

# Cut the Fat!

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I don't know about you, but the TV seems inundated with diet commercials. Some are ready-to-eat, some are meeting oriented, some deal with supplements, others are steeped in psychology. It can be confusing...and a bit depressing. But don't worry, this article is not calorie-oriented!

Have you been part of a spiritual fast? Some find it easier than others to eliminate foods for a specific duration. Fasting is as old as the Bible. The Pharisees wrongly used it to show off their "spirituality" while Jesus exhorted the disciples that fasting was needed to empower them. The 40 days before Easter (Lent) has traditionally been a time for the church to fast.

Our dear friend, Bishop Eugene Reeves, wrote some material about fasting where he calls it "feasting." His words made me reconsider how I view fasting. Perhaps we should think differently. When we address physical needs, we focus on diet and nutrition. So let's do the same for our fast/feast, except make it spiritual.

First, I tend to miss certain favorite foods when I fast. So why don't I do food replacements for my spiritual life? Think "gourmet" for a minute, If you were to characterize gourmet worship, what would it look like to you? Are there certain songs you would minister to God? Gourmet food looks good...so think about what your worship would look like. Write down some notes about your favorite times of worship and use these as a daily guide during your fast/feast.

Second, there is nothing like comfort food. It soothes us and makes us comfy. What does spiritual comfort food look like? It's where we have wonderful communion with our Lord. Every bite of comfort food is delicious, so the spiritual comfort food in our conversations with our Father should be even more delightful. Find a special place where you can have deep discussions and profound communion.

Third, our bodies need nutritious food that still tastes great. Our spirit man's food is the Word of God. It builds our spiritual muscles. The Bible is balanced with principles for our lives, thought-provoking revelation for our minds, and emotional lessons. Take time to seek the Holy Spirit to give counsel as to what you should read during your fast/feast. Great selections will feed you over and over as you receive rhema revelation.

Fourth, we all have favorite foods...many of us love soul food. It feels like home, smells like home, and brings memories of great times. We can have literal soul food in our fast/feasts. Are there things you see missing in your life that you crave to have once again? This could range from relationships to disciplines, or ministry to career fulfillment.

Write what comes to your mind as you consider what you are missing. Let the Spirit guide you into all truth as He counsels and teaches your soul to make strides in these areas. His directions will feel good in your soul because they are a divine plan.

Fifth, we should prepare for our fast/feast just as we do for special holiday feasts. The ways that make you trip up on a physical fast are usually when hunger makes you feel drowsy or lethargic. When you don't feed your body, these are expected results. So let's feed our soul and spirit as we participate in our fast/feast so we don't get lethargic. What spiritual snacks can you have ready, when you start fading? Print out some key verses that you can use to encourage yourself in what your expectations are at the end of the fast. God's promises are great snacks.

During physical fasting we are deprived of big meals. Don't think you can do any better without big spiritual meals. You need to spend a quantity of time to receive all the spiritual vitamins and minerals you need. Your time should make you feel full.

Quick energy boosters are also used during physical fasts to keep the body and soul operational. Your spiritual energy boosters can be a special book to read or a few friends to call and encourage each other in your fast/feast.

As women of God, we are to not be under the law but under the Spirit. This means that everyone's fast does not need to look the same, but can be uniquely designed by God's Spirit. Let Him design yours. Let Him lead you in your spiritual fast/feast. Don't tell your body that you are fasting food....tell your soul that you are on a quest for the best fast/feast available. And press on through!

Here are some scriptures you may find delicious:

1 Peter 2:22

2 Timothy 3:16,17

Hebrews 30:20,21

Psalms 118:105

Isaiah 40:8

Proverbs 2:6

John 16:7,8

John 8:31,32

Deuteronomy 8:3, 9