

30 Hours of Prayer and Fasting

“The final answer is that God rewards fasting because fasting expresses the cry of the heart that nothing on the earth can satisfy our souls besides God. God must reward this cry because God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.”

— John Piper, *A Hunger for God*

Introduction

As we head into a journey of fasting and prayer together, let's take a moment to prepare for the spiritual adventure ahead. Fasting and prayer are not just ancient rituals; they are powerful spiritual disciplines that can transform our relationship with God and deepen our faith in ways we never imagined. Fasting and prayer together come to God with a seriousness that says, “God, I'm so desperate for you that I'm willing to give up something I need to sustain my physical life in order to be sustained by you.”

The Posture of Fasting

Jesus teaches us about the posture we should take as we approach the idea of fasting.

“Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they disfigure their faces so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting isn't obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

-- Matthew 6:16-18 (CSB)

While we are fasting as a church and not in private, this passage offers insights into how we should fast. Jesus teaches us to approach fasting with sincerity and humility, emphasizing the importance of seeking God's presence in the quietness of our hearts. Let's set aside any distractions and create a space where we can connect with our Heavenly Father on a deeper level. This is not about others and their opinions of us, but about seeking God and his Power.

Key Examples of Fasting

Throughout Scripture, we find examples of fasting and prayer. Daniel, Esther, and Jesus are just a few of the many biblical examples who God's guidance, protection, and provision in fasting.

We witness Daniel pray and fast as he intercedes for his people after a hard vision. His humility and sincerity before God paved the way for divine intervention and restoration (Daniel 9:1-19).

And then there's Esther, whose courageous act of fasting before approaching the king saved her people from destruction. Her willingness to sacrifice and seek God's favor in prayer demonstrates the impact of fasting on both personal and corporate levels. She needed God's help, but so did her whole people (Esther 4:15-17).

Jesus, our ultimate example, fasted for 40 days and nights in the wilderness, showing his complete reliance on God and his commitment to spiritual discipline. His fasting prepared him for the challenges he would face and strengthened his connection with the Father (Luke 4:1-14).

As we prepare to embark on this season of fasting and prayer, let's remember the purpose behind our actions. Fasting is not about deprivation or proving our strength; it's about surrendering our desires and aligning our hearts with God's will.

As you read through this guide, may it inspire you to approach fasting and prayer with a sense of purpose and expectation. Together, let's open our hearts to God's leading, trusting that he will meet us in our time of seeking.

Fasting Schedule

Fast Begins: Friday - April 26, 12:30 pm

Prayer Walking: Friday, April 26, 7:00 pm (Meet at Abingdon Elementary Parking Lot)

Zoom Prayer Group: Saturday, April 27, 8:30 am ([Click Link](#) to Join)

Playground Prayer Group: Saturday, April 27, 11:00 am (Abingdon Elementary Playground)

Closing Prayer and Worship Rally: Saturday, April 27, 5:30 pm (Church at Riverside, Belcamp)

Fast Ends: Saturday, April 27, 6:30 pm

Fasting Devotional and Prayer Guide

Four Focuses for our Fast:

- 1) Greater personal spiritual growth and intimacy with Jesus
- 2) Greater burden for our community and the spiritually disconnected
- 3) Greater Church health and growth
- 4) Greater Evangelistic impact and lives changed by Jesus

Friday Lunch Devotional

“Isn’t this the fast I choose: To break the chains of wickedness, to untie the ropes of the yoke, to set the oppressed free, and to tear off every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your house, to clothe the naked when you see him, and not to ignore your own flesh and blood?” -- Isaiah 58:6-7 (CSB)

God works through the fasting of his people, not just for us personally, but to see a move of God in the lives of the people around us. Prayer and fasting can work to see patterns of wickedness broken. It can work to move us to compassion for those hurting and in need in our community. Let’s start our fast by asking God to move powerfully through this intentional time of prayer and fasting.

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for a heart of compassion and sensitivity toward the needs of others during this fast.
- Ask God to reveal areas of spiritual and physical needs in our lives and communities, and guide us in how to address them.
- Seek God's power and presence to be evident in our fasting, believing for breakthroughs and miracles in our lives and the lives of others.

Friday Evening Devotional

“First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time. For this I was appointed a herald, an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

-- 1 Timothy 2:1-7 (CSB)

1 Timothy 2:1-7 urges believers to pray for all people. God desires people to be saved and come to know him. We want to see our church's ministry to intersect with this desire of God for the spiritual disconnected in our community. Let's ask God to move big in people's lives.

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for wisdom, guidance, and protection for leaders in government, churches, and communities.
- Intercede for individuals in your life who do not yet know Christ, asking God to open their hearts to His love and truth.
- Seek God's transformation for people as they come to know God who sent his son and gave his life

Saturday Morning Devotional

“Even now — this is the Lord’s declaration — turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the Lord your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster.” -- Joel 2:12-13 (CSB)

Joel 2:12-13 calls for personal confession, repentance, and returning to God with all our hearts. While we are praying for our church and others, we need to also looking within our lives. Let's walk through a time of genuine repentance and seeking God's forgiveness and restoration.

Prayer Prompts:

- Humbly confess any sins or areas of disobedience in your life, asking God for forgiveness and cleansing.
- Repent from attitudes, habits, or behaviors that hinder your relationship with God and others.
- Pray for a renewed passion and commitment to follow God wholeheartedly, seeking His will in every area of your life.

Saturday Lunch Devotional

“Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, a close friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off.” -- Acts 13:1-3 (CSB)

Acts 13:2-3 illustrates the importance of prayer in discerning and raising up leaders for God's kingdom work. It is not just about those who seem to check boxes, but we look to God's direction and empowerment for ministry. Pray for God to call and raise up new leaders like this and pray that our current leaders would continue to serve under God's power.

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for the raising up of godly leaders in our church who will faithfully serve and lead according to God's will.
- Intercede for pastors, missionaries, and other ministry leaders, asking God to equip them with wisdom, strength, and spiritual discernment.
- Seek God's guidance and empowerment for your own leadership role or influence, whether in your family, workplace, or community.

Saturday Evening Devotional

“For this reason I kneel before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God’s love, and to know Christ’s love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us — to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” -- Ephesians 3:14-21 (CSB)

Ephesians 3:14-21 is a prayer for the church's strength, unity, and mission. It expresses a desire for believers to be rooted and established in God's love, filled with His fullness, and empowered for His purposes. It is filled with hope for the future, not based on us, but based on God.

Prayer Prompts:

- Pray for a deepening of your own understanding and experience of God's love, that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.
- Intercede for the unity of the body of Christ, both locally and globally, that we may be one as Christ and the Father are one.
- Ask God to empower the church to fulfill its mission of making disciples, sharing the gospel, and demonstrating His love to the world.