

21

DAYS OF
PRAYER + FASTING



WEST LAKE
CHURCH

**"Praying and fasting makes
us more like Jesus by
starving our flesh and
feeding our soul."**



When Jesus ascended into heaven, He left His disciples with an overwhelming and seemingly impossible task to take the gospel to their neighbors and to the ends of the earth. He also left them with an important promise, "I am with you always." God knew that they would only be able to accomplish His work if they were filled with the power of His presence, because He knew that His presence was all they needed.

Likewise, God has given us an exciting, but seemingly impossible opportunity right here in the Lake Houston community. He has placed you and I intentionally in this rapidly growing area not just for our benefit, but to be a part of a great movement of God. And over the history of God's people, every great movement of God has been preceded by times of intentional prayer and fasting.

So, over the next 21 days, I want to ask you to seek the Lord with me individually, as families, in community groups, and as we gather on Sundays. God has entrusted this important assignment to us, so let's pray, fast, listen to, and obey everything He calls us to do.

Let's commit to seek God like never before.
I am praying for you.

For His Glory,
Cameron Whitley

INTRODUCTION

This prayer and fasting campaign is to encourage you to grow in your walk with Christ through reading, praying and fasting over the next 21 days. We desire for this to be helpful to you as you pursue living like Jesus Christ daily.

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is abstaining from normal routines of your life to spend focused time in prayer and the reading of God's word with the goal of aligning with the Kingdom of God. Ultimately, fasting is more about replacing than abstaining. Fasting humbles us before the Lord and grows our awareness of our need for Him.

WHY SHOULD I FAST?

Fasting is practiced all throughout Scripture. Moses, Daniel, Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah, John the Baptist, Paul, and Jesus Christ himself. Though it's not salvation, both prayer and fasting are expected in the lives of God's people. Both draw us closer to God as we declare, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven."

HOW SHOULD I FAST?

COMPLETE FAST

This fast calls for drinking only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, or bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

PARTIAL FAST

This fast is sometimes called the Jewish Fast and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.

SOUL FAST

This fast is common for those who have health issues that prevent them from fasting food, or who wish to refocus certain areas of their life that are out of balance. For instance, someone might select to abstain from social media or watching television for the duration of the fast, and then carefully bring that element back into their life at the conclusion of the fast.

DAY 01

READ: Daniel 10

This passage is a source for the idea of a 21-day fast. As you set apart these three weeks to seek God, know that God has already heard your prayer. He is already at work on your behalf. What specifically are you seeking from God during this time? Write down your prayer below so you can reflect on it at the end of the 21 days. Spend time praying for God to speak to you and give you strength.

DAY 02

READ: 1 Chronicles 21:18-27

This fast will require sacrifice, but it is a sacrifice that honors God. It will cost your convenience, your comfort, and it will also take some serious self discipline and commitment. What will your sacrifice be during this fast? Make sure it's a sacrifice that will not be easy. Write down your commitment and share it with a friend who will hold you accountable to it. Ask God for the boldness to obey what He wants you to sacrifice.

DAY 03

READ: Daniel 1

Nothing but vegetables and water. Not just three weeks, but probably for the duration of their time in Babylon. This response from these four young men didn't come from a fear of getting caught. It came from a devotion to God's commands already formed in them prior to captivity. During our fast, you'll have opportunities to deviate from your commitment. Especially if you're fasting alone and no one will find out. Pray that God will give you the strength, and self-control, to honor Him no matter what.

DAY 04

READ: Psalm 119

This is the longest psalm and is primarily about a passion for God's Word. These 21 days you've set apart will be much richer by combining Bible reading with your fasting and prayer. How would you describe your passion for God's Word at this moment? Be honest. Pray that God will increase that fire in your heart during this time and even after your fast is finished.

DAY 05

READ: Matthew 6:5-18

Isn't fasting supposed to be a secret? Many fasts in the Bible were corporate fasts organized by spiritual leaders for a whole group to participate in together. So, what do you think Jesus is saying here? Reflect on that answer and also the motive behind your fasting? Is there some secret wish to be seen as holy or spiritual? Ask God to uncover your motives for fasting and ask Him for the encouragement needed without it clouding your heart with pride.

DAY 06

READ: Isaiah 58

This is a message from God to His people who were frustrated with His lack of response to their fasting. It's easy to confuse fasting with a hunger strike or a formula to get God to do what you want. But this chapter says exactly what He wants. Pray that God will use your hunger and discomfort to permanently alter how you see those in the world who are lost and needy. Pray for your one and decide one way you can invest in them today.

DAY 07

READ: Mark 14:1-26

Broken and poured out. You see those words in both the story of the woman and the last supper. Since bread and wine are likely not options for you to remember Jesus during these 21 days, do what the woman did. Do what Jesus did. Live your life broken and poured out in remembrance of what He has done for you. How can your life be a living sacrifice to God? Talk to God about things in your life that need to be broken and poured out like the perfume.

DAY 08

READ: Psalm 100

You're entering week two of your fast! This psalm talks about entering God's presence with thankfulness, gladness, joy, and praise in your heart. If you've become focused on the physical hardships you're facing or the burdens you're bringing to God in prayer, then spend today just being grateful to the Lord. Write down some things that bring you joy today. Sing a song of praise to Him. Pray that God will stir an urgency to share this joy with others.

DAY 09

READ: Romans 12:1-2

This is a great time to explore how you can present your body as a living sacrifice to God. This passage starts with that challenge and offers many ways to express it. In what ways has your fast been helping you experience true worship? Ask God to continue to reveal His will for you during this time of sacrifice and worship. How can you empty yourself today to show your one the love of Jesus Christ? Whatever that is, be obedieint to do it.

DAY 10

READ: Luke 4:1-13

Forty days of nothing? Not hardly. Even though Jesus fasted for forty days, He clearly came out stronger based on the events following his fast. How have you already been strengthened by this fast? Are you growing or struggling through these first ten days? Maybe you're not experiencing the outcomes you expected. Ask God to lead you into the same kind of preparation, power, and purpose that Jesus gained from His fasting.

DAY 11

READ: James 1:12-18

You are now entering into the second half of your fast, which makes these verses all the more important. Reflect on whether your fast can be characterized by “patiently enduring” or not. Ask God for wisdom to not be misled and to see His good and perfect gifts through hard or painful seasons. If we are not aware, our desires will lead to temptation, which can lead to sin, which will lead to death. What desires, temptations, or sins has God made you aware of through the first ten days?

DAY 12

READ: 2 Corinthians 10:14-24

Food is usually a source of comfort. Reflect on how much your thoughts have been driven by craving certain foods or missing the things you're fasting from. Is it often? Fasting can make you aware of the unhealthy place many things can have in your life. Pray that the God's grace, and His Word, will become your source of comfort insted of food. Write down anything in your life that has taken the Holy Spirit's place as your Comforter. Then ask God to forgive you.

DAY 13

READ: 1 Peter 2:1-10

You are chosen, holy, set apart, and a royal priest--you are a child of God. Whether you feel like it or believe it right now. You may be in need of an anchor. Someone to hold you steady. Set Christ as your cornerstone today. Write down the ways He has brought you out of darkness and into His marvelous light. Thank God for the work he has begun in you through the Cornerstone, Jesus Christ. Pray and ask Him to continue to build upon what he has started.

DAY 14

READ: Matthew 5:1-14

God blesses those who _____. Maybe you answered that with, "who helps themselves."? But that is not Jesus' words. If you can relate to wanting/needing a "blessing", then spend time meditating on what's called the Beatitudes. Take a minute to write down the character that **God** chooses to bless. His list doesn't look anything like ours most days, does it? Thank Him for the blessings He has given you, especially the ones that come as a result of persevering through hardship or trials.

DAY 15

READ: Psalm 51

You're starting the third and final week of your fast. Take some time to reflect, evaluate, and celebrate what God has done in these last two weeks. Then, write down some highlights you'd like to share with someone else. I'm sure you've missed some days of reading, praying, and writing, and may have given up on your fast all together. The good thing is that there is a whole week left and God is a God who forgives. Ask God to use this last week to refine you and cleanse you as you draw closer to Him.

DAY 16

READ: Psalm 27

Psalm 27 talks about seeking one thing: a fearless trust in God. Usually, we focus on seeking things from God instead of just seeking God. We tend to seek God's hand and not God's face. Although God is capable of meeting your needs and answering your prayers, he loves you more deeply than you can ever know. When you seek His face, you end up in a much closer posture to Him. What are some ways that you can seek God and draw closer to Him today than you have before?

DAY 17

READ: Daniel 3

This is one of the most dramatic stories in the Bible. Believe it or not, you can relate to the situation they faced. Not because you might be thrown into a furnace, but because of their faithful worship to God, who stood with them in the flames. What situation are you facing today because of faithful worship to God? In what ways can faithful worship help lead others towards Jesus Christ? Take the situation to God in prayer and know that he's with you. Even in the flames.

DAY 18

READ: Joel 2:12-32

Tear your hearts instead. You can finish the last few days strong by making sure your heart remains open to God, and not just doing the right acts before God. Is there an area of your life where you are doing godly things without actually having the heart of God? If so, return to the Lord who is merciful, compassionate, slow to anger, and filled with unfailing love and turn away from your own kingdom.

DAY 19

READ: Psalm 84

Do your heart and flesh feel weak? As you near the end of your fast, think of the eternal joy of spending one day in His courts over the temporal satisfaction of our flesh. Praise Him for the ways He has grown you through this fast, and seek Him more. Read this psalm OUTLOUD today as a prayer to God. Feel free to personalize it or add to it. Say it loudly or just whisper. Write down one truth that stuck out to you.

DAY 20

READ: Zechariah 7

Are you considering continuing your fast or beginning a new habit of regular fasting? Here, people are wondering if they should continue fasting and the Lord answers them through Zechariah. Since Moses' time, God instituted a whole calendar of both fasts and feasts. Both were designed to draw His people closer to Him, while standing out in the world. If drawing closer to God is your daily goal, then both fasting and feasting can be holy. What has God shown you? What is one change you can share?

DAY 21

READ: Ezekiel 47:1-12

No matter how deep you have come over the last 21 days, wade in deeper still. Don't worry about what's going to get wet. Don't stop at the point where you can keep your feet underneath you. Essentially, trust God. What are you holding on to? What are you afraid might happen living a life of faith? Pray today that this will be just the start of a deeper relationship with God. Have faith that sharing your trust in God with others will not only encourage you, but will inspire them to do the same.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



A Final Word:

“ Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Therefore, put on

EVERY PIECE OF GOD'S ARMOR

so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the

BELT OF TRUTH

and the

BODY ARMOR

of God's righteousness.

FOR SHOES,

put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the

SHIELD OF FAITH

to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on

SALVATION AS YOUR HELMET,

and take the

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT,

which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion.

Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. ”

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

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