

## **Fasting Media: Digital Detox Together\***

*The noise of the modern world makes us deaf to the voice of God,  
drowning out the one input we most need. - John Mark Comer*

### **There is a war going on for our attention.**

We have a compulsive urge to turn on or tap a screen at the slightest hint of boredom. The algorithms are charming and addictive. We are often robbed of space to think, feel, and dream. Our heart, mind, and soul need a break from all the noise, distraction, and constant alerts. What if we intentionally detoxed by eliminating distractions to create space to be more present to God, ourselves, and others? As we say “no” to some ways our devices form us, let’s see what God has for us to say “yes” to!

### **What to expect from your experience.**

Due to the addictive nature of technology, you may experience a number of withdrawal effects: nervousness, restlessness, or irritability are common. Often, our engagement with technology disguises unpleasant feelings and leads us to avoid coping with them. You may experience heightened emotional sensitivity and realize deep feelings of anger, grief, sadness, etc., even if you are initially unsure of the cause.

### **The benefits outweigh the drawbacks!**

As we progress, you may become increasingly aware of the leading of the Holy Spirit and God’s presence and work in your life. Additionally, people report sleeping better, better posture, noticing the faces and eyes of others, increased mental clarity, the ability to focus intentionally, easing of neck and shoulder tension, an uptick in peace, the ability to dream for the future, and a vibrancy to the physical world.

As you begin, you may ask yourself,  
“Can I even do this?”

We invite you to instead ask yourself,  
“What does God want me to learn or experience from this?”

### **#1 Screen Time Inventory**

Open your phone and check your screen time. Not sure how? Google how to check your screen time.

How many hours are on your phone each day?

Which apps do you use most frequently? Why?

Do you have any digital “waste” (phone usage that is not necessary or valuable)?

What could you be doing with that time that would leave you more satisfied?

How can you redirect some of the unnecessary screen time toward other, more worthy endeavors?

**#2 Set a Specific Goal** It can be a goal around your total minutes, your phone pickups, time spent on a particular app—the point is to decrease the attention you devote to your screen in order to increase the attention you give to those around you, and to your own soul. (See back)

### **#3 Check in Weekly + Adapt if Helpful.**

To help find a way of fasting from technology that works for you, please look at the list of options below and pick as many of them as you want to commit to for Lent. If it's helpful, you might start with a few that are easier to do and then choose a couple that will be more challenging and one that you know will be tough. After the first week, review the list again and consider adding others or coming up with one of your own. Put a check mark by the ones you are going to practice:

Set your phone on silent / do not disturb when you are with other people

Keep your phone out of the bedroom Replace your smartwatch with a regular watch

Replace your phone alarm with an alarm clock

Silence and put your phone away an hour before bed

Wait to use your phone until an hour after you wake up

If your phone has a screen time calculator, pick a percentage to try + cut it by each week or day

Pick a day of the week to not use any entertainment media (*games, TV, podcasts*)

Pick a day of the week to not use any social media

Pick a day of the week to not engage news media

Only watch TV or movies as a community activity with friends + family, talk about it afterwards

Only play video games on your day off

Only engage the news media during a specific time of the day

Commute without any media (music, TV, etc.)

Exercise without any media (music, TV, etc.)

Eat your meals without any media (music, TV, etc.)

Remove social media apps from your mobile devices

Turn off notifications for email, social media. Designate a specific time of day you'll check them

Don't use work apps or answer work calls and emails outside of work hours

Don't use social media at all

Don't watch TV or movies at all

Don't play video games at all

Don't listen to podcasts at all

Other:

\*Sources we've gathered from: John Mark Comer's book, [The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry](#) and Harvest Vineyard Church [Digital Detox](#).

## Feasting on Deeper Desires: Enjoy God & Life Together!\*

*“Sabbath is the holy time where we feast, play, dance, have sex, sing, pray, laugh, tell stories, read, paint, walk and watch creation in its fullness. Few people are willing to enter the Sabbath and sanctify it, to make it holy, because a day full of delight and joy is more than most people can bear in a lifetime, let alone a week.” – Dan Allender, Sabbath*

Practicing a Sabbath is a weekly rhythm of rest and joy God gives to us. It is not only a set aside day of the week, but can also become a way of life. **Have you opened your gift?**

### **Sabbath comes from the Hebrew word “to stop.”**

It’s a day dedicated to ceasing activity, worry, anxiety about what comes next, and simply rest. When was the last time you practiced a full day of rest? (When was the last time you felt rested?) We are not robots built to run 24/7, and when we try to, we quickly forget the One who is actually running the show.

### **The Sabbath is a day designed to help you rest from work.**

By intentional design, we rest from what is yet “undone” and “unfinished”, including our to do lists and life’s demands that are continually calling out to us to do more, be more, and have more. It’s a time to remember that God has provided for you, that God is with you, and maybe most importantly, that God doesn’t live in your world; you live in God’s world. It’s a day to shift perspective. Remembering all we do is rest and worship.

### **In Sabbath, we re-joy and cultivate delight.**

The Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:4 tells us to “rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice!” In Nehemiah 8:10 we are reminded that “the joy of the Lord is our strength.” Taking time to play and recreate is one of the ways God restores our soul. How might we more accurately reflect the image of God as we do things that bring a smile to us?

### **We worship our Father and Creator with others on the Sabbath.**

As you open your heart and hands to God, it becomes a place you can receive what he so longs to share with you. *What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don’t worry about missing out. You’ll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.* Matthew 6:33-34, The Message

*Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.  
Westminster Catechism.*

### **Sabbath Inventory**

What does resting look like for you?

What are some things you enjoy that you wish you had time for?

What do you do on vacation that you might be able to do right here at home?

How might you invest in your relationship with God, yourself and others?

What is realistic for you and your life season? Sabbath for families looks different - Customize!

Here are some ways you can Sabbath and “feast” during Lent during your media fast. How can you replace digital / screen time with a deeper desire? Put a star next to the ones you want to try and then as you do them - put a smiley face on the ones you find fun and restorative.

Take a nap.

Practice a new sleep routine, lovingly tucking yourself in at night.

Eat your lunch without working.

Practice sitting in silence and listen for God to speak.

Read the Bible - start with the gospels if you don't know where to begin.

Read a book to help you grow

Read a book for fun and enjoyment

Call a family member or friend and catch up

Play a board game with friends or family

Start a gratitude list and add to it daily.

Write a letter, a text, or an email to someone and thank them for something

Talk with someone at work or school during times when people usually use their devices such as breaks, meals, or waiting for the bus

Attend a church event and invite someone to join you.

Go for a walk or a hike in a new or favorite place

Sit at a coffee shop without any technology

Spend intentional time in nature

Work on an unfinished project

Give someone a gift or buy them a meal.

Volunteer at church or a local non profit.

Cook or bake something new

Play an instrument or sing

Share your faith journey with a non-christian friend or family member.

Create a piece of art

Reflect on the day

Play with a pet

Exercise

Journal

Other:

\*Sources we've gathered from: John Mark Comer's book, The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry and Harvest Vineyard Church Digital Detox.

## Ending your fast:

In the last few days of your Digital Detox, take some time to reflect on your experience. There is a tendency after any fast to return to old habits and forget what you've learned. While it is totally okay to re-engage technology, we want to do so with the clarity and purpose that comes from our digital fast. If helpful, allow the prompts below to guide you.

What did I notice that I was surprised by?

Do I have any new insights about my life?

Did I experience anything meaningful about my relationship with God and others?

Are there any changes to my relationship with technology that I want to keep moving forward?