

*“Moreover **When Ye Fast**, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” **Matthew 6:16-18 KJV***



Fasting is abstaining from bodily desire or need for a determined duration most commonly associated with food. If there is no sacrifice, there is no fast. Food is our most persistent desire and is usually the most common fast, but there has to be a purpose or the fast is useless and unproductive. When we fast before God, it must be secret, only known to God and hidden from men. There must be a reason, or request you have placed before Him that is in accordance with His Written Word. You don't use fasting as a negotiation tool, but rather as a way of demonstrating to God the earnestness of your petition or purpose. Perhaps you seek the salvation of a loved one or some besetting sin with which you struggle or some needed item for another. It is not to be lightly entered into or stopped for it will be to no avail. It is a personal vow to God that is done regardless of outcome. God is not bound by our vows, only we are. *“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.”*

You can ask for God's help in performing the vow, in fact, it is necessary we do so. *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty Hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: Casting All Your Care upon Him; for He careth for you.”* If your care is genuinely spiritually motivated, you have God's Ear; tell Him, He already knows.

Perform your fasts before the Lord,
In all accordance with His Word,
For He will hear your earnest prayer,
And He will always meet you there. –CGP

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” Prayer should be our attitude not just an action. The attitude of prayer habitually turns to God with gratitude for every need and desire while assuming the responsibility of study and meditation in His Word to make sure we do not ask amiss. Fasting should be a joyous time of fervent focused fellowship with God!

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” James 4:3 “Be careful (stressed) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication (fervent pleading) WITH THANKSGIVING let your requests be made known unto God.” Philippians 4:6 KJV