

How
to FAST
SUCCESSFULLY

How
to FAST
SUCCESSFULLY

DEREK PRINCE



WHITAKER
HOUSE

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked (NASB) are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*,^{*} NASB^{*}, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1988 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org). Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*,^{*} NIV^{*}, © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.^{*} Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

HOW TO FAST SUCCESSFULLY

Derek Prince Ministries—International
P.O. Box 19501, Charlotte, North Carolina 28219-9501
www.derekprince.org

ISBN: 978-0-88368-345-3
eBook ISBN: 978-1-60374-440-9
Printed in the United States of America
© 1976 by Derek Prince Ministries—International

Whitaker House
1030 Hunt Valley Circle
New Kensington, PA 15068
www.whitakerhouse.com

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical—including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system—without permission in writing from the publisher. Please direct your inquiries to permissionseditor@whitakerhouse.com.

Contents

1. What Is Fasting?	7
2. Should All Christians Fast?	11
3. How Should I Prepare for a Fast?.....	15
4. What Is the Purpose of Fasting?	25
5. How Long Should I Fast?	31
6. What Happens during a Fast?	35
7. What about Unpleasant Physical Reactions?	41
8. How Can I Fast with Maximum Physical Benefits?.....	47
9. What Are the Different Types of Fasts?.....	51
10. How Are the Sabbath and Fasting Related?	57
11. How Should I Break a Fast?	65
12. In Summary	69
About the Author	73

What Is Fasting?

The theme of this study is “How to Fast Successfully.” This subject does not readily lend itself to a sermon, but rather to some practical teaching on various aspects of fasting. Many people ask: “How do I fast? How long do I fast? How often should I fast? How should I break my fast?” The purpose of this study is

to answer these questions and to clear up some misconceptions about fasting.

I think it is good to begin with a definition of fasting. The definition I have used several times is: **Fasting is abstaining from food for spiritual purposes.** Normally fasting is not abstaining from fluids, but only from solid food. Although there were occasions in the Bible when people did fast without food or without water for as long as forty days, for this study, we will consider fasting as abstaining from food for spiritual purposes.

Many of the people who have asked, “How do I fast?” have been Christians and members of churches for many years. Yet, apparently no one has ever taught them about fasting, even though the Bible has much to say about the subject. Since most of these people know something about prayer, it may be good to begin by pointing out a parallel between fasting and praying.

In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6, when Jesus speaks first about praying and then about fasting, He uses similar language in talking about both topics. The main difference

is that when He talks about praying He includes a pattern prayer which we call the Lord's Prayer. But I think there is a basic parallel between fasting and praying, and I'll point out two aspects of it.

We all know we can pray as individuals, and most of us are also familiar with praying in groups. Group praying we usually refer to as a prayer meeting. Individual praying is what we do when we're by ourselves. I believe there is the same distinction in fasting: there is group fasting, where people fast together; and there is individual fasting, where a person fasts on his or her own.

We are also familiar with two kinds of prayer: (1) regular prayer at a set time each day, and (2) special times of prayer when the Holy Spirit leads us to take extra time beyond our usual pattern of prayer for a special need. The same, I believe, is true of fasting. I think fasting should be a regular practice in the life of every disciplined Christian. But beyond those regular times of fasting, there are times when the Holy Spirit leads us to give additional emphasis to fasting.

So we see that there is a parallel between praying and fasting. Just as there is individual prayer and collective prayer, so there is also individual fasting and collective fasting. Just as there are normal patterns of prayer and there are times of special prayer, so there should be normal patterns of fasting in the life of every Christian and there should be special times of fasting as the Holy Spirit leads.