

CHURCH OF THE HIGHLANDS

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Study Guide

# Fasting for Breakthrough

Chris Hodges  
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## Major Points

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- 1 Fasting is not punishment but a means of reordering the triune self so the spirit rules over body and soul**  
*Romans 8:5-6*
- 2 Some spiritual breakthroughs require the deeper commitment of prayer combined with fasting**  
*Matthew 17:21*
- 3 Fasting should be integrated throughout the year for major decisions, not limited to an annual event**  
*2 Corinthians 11:27*
- 4 There are multiple types of fasts — complete, selective, and soul fasts — each serving distinct spiritual purposes**  
*Daniel 10:3*
- 5 Corporate fasting and repentance can spark national revival and restoration**  
*2 Chronicles 7:14*

## Key Quotes

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*“A diet changes the way you look, but a fast will change the way you see.”*  
at 6:32

*“Fasting is denying the fleshly appetites of the body and reordering the desires of the mind, will, and emotions so that our spirit becomes more responsive to God.”*  
at 18:22

*“The one that is fed is the one that is in charge because it becomes the strongest, and whatever ones are starved become the weakest.”*  
at 16:18

*“This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”*  
at 5:50

*“Sometimes we call it something and it's really, it's not what's in you. It's what's missing in you.”*  
at 34:34

*“God does his best work when all that happens. Cause people got it. It's hard to touch people when they're satisfied and happy. It's when they're miserable that they go, God help us.”*  
at 39:54

## Discussion Questions

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1. Pastor Hodges describes fasting as putting every part of us 'in its proper place.' In your own life, which of the three parts — body, soul, or spirit — tends to be in charge, and how does that show up in your daily decisions?  
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2. Pastor Hodges shared that a diet changes the way you look but a fast changes the way you see. What is a specific area in your life where you need a change of perspective rather than just a change of behavior?  
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3. Of the five biblical fasts Pastor Hodges outlined — the Disciples, Ezra, Paul, Daniel, and Samuel fasts — which one most closely addresses your current season of life, and why?  
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4. Pastor Hodges emphasized that fasting should not be limited to 21 days in January but integrated throughout the year. What upcoming decision or situation in your life might benefit from a dedicated time of prayer and fasting?  
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5. Pastor Hodges said that the Samuel fast includes confessing not only personal sins but the sins of the nation. How do you understand the role of corporate repentance, and what would it look like for your small group or church to practice it?  
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## Word Studies

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## νηστεία nesteia

*Greek*

Abstinence from food for religious or spiritual purposes; derived from 'ne' (not) and 'esthio' (to eat). In the New Testament it encompasses both voluntary spiritual discipline and involuntary lack of food, often paired with prayer to indicate intentional seeking of God.

*Usage: 6 times*

## σάρξ sarx

*Greek*

Literally 'flesh' or 'meat,' but in Pauline theology it refers to the sinful human nature and its desires that oppose the Spirit. Pastor Hodges' teaching on the body's cravings ruling a person directly reflects Paul's sarx/pneuma contrast in Romans 8.

*Usage: 147 times*

## πνεῦμα pneuma

*Greek*

Spirit, breath, or wind. Refers both to the Holy Spirit and to the human spirit — the immaterial part of a person that connects with God. Central to the triune-being teaching: the pneuma is the part made immediately righteous at salvation.

*Usage: 379 times*

## Cross References

### **Galatians 5:16-17**

Paul's instruction to 'walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh' directly parallels the sermon's core teaching that strengthening the spirit through fasting subdues fleshly cravings.

### **Joel 2:12-13**

God's call to 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning' reinforces the Samuel fast concept of corporate repentance leading to national restoration.

### **Matthew 6:16-18**

Jesus' instructions on how to fast — not for show but in secret before the Father — complement the sermon's emphasis that fasting is about inner spiritual reordering rather than outward performance.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Paul's prayer that 'your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless' provides the clearest New Testament support for the triune nature of humans that forms the theological backbone of this sermon.

### Nehemiah 1:4-6

Nehemiah's response of fasting, prayer, and corporate confession upon hearing of Jerusalem's ruin mirrors the Samuel fast pattern of mourning national sin and seeking God's restoration.

## Further Reading

- **Pray First: The Transformed Life**  
*by Chris Hodges*
- **Fasting: Opening the Door to a Deeper, More Intimate, More Powerful Relationship with God**  
*by Jentezen Franklin*
- **God's Chosen Fast: A Spiritual and Practical Guide to Fasting**  
*by Arthur Wallis*

## Scripture References

| REFERENCE           | TYPE       | TIME    | CONTEXT  |
|---------------------|------------|---------|--|
| Mark 2:19-20        | Read Aloud | 6 : 40  | <i>How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while h...</i> |
| Matthew 17:19-21    | Read Aloud | 8 : 00  | <i>Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and as...</i> |
| Acts 13:2-3         | Read Aloud | 10 : 00 | <i>While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, t...</i> |
| 2 Corinthians 11:27 | Read Aloud | 11 : 00 | <i>I have labored and toiled and have often gone with...</i> |
| Isaiah 58:6         | Read Aloud | 32 : 00 | <i>Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to ...</i> |
| Ezra 8:21-23        | Read Aloud | 34 : 00 | <i>There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so...</i> |
| Acts 9:9            | Read Aloud | 37 : 00 | <i>For three days he was blind, and did not eat or dr...</i> |
| Acts 9:17-18        | Read Aloud | 37 : 20 | <i>Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Pla...</i> |
| Daniel 10:2-3       | Read Aloud | 40 : 30 | <i>At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I...</i> |
| Daniel 10:18-19     | Read Aloud | 41 : 30 | <i>Again the one who looked like a man touched me and...</i> |
| 1 Samuel 7:3-6      | Read Aloud | 42 : 30 | <i>Samuel said to all the Israelites, 'If you are ret...</i> |
| 2 Chronicles 7:14   | Read Aloud | 46 : 00 | <i>If my people, who are called by my name, will humb...</i> |