

## V. Practical: Tips for fasting and Q&A

1. Start small.
2. Plan what you'll do instead of the activity you are fasting from
3. Consider how it will affect others
4. Try different kinds of fasts
5. Fast from something other than food

### Class Schedule:

~~September 6: Introduction~~  
September 13: Fasting  
September 20: Bible Intake I  
September 27: Bible Intake II  
October 4: Prayer  
October 11: Fellowship  
October 18: Serving  
October 25: Evangelism

## Spiritual Disciplines

Week 2 – September 13, 2015



### Fasting

#### I. Introduction

*"Discipline yourself for the sake of godliness." 1 Timothy 4:7*

#### II. Old Testament Background and Definition

The only commanded fast: Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-31)

Purposes of Old Testament fasts:

- strengthening prayer (Ezra 8:23; Joel 2:13)
- seeking God's guidance (Judges 20:26)
- expressing grief (1 Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:11-12)
- seeking deliverance or protection (2 Chronicles 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23)
- expressing repentance and returning to God (1 Samuel 7:6; Jonah 3:5-8)
- humbling oneself before God (1 Kings 21:27-29; Psalm 35:13)
- expressing concern for the work of God (Nehemiah 1:3-4; Daniel 9:3)
- ministering to the needs of others (Isaiah 58:3-7)

#### Definition of fasting:

*Fasting* is voluntarily going without food — or any other regularly enjoyed good gift from God — for the sake of some spiritual purpose.

*1 Corinthians 7:5*

**III. Danger: How not to fast (Matthew 6:16-18)**

**IV. Purpose: Why do we fast? (Matthew 9:14-15)**

**“The heart that motivates a true fast is a heart for God.”**

**“The spiritual purpose for our fasting should be longing and asking for the fullness of God, both here and now and also in the age to come.”**