

To Go

Fasting

Matthew 4:1–4

Andy Kvernén
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1. How do you respond to feeling hungry? Describe a common scenario that makes you a little “hangry.” How do you tend to remedy the situation?

2. Read Matthew 4:1–4. In what way does Jesus prepare for his temptation in the wilderness? Why do you think Matthew emphasizes this spiritual practice above others here?

3. Examine the following list from Donald Whitney describing the purposes of fasting. Look up each reference and ask yourself how fasting could become a part of your own spiritual practice for one or more of these purposes?
 - a. To Strengthen Prayer (Nehemiah 1:4)
 - b. To Seek God’s Guidance (Judges 20:26–28)
 - c. To Express Grief (1 Samuel 31:13)
 - d. To Seek Deliverance (2 Chron 20:3–4)
 - e. To Express Repentance (1 Sam 7:6)
 - f. To Humble Oneself (Psalm 35:13)
 - g. To Express Concern for the Work of God (Daniel 9:3)
 - h. To Minister to the Needs of Others (Isaiah 58:6–7)
 - i. To Overcome Temptation (Matt 4:1–11)
 - j. To Express Love and Devotion to God (Luke 2:37)

4. Plan to fast for one or two meals sometime in the near future. And remember, fasting is not just abstention from food; it’s also attention to God. Use fasting combined with another one of the spiritual practices we’ve discussed so far and ask God to make you more dependent on Him.