

FIRST FRUITS CONSECRATION GUIDE

FEBRUARY 1st -February 3rd

YOUR NEW YEAR WON'T BE NEW IF YOU STAY OLD

Clarifying Consecration

Consecration is the DEDICATION of something or someone --- TO THE PURPOSE OF GOD.

This Consecration is a season in which to especially dedicate ourselves afresh unto the Lord. At the beginning of this New Year, by offering the "firstfruits of our time", we commit the whole of the year to the fulfillment of Kingdom Purpose. We petition for the Word and the Spirit to flow freely throughout the earth, and for godly success in every aspect of our collective and individual existence. Whenever there is Consecration, there is a greater manifestation of the Grace of God.

TWO BASIC ASPECTS OF OUR CONSECRATION:

THE ATTITUDE AND THE ACT

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The attitude of consecration is what God values most, above how many days one fasts or how many chapters of the Bible one reads. These outward ACTS have real meaning when they are the expression of an inward ATTITUDE. When one humbles himself/herself to God, this disposition pleases Christ, for it is the "mind" that He had on earth.

Perhaps the "highest-praise-word" is "Hallelujah", but the highest praise is "YES": for when one totally surrenders to God, he is not just "doing" praise but BECOMING a praise.

The ACT of consecration should be the fruit of an ATTITUDE of consecration. The ACT always includes reading/meditation in the Word of God and prayers of all kinds. It often includes fasting and other acts of self-denial.

Philippians 2:5-11

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF CONSECRATION

1. CORPORATE CONSECRATION (INSTANTANEOUS)

I Corinthians 12:13 | I Peter 2:9 | Isaiah 43:6-7

Every believer is set apart into the Body of Christ, for God's purpose. GOD Himself does this.

2. CONTINUAL CONSECRATION (Lifetime - personal)

I Corinthians 10:31 | I Thess. 5:17

The lifestyle of the Christian is one in which every moment is lived in God-consciousness, devoted to His purpose, whether in a secular or a sacred setting. The individual BELIEVER does this.

3. CALLED CONSECRATION (Special Seasons)

II Chronicles 20:3-4 | Joel 2:15-17

There are designated times when Christians "come aside" to place special emphasis on the Lord and their relationship with Him. These seasons include intercession for nations, communities, and families.

The CHURCH - collectively - does this.

Fasting and Consecration

Fasting is the voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual reasons --- denying the natural appetites while asking God to deepen and fill the spiritual appetites.

WHAT DOES FASTING DO?

IT . . .

1. . . . undergirds faith and prayer. | **Matthew 17:21**

2. . . . prepares us for supernatural works. | **Mark 9:1-8; 14-29; Luke 4:1-2,14**
3. . . . blesses the nations and the church. | **Joel 1:1-14; 2:1,12**
4. . . . disciplines our emotions and our bodies. | **Psalm 35:13 with Isaiah 58:5; Romans 12:1-2; I Corinthians 9:25-27**
5. . . . enables us to break oppression. | **Isaiah 58:6-7,10; Luke 4:18-19, Acts 10:38**
6. . . . makes us light in the dark world. | **Isaiah 58:8**
7. . . . provides divine health. | **Isaiah 58:8**
8. . . . is a part of ministry unto The Lord. | **Luke 2:37; Acts 13: 1-**
9. . . . accompanies repentance, and may turn away divine judgment. | **II Samuel 12:15; Jonah 3:4-10**
10. . . . positions us to receive divine revelation. | **Daniel 10:1-3; Luke 2:36-38**

ABSOLUTE FASTING

An absolute fast is abstaining from ALL food and drink for a period of time. Most people continue to drink water, for health reasons, and remembering that after Jesus' fast it is stated that He "hungered", not that He "thirsted".

Absolute fasting seems to be the Bible norm when the term "fast" or "fasting", "fasted" is used.

When we use the term "fast" or "fasting", we are referring to absolute fasting.

Other Consecration Sacrifices

Modified Fasting or "Sacrifice"

Some people abstain from food while still drinking fruit/vegetable juices and/or water. This has medical benefits, but it is not clearly mandated or exemplified in Scripture. Certainly, it can be a legitimate sacrifice unto the Lord, but it is NOT what is referred to in the Bible as "fasting".

"No Pleasant Bread" Sacrifice

This sacrifice was undertaken by the prophet Daniel (Daniel 10: 1-3, 12-14b).

Some Bible students believe he did continue to eat, but ate less desirable foods.

Some contemporary teachers also teach a "Daniel Fast." Other teachers believe Daniel's fast was "absolute". We don't argue! This consecration involves various sacrifices, but the fasting part is simple - abstinence from food and all drink other than water. We deal with exceptional situations on the next page.

EXTENDED SACRIFICE

All 3 days should involve some ongoing extended sacrifice unto God: either the same sacrifice for all the days or different sacrifices for various sets of days. Whereas your absolute fast will be for limited amounts of time, you should consider giving a more extensive sacrifice even when you are not officially “fasting”, such as giving up a certain food, drink, or non-health based recreational activity.

For example, one might omit eating sweets for all 3 days, even when not fasting. Or, one might omit some other food type for one day --- and omit another type the next day.

ENTERTAINMENT

All 3 days should involve minimal television viewing (limited to essentials such as news, or programs [along with CD’s, or other media] that have spiritually edifying content). The same is true of social media. Christian television may be beneficial, and the news may be necessary, but in all things we should remember the Lord. We should use our praise and worship music, ministry YouTube videos , etc. to keep our hearts attuned to the things of God. All other kinds of entertainment, such as movies and such, should be postponed until after the consecration. (Our entertainment should reflect godliness at all times, even when there is not a special Consecration. Therefore, the Consecration is a good time to evaluate what we call entertainment, and to eliminate those things that distract us from God’s purpose and truly healthy minds as well as bodies: this is another aspect of discernment.)

NOTE: *Those parents / guardians with children in academic, athletic, or other scholastic and developmental activities must continue to support them.*

NOTE: *Physical exercise and other health activities should continue as appropriate. However, any recreational activity purely by choice, purely for natural enjoyment, should be denied throughout the consecration. You may need to decide whether you will exercise while fasting, or before-and-after.*

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Expectant mothers should not fast. They should deny themselves in some other way, a way that does not potentially have a harmful effect on her or the unborn child. They will have opportunities in the future.

Females should time their fasting not to occur at their “time of the month”. Individual sisters vary with regard to how much eating it takes for them during this time, but they definitely need proper nutrition. They should sacrifice themselves to the Lord in other areas.

Those on a medication regimen that requires regular eating should continue eating as they have been instructed by their physicians. However, they could choose the “no pleasant bread” model, in which they eat nutritious food, but not their most enjoyable, most delicious food choices.

The married should consult one another for “consent” in the various intimate aspects of their relationship as to how much time they will give to the Consecration exclusively. (I Corinthians 7:3-5) This means physical intimacy, but it would apply to other areas as well. For example, if one’s schedule for breakfast, lunch, or dinner will be temporarily changed, the person who prepares meals needs to be informed.

CONSECRATION SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD

A standard fast day should be reckoned from 6:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M.

More fasting than these 3 days are welcome, according to God’s will and yours.

YOUR PERSONAL FASTING SCHEDULE

How one’s personal fasting schedule is structured is up to the individual, as he / she is led and convicted by the Lord in his / her own spirit, with consideration to work and life schedules:

For example: Some people may choose to fast from 6:00am to 6:00pm on the first day and on the second day from 6:00am to 2:00pm and so forth.

The inexperienced: If a person has no fasting experience, he or she can begin with a shorter “day” time frame, fasting until 2:00 P.M. for example, and then build up.

Choose either one of these time frames to fast or a combination of them.

Schedule

6:00am to 6:00pm

6:00am to 4:00pm

6:00am to 2:00pm

Please remember, during the times where you are not “fasting” you are still in “consecration”. Eating after 6:00pm doesn’t mean cookies, soda, video games etc.

PHYSICAL EXERTION

A person whose job is extremely physically strenuous may choose to fast not as long, but more often, and / or to sacrifice other things.

Remember: everybody can give God something.

Also remember: if your sacrifice means nothing to you --- if it is not YOUR BEST, from YOUR HEART --- it means nothing to God. This is not about a marathon: it is about putting God first in a special way for a special season.

DO’s & DON’Ts of FASTING

Do not share with anyone or even insinuate that you are or have been fasting verbally, through text or even social media. No one should know that you are fasting. If you have to tell others that you are fasting, you should start the fast over. | **Matthew 6:16-18;**

If you are simply withdrawing from food, it’s not a spiritual fast. A spiritual fast is a feast with the LORD. Praying, denying/humbling self, worshiping, reading, meditating and hearing God’s WORD are all essential for successful spiritual fasting.

SPECIAL CORPORATE PRAYER TIMES (On Zoom)

TUESDAY – FRIDAY at 8:00PM

To join us on Zoom, go to ***sendingchurchwilm.com*** and click “Teaching LIVE”.