

What is a Financial Fast?

It is a God-inspired way for us to find financial freedom and peace in the area of our spending, saving and giving. The concept is similar to our annual fast where we give up food—something physical for God’s presence—something spiritual. It is a way to draw closer to God. This fast is about curbing our desire to consume while fueling our desire to get closer to God!

During the financial fast the Spirit of God will reveal areas in our financial spending that are “out of control” and He will help us differentiate our needs from our wants. This time of financial fasting will allow God to redirect our spending and giving to reflect His plan for our financial stewardship.

I am praying you will join us during our church-wide financial fast by committing to the following plan for 21 days.

During the fast we should not use credit or debit cards for 21 days. For three weeks we should refrain from buying anything that is not a necessity like food and medicine. Below are some tips and tools for us to be prayerful about as we prepare for this season. On the other side there are also some guidelines for what we will purchase and what we will refrain from purchasing.

Three Financial Fasting Tips

- For 21 days use a journal to capture your feelings, fears and frustrations about your finances. Also, take time to capture your prayers and how God spoke to you about your spending habits and empowered you to complete the fast for 21 days. Be prepared to spend time reflecting on your thoughts, praying over your notes and being inspired for action
- Review your progress. After the fast is over review your journal notes to see what growth or insights you have had. Be as specific as possible when you record your thoughts and emotions
- Get an accountability partner. You may need help and encouragement during the fast. Find someone else to partner with and pray with during this time.

Our plan is to spend only cash on essential needs for 21 days. I realize one persons need is another persons want and vice versa. People will always come up with ways “around” items on the list. We cannot come up with a list of all the “do’s and do not’s that may violate the principle of the fast. Let the Holy Spirit guide you.

Overview of what we can purchase during the 21 days

- Essential items such as food and medicine
- Essential personal hygiene items
- Essential clothing items that would be required for your job such as pantyhose, work shirts, or a uniform. We should not buy clothing simply because we think we need a new outfit for work.
- Essential items for your family. School supplies would fit under this category.
- Essential items for your home, such as cleaning products. Sheets, pillows, lamps, curtains, etc. are not essential unless the old ones are completely worn out or broken.

Overview of what we should not do during the 21 days

- Don't go to the mall.
- Don't window shop. A major objective is to stop using shopping as a form of entertainment.
- Don't shop "on-line".
- Don't browse through catalogs. Put them away for the 21 days so they will not be a temptation.
- Don't buy any meals outside the home.
- Don't go to the movies, plays or spend money on entertainment.
- Don't buy things we know we should not buy.
- Don't use plastic. Use cash whenever possible. This fast is about getting us connected to our cash spending.

We can go out and have fun just don't spend money doing it. Look for community programs that are free. Check with local colleges to see if there is a free showing of a movie or drama production. We can find ways to entertain ourselves and family without spending cash. Consider having a family game night and play those games we have purchased over the years.

**This list is adopted from the book,
“The Power to Prosper: 21 days to Financial Freedom” by Michelle Singletary**