



***Note:** This fast is not required and neither expected of IRM members or anyone who may want to participate. The fast is completely voluntary. We ask that all who choose to participate should seek the advice of their physician/healthcare provider before participating in this fast. The 21 day fast is not required and participants may stop at any time during the fast.*

Why should we fast?

Matthew 9:15 *“And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.”*

What is Fasting?

- It is the deliberate abstinence from physical gratification to achieve a greater spiritual goal.
- It's renouncing the natural in order to invoke the supernatural.
- Fasting is the bridge to intimacy with God

What are some fasting errors?

- Fasting is not to punish your body. (1 Corinthians 9:27)
- Fasting does not earn God's favor. (Luke 18:12)
- Do not let fasting become a source of guilt. (Romans 8:1-2)
- Fasting should not be entered into lightly. God takes vows very seriously (Ecclesiastes 5:1-7)
- Fasting does not guarantee a certain result. (2 Samuel 12:16-23, 1Kings 21:27)

1st Step in Fasting: Your PURPOSE

Fasting was to be a priority. All throughout scripture, fasting is prayer, praise, proclamation. In Matthew 9:15 *“And Jesus said to them, “The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.”*

Why am I fasting? Is it for spiritual guidance, healing, grace and mercy, intimacy with the Father, a need? Seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help you focus in on what you're fasting for so that your prayers are specific before the Father.

2nd Step in Fasting: Your COMMITMENT

- Make a decision on what you will commit to during the fast:
- Fasting for an extended period of time – 21 days fast or you may choose to do a week. Those who are just starting out should take it slow for the first time.
- Commit to the type of fast you have prayed about (water, no red meats, just fruits and vegetables, etc).
- Set an agenda for prayer and reading your word throughout the day.

3rd Step in Fasting: Prepare SPIRITUALLY

Prepare your heart by:

- Confessing all sin and asking God for forgiveness (1John 1:9)
- Forgive those who have sinned against you as you ask for forgiveness from those you sinned against (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4)
- Give yourself completely to our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1,2)
- Meditate on God's Word—worship Him (Psalm 48:9,10;103:1-8,11-13)
- Have an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6)

4th Step in Fasting: Prepare PHYSICALLY

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some people should **never** fast without professional supervision.

- Take YOUR TIME
- Eat smaller meals before we start the fast. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods.
- Eating raw fruits and vegetables for 2 days before we start may help as well.

Now that we are fasting...we are abstaining from all solid foods and have begun to seek the Lord. Here are some helpful suggestions to consider:

- Avoid drugs, even natural herbal drugs and homeopathic remedies. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision.
- Limit your activity.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pangs, or dizziness. Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.
- The first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will likely experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pangs, increase your liquid intake.

How to End

Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

We suggest that you do not drink milk because it is a pure food and therefore a violation of the fast. Any product containing protein or fat, such as milk or soy-based drinks, should be avoided. These products will restart the digestion cycle and you will again feel hunger pangs. Also, for health reasons, stay away from caffeinated beverages such as coffee, caffeinated tea, or soda. Because caffeine is a stimulant, it has a more powerful effect on your nervous system when you abstain from food. This works both against the physical and spiritual aspects of the fast. Another key factor in maintaining optimum health during a fast is to limit your physical activity.

Although not mentioned in the Bible, we as Christians today can also commit to fasting from other activities:

- Electronics
- Computers
- TV
- Video games
- Limited cell phone use if possible.
- Try to give up some entertainment like sports and movies and focus more on Prayer and Bible Study