



Navigators Discipleship Tool



4 Ideas for Prayer and Fasting

Fasting is the spiritual discipline of intentionally going without something for a time to focus on your relationship with God. Even Jesus fasted for 40 days before beginning His ministry. Recognizing your appetites—what fuels you—and how they draw you toward or away from God is one way to practice this spiritual discipline.

“Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, ‘How is it that John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?’ Jesus answered, ‘How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them’” Mark 2:18-19 (NIV).

FUEL (Food; Use Of Time; Entertainment; Listen To), take inventory of *your fuel* through one of the four fasting ideas described below.

Before you start a fast, invite a friend to join you. You can encourage each other through the fast and share about your journey.

FOOD

Practice: Do you ever use food as a comfort when you’re sad or as a reward when you’re happy?

Try fasting from one type of food or even one meal a day for a certain period of time and see how your cravings change. How does this require deeper dependence on the Lord?

Ponder: What can you learn from Daniel as he fasted from certain types of food (Daniel 1:8-16)?

“Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.’ So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days” Daniel 1:12-14 (NIV).

Pray: *Father, deepen my hunger and thirst for you.*

Use of Time

Practice: How often do you describe your day as “busy?” How does your schedule make you feel? What fills most of your time?

Take inventory of your time by writing down everything you do for a week. Then ask God to show you what activities you could fast from to commit to time for Him.

Ponder: Learn from Nehemiah as he fasted and prayed after hearing about the destruction of the city walls of Jerusalem. He was willing to offer whatever time necessary to help.

“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven” Nehemiah 1:4 (NIV).

Pray: *Father, teach me how to best honor you with how I spend my time.*



Entertainment

Practice: How does it feel to have someone like your post or have someone unfollow you on social media? How are your entertainment choices influencing you?

Talk with the Lord about what you watch and listen to—music, movies, TV, social media, podcasts, etc. Decide how you might fast from entertainment.

Ponder: Learn from the early church how fasting and prayer coincided with worship. This led them to commission more believers to go and share the gospel.

“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.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” Acts 13:2-3 (NIV).

Pray: *Father, make me more aware of who you are and therefore increase my worship.*



Listen To

Practice: Who do you look to for encouragement? Does someone’s approval matter most? Whose voice is the loudest in your life?

Try fasting from noise and use it as an opportunity to embrace silence and more clearly hear God’s voice.

Ponder: Learn from the churches in Galatia (Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch) as Paul and Barnabas used prayer and fasting to make leadership decisions (Acts 14:21-23). In Paul’s letter to the Galatians he emphasized the importance of God’s approval.

“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ” Galatians 1:10 (NIV).

Pray: *Father, transform me to desire your approval above all others.*

