



# LENT & LETTING GO

## (FASTING AND ABSTINENCE)

### A THOUGHT ON LENT & LETTING GO

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The Idea of not doing something we like or enjoy, or choosing to go without, is almost considered insanity in our current culture. (A crime against our society's ways if you will). We are told at all times to look for a quicker, cheaper, better option and always, in all circumstances and decisions, we are told to look for more. Always more.

However for Jesus, choosing to go without or to consume less for seasons was a deep common spiritual practice, not just practiced by Him, but by many in the Bible. Lent is a season of 40 days before Easter that Christians use as a time to reflect, repent, or at least consider, the cross and Jesus' sacrifice. Many choose to Fast or Abstain in this season as a way to Abide.

Choosing to go without allows us to reflect and remember that the things of this world are not what sustains, defines or anchors us. In fact, all these things will fade away. It gives us a chance to refocus and lean into Jesus; to acknowledge him as the bread of life.

Please note: This is not a way to manipulate or leverage God into doing something or speaking in a special way. Its not a hunger strike. It's a chance to turn our attention, mind, heart and stomach towards him.

**"LETTING GO OF \_\_\_\_\_ IN ORDER  
TO HOLD ONTO GOD MORE FIRMLY"**

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KEY VERSES

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*Matthew 4:1-11*

*Matthew 6:17-19*

*Nehemiah 1:4*

*Joel 2:12*

*Acts 13:3*

*Mark 9:29*

*Isaiah 58:4*

*Joel 1:14*

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KEY PASSAGES

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*Isaiah 58*

*Ezra 8:15-36*

*Jonah 3*

*Matthew 6*

*Acts 13:1-11*

*Daniel 9:1-19*

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TEACHING

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For Teaching click the Picture above or Search  
Transformation Trek on Youtube



# TREKKING TOGETHER

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## FORM

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**THIS MONTH, IN YOUR SMALL GROUP, SMALL TABLE, CELL GROUP (WHATEVER YOU CALL IT) READ THE KEY VERSES & CONSIDER THE BELOW QUESTIONS.**

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**Week 1** - Watch the practice guide Video, Read through the Scriptures on this Practice.

**Questions to Discuss** - What does Lent & letting go look for you? How do you feel about this Practice? Why would you practice this practice & what would consider letting go of?

**Week 2** - Update each other on what you have been trying and how has it effected you? Ask each other about what you have been filling the spaces with this month? So important

**Week 3** - What are you finding difficult with this practice? Prayer for each other and that this practice would help refresh and renew our understanding of Gods presence

**Week 4** - Take time to discuss how you have seen a breakthrough through this practice. In what ways would you realign your life in the future to consider this practice as a regular part of your life and group?



## A Traditional Fast (Going without Food)

There's something spiritual about food. What we eat and drink has a profound effect on us and likely more on our spirit and soul than we could ever know. The Ancient Hebrews actually consider their soul, the centre of being, in their stomach. This is where such sayings around a "Gut Feeling" comes from.

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So, it would therefore make sense that going without food for a day, a couple of days or even 40 days (Lent) is something that would have a profound effect on us. How you do this though, is completely up to you and God.

**Here are a couple of options:**

- **Choosing to not eat for an extended period of time, only drinking water. (We strongly recommended consulting a doctor before doing this, it's not a competition or challenge, it's a practice.)**
- **Choosing to skip a meal - Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner - each day for a season. Replacing the time to prayer/read scripture.**
- **-Choosing hours to eat. Eg not eating during daylight or between certain hours**
- **Disclaimer: This is not a health or weight loss program. If this is why you are led toward this practice, then our suggestion is to stay away from it. This is about abiding in Christ, not about looking better in jeans.**

**Journal or reflect on how this Transforms your Month?**

# PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

## Abstinence

Going without food is not always the safest or even the most practical option for everyone. This is totally ok, as there are plenty of other things we overconsume in this culture. This Lent season (40 days before Easter) can be a great chance to give something up that you are overconsuming or is getting in the way of time with God & others. For example:

- Going without Social Media or Setting boundaries with your tech in order to build relationship with God & others.
- Going without TV (Netflix, Stan, Disney +, Amazon Prime, Binge etc etc) for Lent and using that time to Pray & again connect with God & others.
- Going without a vice. Alcohol, Chocolate, Gym, even book reading that you feel is perhaps over consumed. Use this time to not pick up another vice, but pick up your Bible.

*Abstaining from anything is a great way to centre your mind, heart & soul on Jesus. Whether it's **TV, Phone, Social Media, Sugar, Talking, Music, Alcohol, Coffee**. We don't abstain to get rewards points off Him for doing such things, but because He is worthy of our time and attention & when we give Him this, at the cost of other things, we are changed & formed for the better.*

***Journal or reflect on how this Transforms your Month?***

# PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

## ***Fill your time***

The last thing we want is to reduce a habit or meal and then to end up filling it with another habit or vice. We want to use this season to feed on Good & Beautiful things of God. Spending time in Prayer/ Reading the Bible/ In Small Christian Community. We will have a Lent reading available and lots of conversation topics posted on our socials, as well as example challenges that people are trying. We encourage you to engage with those things.

## ***Stack the Practices***

As you explore this practice this month, you may find some of the rhythms you develop are extremely effective in your stage/ season of life. If this is the case, then we encourage you to include that practice into your week/month/year. Place it in your Rule of Life. For example: You may choose every week to make a day "Fasting Day" and use that day to "Go without" & pray for your Family, Friends & Church or a particular issue on your mind. These Practices are made to Stack!

***Journal or reflect on how this Transforms your Month?***





# CREATING FAMILY RHYTHMS

*Teaching your young kids to not eat or taking things away from them can feel more like a punishment for them than a Deep Spiritual Practice :)*

*As our Families are the ultimate Disciple making tool, we want to also find ways to teach and practice these seasons with the full family. Here are a couple of creative ideas:*

- Choose a night of the week to have a simpler meal. As the kids complain, spend time praying about people less fortunate. This is a great time to go around the table and list things we are grateful for, not just things we want.
- Have an earlier night in order to pray longer. Instead of getting the kids to bed as quick as possible and then binging tv or getting work done, spend some time asking them what they would like to pray for. How is school? What are they struggling with? Who are their friends? What are their friends struggling with? Then pray together.
- Older kids may have enough maturity to understand a Tech Fast, in which case, encourage them to give the phone a break (for a season) and help them fill that time with Prayer/Bible or simply deeper conversation.

***Journal or reflect on how this Transforms your Month?***

## Lent Readings 2023

22/2 Matthew 21:1-11

23/2 John 12:1-11

24/2 John 12:12-19

25/2 Mark 11:12-26

26/2 Sunday

27/2 Matthew 21:23-32

28/2 Mark 12:1-12

01/3 Matthew 22:1-14

02/3 Luke 20:9-26

03/3 Luke 20: 27-40

04/3 Matthew 22:34-46

05/3 Sunday

06/3 Matthew 23:1-39

07/3 Mark 12:41-44

08/3 Mark 13:1-13

09/3 Matthew 24:15-35

10/3 Matthew 24:36-51

11/3 Matthew 25:1-13

12/3 Sunday

13/3 Matthew 25:14-30

14/3 Matthew 25:31-46

15/3 John 12:20-50

16/3 Mark 14:12-26

17/3 John 13:1-17

18/3 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

19/3 Sunday

20/3 John 13:18-38

21/3 Luke 22:24-38

22/3 Matthew 26:31-35

23/3 John 14:1-31

24/3 John 15:1-27

25/3 John 16:1-4

26/3 Sunday

27/3 John 16: 5-33

28/3 John 17: 1-26

29/3 Matthew 26: 36-56

30/3 John 18: 1-8

31/3 Mark 14: 32-72

01/4 Luke 22:39-62

02/4 Sunday

03/4 John 18: 19-40

04/4 John 19: 1-16

05/4 Matthew 27: 27-44

06/4 Luke 23: 26-49

07/4 John 19: 16-42

08/4 John 20:1-31

09/4 Easter Sunday