



Ideas for a TV Fast

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
Colossians 3:2

If fasting is something you do to find the time to focus on prayer and the things that really matter, then probably it requires putting away our culture's biggest distraction. The television. Could you do that for a week, two weeks or the whole 40 days?

Here are several approaches to a TV fast:

- **TV VIEWING ABSTINENCE:** Go without any TV for a predetermined portion of time during the 40-day "True Fast."
- **TV VIEWING REDUCTION:** The idea is to reduce the amount of time you spend watching TV so that you can pursue "things above" through prayer, spiritual reading or conversation, or Christian fellowship and service. Also, let your fast keep reminding you to pray for General Conference 2003.
 - Time Reduction:
 - A "Tithe" for Prayer - Estimate the amount of TV viewing time you spend weekly. Take a tithe of that time and spend it in prayer. For example if you spend 20 hours a week watching TV. Reduce the amount to 18 hours and spend 2 hours during the week in pursuing "things above."
 - Only a "Tithe" for TV Viewing - Or, reverse the tithe principle and allow yourself only a tithe of your normal TV viewing time. For example, if you spend 20 hours a week watching TV, allow yourself only 2 hours of TV. Spend the other 18 in pursuing "things above."
 - Type Reduction:
 - Most people watch several different types of television programming: news, sports, drama, comedies, educational, home improvement. Limit your TV viewing time to only one type of programming. (E.g. news only.)
 - Channel Choice Reduction:
 - Limit your TV viewing by disconnecting your cable or satellite, and give yourself only one channel choice.
 - Intermittent Abstinence:
 - Select "no TV" time periods that you observe periodically. For example, no TV on weeknights. "No TV" every other week. No TV on Sundays.
- **PURSUING "THINGS ABOVE" AS A FAMILY**
 - Use your extra time to visit, phone or write family or friends. Involve the kids.
 - Plan a special time together by taking a walk, going on a picnic, playing one of your children's favorite games, reading a book together as a family, visiting an older couple in your church family, etc.
 - Visit the library at the beginning of the week. Have each person in the family pick out a book to read. Have everyone read for a half hour and then get together and tell about what you have read. (You can make it a "party" by having ice cream together or some other small treat as you talk.)
 - Have each family member take a time when you would have been watching TV and make it their responsibility to plan a family activity. Younger children can plan these too by just thinking of what kind of "playing" they would like the whole family to do. You can also brainstorm as a family.
 - If you are a musical family, work together on music that you could do together at church; arrange a "tour" to go and visit some older folks and play for them; call a nursing home to arrange to play for the residents.