? How can you guard against that pitfall as you step into an intentional time of prayer & fasting leading up to Church Camp?

### **Application**

1. Use one word to describe how you felt as you were listening to the sermon. Did you have any "lightbulb" or "ah-ha" moments? What were some of your key takeaways from the sermon?
2. What has been your past experience or exposure to fasting? What did you learn about fasting? Did your perceptions or ideas about fasting shift after the sermon? How so?
3. What is your plan to respond to Pastor Josh's call to our church to step into a time of intentional prayer and fasting? How can you 1) set your objective, 2) make a plan, & 3) give the Lord your YES, now?
4. What do you need from the Lord as you step into a time of prayer and fasting? What are you trusting the Lord for? How would you describe your hunger for more of God in your life?
5. Spend time as a group praying over our upcoming Church Camp. Pray that God would be glorified in our gathering and that he would move in the lives of the members of your city group. Consider sitting together as a group at Church Camp this week!