

START WHERE YOU ARE

It is important that you start where YOU are. The fasting principle is to exchange dependence on the natural for the spiritual; become radical with the principle itself. You can customize how that looks in your specific context. Remember you aren't competing against anyone else; you are simply depriving your flesh of its appetites while supercharging your spirit's sensitivities to God.

FASTING STRIDES:

When most people start fasting, there is typically some level of discomfort. However, it is possible to get used to the fasting routine pretty quickly. You must learn to fast in a way that works for you.

While any true fast does involve abstinence from food or at least certain types of food, typically, different fasting combinations work better for different people. The goal to having a successful fast is all about finding what we like to call your *Fast Stride*, and that is different for everybody and can change depending on the season you are in.

The best way to describe your *Fast Stride* is that it's the place where you feel light and spiritually in tune. Your mind is easily focused on God and spiritual things. You have an increased spiritual energy— you can feel the fast working. Just like runners know what their target pace is to see the rewards/benefits of their physical training, the *Fast Stride* is similar in a spiritual sense.

ASSESS AND ARM AGAINST PERSONAL INDULGENCES:

Finding your *Fast Stride* helps you choose both the type and length of fast. Let's say you choose to go on a Daniel fast (only fruits and vegetables).

Should you eat **beans**? If you can eat beans and stay in your *Fast Stride*, go ahead. But for some people eating beans takes them out of the zone.

Should you eat peanut butter? Maybe not. **Peanut butter** can be more of an indulgence, and many people struggle to stay in a *Fast Stride* while enjoying indulgences.

Should you completely cut out **caffeine**? It depends. The great thing is, when you fast, your body automatically craves less caffeine. If you can stay in your *Fast Stride* with a little caffeine, great. If you are going on a longer fast and want to cut it out of your diet completely, that's great and radical too, so it is recommended. But ease yourself off and make it your goal to be completely caffeine free about two--thirds of the way into your fast.

If you drink coffee regularly, one of the worst mistakes you can make is to fast for one to three days and cut caffeine out abruptly and completely. Please don't do that or you will spend this time grumpy and in withdrawal instead of enjoying God's presence.

Some people can't stay in a *Fast Stride* eating any type of solid food, so they prefer all liquids. With today's protein drinks and juicing machines, it is so easy to get a healthy dose of all your nutritional needs even while taking in only liquids. Certain people can't do anything other than drink only water. If they eat a salad or drink a glass of juice, they get out of their zone. Or if they allow themselves to eat **cantaloupe**, they will end up eating twenty cantaloupes a day!