

And to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the Lord?

⁶ "Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

"If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

¹⁰ If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

¹² Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

¹³ "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,

The holy *day* of the Lord honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking *your own* words,
¹⁴ Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Message-Fasting that Pleases God...

How NOT to Fast...

1. Don't fast if you want to be c_____ (v. 1-3, 5).

Scripture Insight: "**58:3-7 Why.** The people complained when God did not recognize their religious actions, but God responded that their fastings had been only half-hearted. Hypocritical fasting resulted in contention, quarreling, and pretense, excluding the possibility of genuine prayer to God. Fasting consisted of more than just an outward ritual and a mock repentance, it involved penitence over sin and consequent humility, disconnecting from sin and oppression of others, feeding the hungry, and acting humanely toward those in need."¹

2. Don't fast if you want to stay in your patterns of _____ (v. 4).
3. Don't fast to try to m_____ God. Fasting is preparing you to receive God's blessing. You cannot earn or work or deserve God's blessings. Fasting simply prepares you to be in a place to receive God's blessings, not earn it!

→ **Fasting does not help you earn God's blessings. God's blessings come by grace through faith. Fasting simply prepares you to hear from God and to be ready to receive God's blessings.** -Jentezen Franklin

How TO fast in a way that pleases God:

1. Fast to break the s_____ in your life (v. 6a).
2. Fast to break the yokes of b_____ for yourself and others (v. 6b).
3. Fast to do _____ to those in _____ (v. 7, 10a).

→ **Do to others what you are asking God to do to you. To open up the vertical flow, you need to open up the horizontal flow.**

¹ Quote from John MacArthur Study Bible.

Luke 6:38 (NIV): Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

4. Fast to seek j_____ to those who are being oppressed (v. 9b).
5. Fast to bring u_____ in your relationships (v. 9c).

→Fasting that makes a difference begins with you being willing to do for others what you are asking God to do for you. -Dr. Tony Evans.

Does fasting really make a difference? **YES!**

12 Benefits of Fasting:

1. Fasting can help your _____ to shine brighter (v. 8a).
2. Fasting can help _____ come quicker (v. 8b).
3. Fasting can help bring _____ to your pathway (v. 8c, 11a).
4. Fasting can help release God's glorious _____ (v. 8d).
5. Fasting can help prayers to be answered _____ (v. 9).
6. Fasting can help _____ you to a place of wholeness (v. 11b).
7. Fasting can help release an overflowing of _____ (v. 11c).
8. Fasting can help bring new _____ to that which seemed destroyed (v. 12).
9. Fasting can help remind you to _____ by taking a Sabbath Day each week (v. 13).
10. Fasting can help you find _____ in the LORD again (v. 14a).
11. Fasting can help you experience God's _____ (v. 14b).
12. Fasting can help you enter into your _____ (v. 14c).

Action Steps-Practical Tips to help make your fast a success.

1. Pray and ask God if He would like you to fast at this present time.
2. Pick your fasting plan. Look at the 3 options on the handout in your bulletin.
3. Write out a fasting prayer guide. Pray for family needs, church needs, the lost, the sick, the persecuted church, America, our president and elected officials, our missionaries, etc.
4. Read the 10 Day Fasting Reading Plan.
5. Prepare your body, your mind, and your soul before the fast.
6. Expect to be challenged physically and spiritually during the fast.
7. As you deny the physical, spend more time focusing on the spiritual.
8. Expect great things to happen in 2019 and beyond.