

Agape House of Worship
Midweek Service & Bible Study

Topic: The power of fasting and prayer
Part 1: A lifestyle of Fasting
Texts: Matthew 9:14-15, Isaiah 58:6

Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2024
Facilitator: Pastor Patrick Ahiadzi

Introduction:

Fasting is often a one-time event that Christians embark on to usher themselves into the new year. Is fasting supposed to be a one-time event or a lifestyle? Today's bible study will help us answer that question and learn strategies to develop this lifestyle of fasting. We hear of Moses, Elijah, Jesus and Paul practicing a lifestyle of fasting regularly. Jesus makes us to understand that there are certain problems that can only be dealt with through fasting and prayer. Understanding the human biology goes a long way to help us prepare ourselves mentally and physically for fasting.

The goal of this bible study series is to help you to know ways to develop a lifestyle of fasting. We will be discussing the effect of different kinds of food and the effect that it has on our ability to fast effectively. We will also learn about the different types of spiritual benefits of fasting.

What is fasting? Fasting is giving up food (or something else) for a period of time in order to focus your thoughts on God.

Types of Fasting:

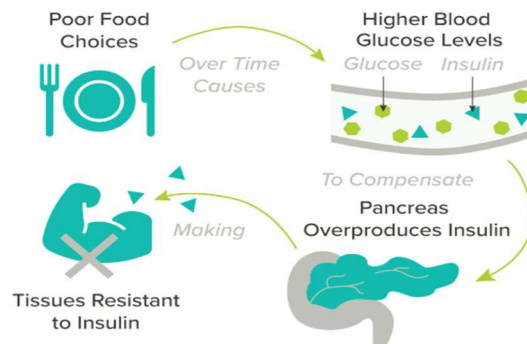
- The Ezra fast (Ezra 8:21-23)
- The Samuel Fast (1 Samuel 7:6)
- The Elijah Fast (1 Kings 19:4-8)
- Paul Fast (Acts 9:9)
- The Esther Fast (Esther 4:16, 5:2)
- The Jesus Fast (Matthew 4:1-2)
- The Daniel Fast (Daniel 1: 5-21; 10:3)

Why is food consumption a subject of concern?

- Sin came into the world because Adam and Eve ate from the tree of good and evil. (Gen 2:17)
- Esau exchanged his birthright for a bowl of soup. (Gen 25:32-34)
- A prophet in 1 Kings 13 was killed by a lion because he disobeyed God, when he was told not to eat.
- Jesus's first temptation had to do with food. (Matthew 4:3)

Avoiding irritability during fasting: Isaiah 58:4 warns us about fighting and quarreling during fasting. The feeling of hunger and tiredness can easily make one irritable during fasting. The human body gets its energy mainly from carbohydrates which is converted into glucose. Examples of sources of glucose are potatoes, beans, fruits, chickpea, candy, lentils, pasta, brown rice, bread, grains, skimmed milk and sweetened yogurt. People whose diet consist of mostly carbohydrates will find it more difficult to fast because of the insulin resistance they have developed in their bodies over time. Signs and symptoms of insulin resistance include high blood pressure, frequent urination, fatigue, high blood sugar, hunger, brain fog, high cholesterol, increased thirst, lethargy, tingling numbness in hands and feet.

What is insulin resistance?



Practical ways to build stamina for fasting

- Have your morning devotion and listen to sermons every chance you get.
- Pray in the morning before or after work. (Pray in tongues every chance you get throughout your day)
- Stay hydrated throughout the fast.
- You can take coffee black with or without honey and milk in the morning.
- Limit your intake of carbohydrates when you break your fast.
- Eat a balanced diet when you break your fast.
- Substitute traditional meals for low calorie, low carb meals. (Daniel 10:3)
- Avoid eating late to promote better digestion and better sleep.

Power of fasting

1. Fasting gives you the power to overcome the devil. (Matthew 4:1-11)
2. Fasting is required to effectively represent God in any capacity (Luke 4:14-19)
3. It allows you to hear clearly from God. (Daniel 2:22)
4. It humbles you. (Psalm 35:13)
5. It breaks yokes and bondages (Isaiah 58:6)
6. It empowers you to live a life of righteousness. (Isaiah 58:6-8)
7. It activates our spiritual senses (Daniel 10:1-7)
8. It makes you healthy. (Daniel 1:15)