

21 days

OF PRAYER

& FASTING

DAY 1

Matthew 6:17-18 | 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

We can all agree that the Lord is a good Father. He rewards our obedience, and He rewards us when we diligently seek Him. We set aside time to seek the Lord through prayer and fasting this month. To some of us, prayer and fasting come naturally. For others, praying and fasting for 21 days can be daunting. But rest assured, God our Father sees our sacrifice. Not only does He see our sacrifice, but He will reward us for our efforts, answer our prayers, and pour out His Spirit upon us.

Prayer: Father, as we begin our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting, help us to rely on you. Lord, help us keep our minds and hearts fixed on your presence. We thank you for leading us through this time and giving us the strength to finish what we started. We know that you are a Good Father and will reward us for our sacrifice. We thank you, and we love you.

DAY 2

Psalms 145:5-7 / 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. 6 They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. 7 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

When we pray, it's easy to move quickly to thanksgiving or requests - depending on the day and what we've been through. And sometimes, a quick 911 prayer is all we can manage. But the psalmists invite us to weave adoration and praise of God into our prayers.

Adoration is different than being thankful. It's an acknowledgment of who God is - His fantastic character and His acts. We adore and praise God when we acknowledge His intrinsic nature.

Psalms 145:5-7 gives us an idea of what it's like to praise God in prayer: "On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness."

When we praise God in prayer, it repositions our hearts. And as we refocus on who God is, we are reminded that no matter what we face today, God is bigger than our circumstances. Praise magnifies God to the position He deserves in our lives, and our problems diminish in the light of His majesty.

Prayer: Lord, You are great and greatly to be praised. I will remember all the ways You have worked in my life and testify of Your goodness. I will share with others how I've seen You act in the lives of those around me. I'm so grateful You are gracious and merciful, and I want to worship You more for who You are today, tomorrow, and always in Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 3

Isaiah 58: 11 | 11 The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

There are over 100 names for God in the Bible. One of the most well-known is Jehovah Jireh, the Lord Who Provides. God provides for every one of our needs, not just the physical needs like food to eat or money to pay our bills. But because He loves us, He also provides for our emotional and spiritual needs. As the scripture says, "He will satisfy [our] needs...and will strengthen [our] frame." So, as we pray these 21 days, let us take ALL of our needs to the King. If we need peace, let us call on Jehovah Shalom - The Lord, Our Peace. If we need protection, let us call on Jehovah Nissi - The Lord Our Banner. If we need healing, let us call on Jehovah Rapha - The Lord who Heals Us. He will answer us and supply our needs when we call on Him.

Journal Prompt: Write a list of all the things you need or are believing God for during this time of prayer and fasting. Take them to God in prayer today and then review it at the end of the 21 days and record how many prayers God has answered.



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DAY 4

Joel 2: 12-13 | 12 "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." 13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Fasting has many benefits, some physical and spiritual. One of the most significant benefits of fasting is that it places a magnifying glass on the things in our life that hinder us from drawing closer to God. The scripture above in the Amplified Classic version says, "Now, says the Lord, 'turn and keep on coming to me with all your heart...[until every hindrance is removed and the broken fellowship is restored].'" That is precisely what fasting allows us to do; as we say no to our flesh and push back our plate, we say yes to God and turn toward His voice and His will.

Prayer: Father, thank you for speaking to me during this time of prayer and fasting. Please show me the people, places, things, and ideas that prevent me from living for you, and give me the strength to remove them in Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 5

Psalms 46:1 / 1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

There's nothing wrong with asking God for help. It shows our faithful trust in Him to act on our behalf. But what if we praised God for what He can do rather than just asking Him to do it? If you have time, read Psalm 46 today, which gives us words to pray as a battle cry to the One who wins every battle He chooses to fight. At the beginning of Psalm 46, the psalmists declare God's power over trouble. It's interesting they didn't make any requests of God. Instead of starting with the problem, the psalmists started with the provision: God Himself. What might happen in our prayer life if we declared God's power and provision over every need and problem first? It surely would change our attitudes when we remember who God is and what is possible for Him!

Journal Prompt: What are the characteristics of God that make Him able to respond to the desires of your heart today? List all you can think of, and use them in your prayers to give Him glory and honor before you ask for His help.

DAY 6

Isaiah 57:15 | 15 For this is what the high and exalted One says— he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

The Lord is with those who are contrite, and He is near to the brokenhearted. Even in our darkest moments, God is with us and promises to revive us when we are low in spirit. Revive is defined as becoming active or flourishing again, restoring from a depressed state, and renewing the mind. So, we can rest easy knowing that God is with us, He is for us, and when we trust Him, He will revive our low places.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for all you have done for me. You said you are close to the brokenhearted and are with the one who is contrite in spirit. I believe you, Lord, and I trust your word, thank you for reviving my dead places. May my heart come alive and my mind be renewed, in Jesus' name, amen.

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DAY 7

2 Samuel 24:24a / 24a But the King replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

King David had sinned against God by taking a survey he'd been told not to take, and he and his nation were suffering God's punishment. David wanted to atone for his sin by building an altar to God. God's instructions were very clear that the altar must be built on the threshing floor of a man named Araunah. So David offered to buy the threshing floor, but Araunah would have none of it - declaring he would donate the land and all the supplies for the altar. That's when King David replied, "I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

This story challenges us to think about what we offer to God. Do we offer him what's easy and costs us little? Or do we offer something that is a true sacrifice? This month, we have the opportunity to offer God something that costs us. It might be time spent in prayer or fasting from food or a habit or practice we enjoy. Whatever it is, may we be like David, a man after God's heart, and have our sacrifice cost us something.

Journal Prompt: Have you sensed God asking you to sacrifice something for His sake, but you've resisted? Maybe He's asked you to get up earlier or watch less tv. Perhaps it's bigger, like forgiving someone you've held a grudge against. Write a list of what you believe God might be asking you to sacrifice on top of prayer and fasting and ask God to help you choose one to start now.

DAY 8

Matthew 6: 20-21 | 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Why are we fasting this month? What are we supposed to be praying for again? These are valid questions; depending on who we ask, we'll receive various answers. But as we continue our 21 days of prayer and fasting, we must remember that the ultimate goal should be to grow closer to God and seek His Kingdom. If, at the end of our fast, we receive the answer to our prayers and the breakthrough that we hoped for, but we return to our sinful and prideful ways, what did we gain? Suppose we only focus on the material items we desire but don't recommit our hearts and lives to pursuing God's will. In that case, this time will have been a waste. However, if we keep our hearts fixed on growing closer to God, the results from this fast will be eternal. Remember, God delights in blessing His children and loves answering our prayers. Still, we cannot be so focused on the gift that we neglect to appreciate and praise the giver.

Prayer: Father, as I continue to pray and fast, help me to keep my priorities in order. Lord growing closer to you is my focus. Help me block out the distractions so I can hear your voice clearly in Jesus's name, amen.

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DAY 9

Ephesians 4:22-24 / 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to 24 put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Managing and submitting our thoughts to God is a daily battle. So often, negative thoughts like resentment, frustration, anxiety, or anger can easily take hold — especially if we dwell on the sacrifice we are making for God. We might feel like God is punishing us rather than inviting us to a deeper place with Him.

While you might be frustrated with yourself for being negative during 21 days of prayer and fasting, try to see the good work God is doing in you. You are being renewed, and in every renewal, God is replacing something old with something new, including our thoughts. In Ephesians 4:22-24, Paul advises to “put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds.”

So when your thoughts and attitude get stuck in a negative pattern, realize that your "old self" is showing and needs to be put off. Through Jesus' sacrifice, your new self was "created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Journal Prompt: Have you found yourself locked in a negative thought pattern? The good news is that God is ready to replace your old thoughts with new ones. Make a list of the negative thoughts, and identify a positive one to replace them. For example, if you struggle with resentment, perhaps write gratitude or humility. Then ask God to give you His mind and the ability to think new thoughts.

DAY 10

Hosea 10:12 | 12 Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

In preparation for planting, a farmer must first take on the difficult task of breaking up any rocky and unproductive ground. The farmer must break up this hard ground before a single seed can be planted and expected to bear fruit. Similarly, we must break up the unplowed ground of our hearts and cast away any bitterness, anger, and unforgiveness to bear fruit in the Kingdom of God. When we present ourselves as good ground before the Lord, as scripture says, He will shower His righteousness upon us.

Journal Prompt: Take a moment to examine your life. Are there any areas of your life that could be considered unplowed ground? If so, pray about these areas and ask God to give you the strength to toss them away.

DAY 11

Psalms 42:1 / 1 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

Living in the desert, we understand thirst. It doesn't take long in the heat before we grab a glass of water. But how often do we actually feel the thirst in our souls for God? Is it possible we have "hydrated" our souls with lesser things? We feel spiritually satiated, but we really aren't. Then, when the heat comes, we wither rather than stand firm. What might happen if we didn't turn to our regular coping habits when rejection, hurt, anxiety, fear, or doubt rise up, and instead, we just sat in God's presence and waited? No agenda, no formal prayers, just allowing Jesus to do what He does best ... bring the living water we really need.

Prayer: Father, You know my habit of reaching for things that seem to satisfy in the moment but don't produce the soul healing only You can bring. I don't want to try and quench my thirst with anything less than what You promise, the living water that will never run out. Help me to see the things I've turned to rather than You. I want to desire You above all things.

21 days

OF PRAYER

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DAY 12

Numbers 13: 30 | 30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

Like the children of Israel, many of us stand at the entrance of our promised land. Still, we allow fear, doubt, and the opinions of others to stop us from stepping into the destiny God has for us. Now, during this time of prayer and fasting, God is giving us the strength to overtake the enemy and take hold of all He has promised us. It's time to conquer the land the enemy has occupied for too long. It is time for us to go up at once and possess the land! Like Joshua and Caleb, let us declare, "If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us!"

Journal Prompt: What promise has God given you? What promised land has He called you into? What is stopping you from processing the land?

DAY 13

Genesis 22:14 / 14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

You might be praying today for a situation that looks and feels hopeless. That's probably how Abraham felt when God asked him to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham must have been devastated as he and Isaac walked toward the place of sacrifice. Every step took Abraham closer to what he believed to be the sad ending of a hopeless situation. Yet, despite his sorrow, Abraham trusted God. His heart wasn't soaring with joy. But he put one foot in front of the other.

Unbeknownst to Abraham, something else was walking up that mountain. For every step Abraham took, a ram on the other side of the mountain took a step. All Abraham saw that day was his solitary journey of pain. But God had another plan. At the very last second, when it looked like the end had come, God spoke, stopping the sacrifice. Abraham looked up, and there, caught in the thicket, was a ram. Abraham took his son off the altar, replaced him with the ram, and offered the sacrifice to God.

Abraham named that place "Yahweh-Yireh" or "The Lord Will Provide." And the story was written so that you and I today would read it as we face our own hopeless situations and be encouraged that a "ram" is on the way.

Journal Prompt/ Prayer: Father, today I face a situation that looks hopeless with my eyes. And yet I choose to trust that You not only see the hard place I'm in, but You care. Help me have hope that You are already in the process of providing an answer to my situation. I want to be a person whose faith is so strong that I wait in hopeful anticipation, not fear or dread, confident that You will provide for me, just as You provided for Abraham in Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 14

Acts 4: 29- 31 | 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

In Matthew chapter 5, Jesus told His disciples to be happy when they face persecution because their reward would be great in heaven. As followers of Jesus, in this current age, we must be bold in the face of persecution. How do we do that—PRAY! When we pray, we give God permission to come into our most difficult situations and fill us with the boldness needed to overcome them. We have the power of the Holy Spirit within us, so there is nothing, and no one can stand against us.

Prayer: Lord, your word says that I will be filled with power when the Holy Spirit comes upon me and that I will be a witness for you throughout the earth. Lord, fill me afresh today with your Holy Spirit. Give me the boldness and the confidence to walk out your plan for me. Use me, oh Lord, to fulfill your purpose here on earth.

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DAY 15

Isaiah 58:6-9a | 6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. 9a Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

Isaiah 58 teaches us that there is a right and wrong way to fast. In this chapter, the Lord speaks to the people of Israel and tells them that He is not pleased when His people "fast to please themselves" or when they fast yet "keep on fighting and quarreling." The Lord tells His chosen people that this type of fasting will get them nowhere. Fortunately for them and us, in verses 6-9, God explains to the people of Israel the kind of fast that pleases Him. When we fast, God is more concerned with our heart posture than with our actions, and when our hearts are in the right place when we call on God, He will answer us.

Journal Prompt: Take a moment to think back on the first few days of the fast. Are there any actions or behaviors that God has challenged you to give up? How has He challenged you to change your heart posture during this time of prayer and fasting?

DAY 16

Romans 12:1 / 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Prayer and fasting can be challenging. Both involve time, intention, and some amount of sacrifice. In our humanity, we would much rather focus on celebrating than sacrificing. But sacrificing is central to our faith. Jesus led the way by humbly sacrificing so much. During His life on earth, He sacrificed food in the wilderness for 40 days, then His reputation, His plans, and ultimately His life. So when we practice the discipline of sacrifice, it puts us in a posture of humility and aligns our hearts with Jesus. In Romans 12:1, the Apostle Paul urged us to consider our entire bodies as a living sacrifice — it's that important. So if you are fasting this month, think how much Jesus' sacrificed for us, and offer your sacrifice as true and proper worship back to Him.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for seeking comfort and safety so much of the time. I confess that in my flesh, I resist sacrificing things I love — and yet Jesus sacrificed so much for me. Help me to lay down my desires and choose the path of selflessness that Jesus modeled. Thank You for loving me despite my self-focused choices. I want to follow You wholeheartedly in Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 17

Matthew 6:7-8 / 7 When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. 8 Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

Prayer can be intimidating. We can hear people at church or small group pray and think, "I'll never sound that good." You might even avoid praying to God because you feel you don't have the words. But how comforting to know that Jesus already knew we might feel that way and gave us a straightforward pattern for prayer. In Matthew 6, Jesus told us exactly how to pray, and it's so simple! But let's focus for a minute on Jesus's words before He gave us the Lord's prayer. He said, don't think a lot of words impress God. They don't. God already knows what you need.

So why do we disqualify our prayers because we don't have the "right" words? If prayer is ever hard for you, use Matthew 6:9-15 as your example. You can pray it word for word to begin, but as you get more comfortable with each section, add a few of your own words. According to Jesus, prayer is a conversation with our Heavenly Father. And that can be as simple as you need it to be.

Journal Prompt: Write Matthew 6:9-15 in your journal. Using it as your example, write a short prayer that contains each of the elements you find in the Lord's Prayer.



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DAY 18

Jeremiah 32:27 / 27 I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?

Have you ever worked your way through a normal prayer list — praying for your family, job, neighbors, church —then thought, “Now I’ve got a big one.”

Some prayer requests come easily, usually those that feel safe to pray because, in our hearts, we know they can be solved in the natural. But sometimes, we face problems and challenges where no amount of human intervention will help. Sometimes we need God to come through with a miracle! If you’ve ever found yourself separating your prayer list into easy and hard, remember this truth: There are no big requests to God.

No matter how hopeless the situation seems, God can step in and do what no human can do. He’s not a man with limited power. He’s not confined by statistics, diagnoses, or negative financial forecasts. There is nothing too hard for Him to solve with a word. Perhaps it’s time for us to remove the limits on what we ask God for - Who knows how much more He wants to do in our lives if we only ask Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I praise You for Your power and majesty. Forgive me for the times I’ve limited You in my own mind. I want to trust You so greatly that I don’t think twice about praying for things that need Your supernatural intervention. Thank You for all You’ve done and will do in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

DAY 19

Luke 1:45 | 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

We have been praying and fasting for 19 days as a church family. As a result, we’ve seen God move in our church and our lives, and we’ve heard God speak to us regarding His promises and plans for our lives. But there might be things that have yet to come to pass or questions that still need to be answered. And as we near the end of this time, it can be tempting to grow concerned or worried that we won’t see the answer to our prayers by the end of the 21 days. Instead of giving in to worry and fear, we must keep our expectations high and continue to believe that God will do what He said He will do! James 1: 6-7 tells us that “when [we] ask, [we] must believe and not doubt because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.” Hebrews 11: 6 reminds us that “without faith, it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” Belief and trust are necessary components of our faith, and when we hold onto our faith and choose to trust God despite our circumstances, we will be blessed.

Journal Prompt: Take a moment to reflect on and thank God for all the ways you have seen God answer your prayers during this fast. Write down the things that you are still believing God to do and then share that list with a trusted friend or family member. Ask them to join their faith with yours as you continue to pray and wait on God.

21 days

OF PRAYER
& FASTING

DAY 20

Isaiah 10: 27 | 27 And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

Just like olives must be crushed to release their oil and gold must withstand the fire to be purified, in the same way, God must break off our old thought patterns, motives, and behaviors before He can pour His anointing upon us. This breaking can be uncomfortable, painful, and sometimes lonely. Still, it is necessary before we can step boldly into His purpose for our lives. When we fully submit our lives to the Lord, we allow Him to remove everything that is no longer useful to His will and way. And as a result, we can be sure that we are built to endure the trials of life and be anointed for victory.

Prayer: Father, give me the grace and the strength to withstand the crushing, the pruning, and your refining fire. I submit myself to you, knowing that through your care, I will become strong enough to endure the trials of life and will be the man or woman you designed me to be.

DAY 21

1 Peter 5:8 / 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Enemies aren't just found in movies or books. If you follow Jesus, you have a spiritual enemy, Satan, who actively opposes God's kingdom and followers. And he's on the prowl looking for ways to sabotage the good God wants to do in and through you. The devil's schemes aren't always obvious, so that's why the Apostle Peter cautions us to be alert and of sober mind. Through prayer, fasting, and with the Spirit's discernment and wisdom, God will highlight the enemy's plans so you can prepare and protect yourself and those you love. The good news is that Satan is little more than a pest in light of the power of the One within us. Armed with the Word of God and the mind of Christ, we have every tool needed to defeat our enemy.

Journal Prompt/ Prayer: Is there an area in your life where you consistently struggle? Ask God to reveal what might be happening in the supernatural, and then pray for God's power to overcome.