



**GRACE**<sup>™</sup>  
**CHURCH**  
INTERNATIONAL

## **Financial Fast**

### **February 26 – May 31, 2020**

### **Guidelines and Tips**

#### *What is a financial fast?*

Just as fasting food requires one's voluntary abstinence from meals and types of snacking, the principles of financial fasting involve the voluntary and disciplined abstinence from unnecessary spending. The parallels between these two are strikingly similar. Some eating is necessary even while fasting in order for one to stay alive. Likewise, some spending is necessary, even while on a financial fast in order for one to handle his or her necessary obligations. With that in mind, financial fasting is a specified period of time in which one chooses to only spend money on necessities while actively resisting the temptations to spend money on unnecessary items. The objective is to curtail unnecessary spending and to focus one's attention on the spiritual virtues of contentment, temperance, sacrifice, and generosity.

#### *How do I prepare for a financial fast?*

1. Pray that the fruit of temperance (self-control) will be manifest in your life in this season.
2. Meditate daily on the scriptures about finance, stewardship, sacrifice, and generosity, that the church will publish weekly. Start with these:
  - a. Hebrews 13:5
  - b. I Timothy 6:17-19
  - c. Malachi 3:8-12
3. Identify and distinguish between necessities and non-essentials.
  - a. This can be accomplished by revisiting or creating a personal budget.
    - i. Your personal budget should include and prioritize your tithe and your savings as the first two-line items.
    - ii. If you have expensive cable, two cell phones, closets of clothes and shoes, but are not regularly tithing in the House of God, or regularly saving for emergencies and future plans, you are in financial trouble already.
  - b. If you are not financially savvy, you can ask the leaders at the church and they will recommend persons to you who can assist you in this important aspect of fasting.
  - c. Inculcate an awareness of how content you are with how Our Lord has provided as you prepare or revisit your budget. Many of you will find that you already have enough resource, you just overspend because of a lack of contentment.

### *What are the goals of this financial fast?*

1. The first goal of this fast is to honor Our Lord with our possessions and with the first fruits of our increase (Proverbs 3:9-10).
2. Another goal should be to reduce the amount of unnecessary spending that we do each day, week, and month.
3. Additionally, we should seek to:
  - a. Save more by taking the unspent portions of our fasted finances and store them away for future necessities or goals.
  - b. Eliminate more of our existing debt by redirecting wasted money to debt reduction.
  - c. Give more money to The House of God for the work of the Kingdom.

### *How should I begin?*

1. *Begin by planting your seed of one dollar per day (\$90.00) at the Ashes and Oil service.* This seed offering will catalyze the spiritual dimensions of this practical exercise and begin germinating a harvest in your life.
2. *Start Small:* It is unreasonable for you to think that you are going to see this fast through the duration of ninety days if you begin with large, overly ambitious expectations of yourself. Some tactics for beginning small that are quite effective include:
  - a. Preparing your morning coffee (or preferred beverage) at home. This will save you the three to five dollars that you spend daily on coffee or your preferred drink. That translates to a savings of over one thousand two-hundred dollars per year.
  - b. Stay out of places that tempt you to spend money unnecessarily like, malls, tech stores, craft stores, gun shops, and ecommerce websites.
  - c. Plan your meals.
    - i. If you are thinking about how you are going to eat for a week you will likely be less impulsive daily.
    - ii. In so doing, you will also eat more healthily and inexpensively.
    - iii. Finally, you may discover that you increase fellowship with the saints by having shared meals between families once or twice per week.
3. *Leave credit cards at home and only spend the cash you have allotted for the week.*
  - a. When we operate daily from mostly cash, we see it diminishing from our hands as we spend it. That helps us to psychologically embrace the fact that our resources are limited and diminishing and should wake us up to the reality that money only spends once.
  - b. Credit cards have the opposite effect on most people. When we make them our principle spending tool, we are more detached from the notion that what we owe is incrementally increasing and what we have is rapidly decreasing.
4. *Eat yourself out of house and home!* Begin this fast by committing to eat the food that is already present in your home and reducing the amount of times you eat out per week.
  - a. The statistics reveal that over 40% of all food purchased in American homes goes to waste and has to be thrown away.
  - b. For the next thirty days we should endeavor to eat what we have in the pantry, refrigerator, and deep freeze without going to the grocery store. This will accomplish several things:
    - i. It will keep us out of the store where we are tempted to spend more money unnecessarily.

- ii. It will militate against the waste that some of us have developed as a lifestyle.
  - iii. It will declutter some of our kitchens.
  - iv. This obviously does not include the purchase of perishable items like milk, eggs, bread, fruit, etc.
- c. After the first thirty days of the financial fast we should be more cognizant of the way we shop, purchasing items that we pre-planned (a grocery list) based upon what we are going to eat that week, or month.

***What are the guidelines and/or parameters for this financial fast?***

1. Come to worship in one of our services of worship in one of our locations every Sunday over the next ninety days.
2. Observe the suggestions and tips listed above for the next ninety days and beyond.
3. Be honest with God and the church concerning your commitment to tithing and giving in His House.
  - a. If you have not committed to making tithing your priority, do so now, as a first step of faith and obedience. Begin tithing from the beginning of this financial fast.
  - b. If you make this commitment, you will secure the aid of the Holy Spirit in the other important areas of your financial life and remove the curse off of your finances.
4. Do not incur any new debt over the next ninety days. This means, no new:
  - a. Cars
  - b. Homes
  - c. Financed items
5. Seek to reduce the amount of debt that you have by paying extra on credit accounts from the savings you'll realize through this fast.
6. Increase your savings or open a savings account.
7. If you haven't gotten this part, significantly decrease or eliminate the amount of times you eat out during the week. This is where much of our money goes.
8. Reorient your entertainment to fewer paid and/or more free things. For example:
  - a. If you typically see one movie per week in a theater, reduce that to one or two movies per month.
  - b. Invite people to your home and visit with other's homes for meals and fellowship rather than in restaurants, Dave & Busters, Top Golf, Malibu, and other paid venues.
  - c. Find free events on [www.atlantaplanit.com](http://www.atlantaplanit.com) and other outlets for free entertainment alternatives.
9. Finish well! See it all the way through, from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost Sunday.