

# SACRED RHYTHMS | fasting

**Materials:** None, though you may want to capture your experience in a journal

## **Brief Description:**

Fasting is a voluntary abstinence from an otherwise normal function- most often eating- for the sake of intense spiritual activity. Fasting was an integral part of people in the Bible. Through this practice, you'll be invited to fast, so that you can spend extra time in prayer, Bible reading, or silence with God.

9 For zeal for your house has consumed me,  
and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.  
10 When I wept and humbled[a] my soul with fasting,  
it became my reproach.

Psalm 69:9-10

This passage from Psalms explains both the purpose of fasting and one of the reasons why many of us would prefer not to do it. Fasting humbles our soul; it helps to see our weaknesses and frailties with more honesty and clarity than we are accustomed to.

## **Doing the Practice:**

Choose something from which to fast, and a time frame that you will fast. It could be once a week for a season, or every day for a set number of days. Do not undertake a full fast from food. A fast of this extent and duration should only be undertaken with very clear direction from God and a good deal of preparation. Instead, perhaps fast from one specific type of food or drink, or from one meal each week, or from using social media, watching TV, reading for fun, or something similar. Additionally, if you are pregnant, nursing, or have another health condition that makes fasting from food impractical or unsafe, choose one of these other ideas.

Regarding the time you would usually spend doing what you have given up- use that time for prayer, reading the Bible, or otherwise being with God.

## **Reflecting On Your Fast:**

Throughout your fast, at regular intervals, capture your thoughts about your fast. How do you feel about what you've chosen to fast from? What do you see rising to the surface in your thoughts during your fast? What does God seem to be saying to you during your fast? How difficult did you find the practice of focusing on God while you were fasting? Did these things change as your fast went on?