



21 days of Prayer
+ Fasting
VERTICAL
CHURCH

21 DAY FASTING GUIDE

It's one thing to know about God, it's a different thing to be known by God. Prayer and fasting are powerful ways to prepare to receive His presence, and all that He has planned for your life, as well as grow deeper in your walk with Him as you proclaim: more of You and less of me.

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is to voluntarily abstain from eating/drinking for an extended period of time. "Eating" and "drinking" can represent anything that is holding you back. Are there things that are distracting you from your relationship with God? Relying on things that have nothing to do with God to get you through the day? Ask God and He will show you. Everyone doing a physical fast should consult a physician first. If you have medical issues, consider fasting TV or media. The point is that there is something God wants you to separate yourself from for the duration so that you can see Him more clearly.

FASTING GOAL: A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE LIVING GOD

"He must increase and [we] must decrease." John 3:30
"Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16

You may experience many benefits from fasting (cleansing your body, breaking addictions, etc.), but the goal of fasting is to experience God. Right now, your life may be all about you, what you want, and when you want it. Imagine if you separate yourself from your perceived needs (such as food) ...you may see that life is all about Him.

EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL FASTING:

Special revelation - Exodus 34:27-28
Courage and Wisdom - Esther 4:3,16
Repentance - Jonah 3:5; Daniel 6:18
Spiritual Power - Mark 9:29
Spiritual Discipline - 1 Corinthians 11:24-28

FASTING PREPARATION

PREPARE YOUR HEART:

Be willing to hear what God says needs to change and be willing to change. What are the paths He wants you to walk? How much does He want you to pray and read His Word? Tell God that you surrender your life to Him and that you want more of Him and His way.

“Ephesians 1:3 says that there are spiritual blessings assigned to us. We can never exhaust them! Wisdom, anointing, prayer power, healing power, teaching power, joy, or encouragement are examples of gifts that God bestows. When you eliminate things that are keeping you from focusing on God, He is able to show you things about your life that you never knew.

If you decide to eat only fruits and vegetables for your fast, it will result in the cleansing of your physical body. You may feel sick as your body detoxes, but you will make it! This isn't a mind game to see if you can survive eating less or not watching ESPN, but about experiencing God. Some people ask, “What does not eating have to do with my relationship with God?” the response would be, “Stop eating and find out.”

Decide where you will meet with God, what and when you will eat, and how you will spend your time differently. Remember, the fast is about communing with God, so don't fill your time with distractions that will keep you from feeling hungry. Create a plan and commit to spending more time with the Lord.

TYPES OF FASTS

COMPLETE FAST

- Drinking only liquids, typically water and/or light juices.
- Broth or soup may be included as options.

SELECTIVE FAST

- Removing certain elements from your diet.
- The Daniel Fast-abstaining from meat, sweets, or bread; drink water and juice, and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

PARTIAL FAST (A.K.A THE JEWISH FAST)

- Abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon.
- Fast during specific times of the day, e.g. 6AM-3PM, or from sunrise to sundown.

SOUL FAST

- Common for: anyone new to fasting food; those with health issues that prevent them from fasting food; those wanting to refocus specific areas of life that are out of balance.
- Suggestions: abstain from engaging in social media, shopping, watching television, etc.

ENDURING YOUR FAST

PRAYER LIFE DURING THE FAST

There is a question you will need to answer. When you are fasting, will you seek Him give Him a listening ear and the quality time He deserves? He will constantly separate you from dependence on the world. Consequently, your time alone with Him may become more frequent than you originally planned, and needless to say, your prayer life will greatly improve. Expect to hear God loud and clear.

FIGHTING DOUBT + FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

During your fast, one of your biggest enemies will be your mind and your memory. Eating at certain times each day has been part of your “life training”. Fasting will make no sense to your mind.

In Matthew 14:22-32, when Peter was walking on the water, he found himself in the middle of a miracle, something that did not make sense to his mind. when Peter’s mind revealed to him the supernatural nature of what he was doing, it convinced him that it was impossible, based on what his mind knew to be normal. Consequently, Peter sank, believing logically what his mind told him, rather than what the Spirit convinced him to believe by faith. Galatians 5:24 tells us that the flesh is at war against the Spirit.

When you feel as though you want to give up, you must ask yourself a few questions:

Is the discomfort you are experiencing worth the prize you are pursuing? If you do give up, where and to what will you go back to? In John 6:66, the disciples were asked by Jesus if they wanted to go back to their old lifestyle. Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of life.”

ENDURING YOUR FAST

SOCIAL TENSIONS

A frequently asked question about fasting is:
“Should you tell people that you are fasting?”

Fasting is a discipline of self-denial and consecration unto the Lord and constant discussion about it can be distracting. Jesus was against the religious leaders drawing attention to themselves by giving people the impression they were suffering for the Lord.

(Matthew 6:16-18).

The religious leaders did this in an attempt to puff themselves up thus defeating the purpose of their fasting.

That being said there will be times that you might need support as you enter further into your fast. It is important to reach out when you need prayer if dealing with doubts, negative influences and temptations.

Also depending upon the length of your fast there will be times that present itself that those around you will find out you are fasting. You can turn this into a moment to edify God. Decide ahead of time when and how to discuss it, because your testimony can be used to encourage others to fast.

You should be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15).

At the end of the day the balance comes down to avoiding drawing attention to yourself and giving glory to God.

ENDURING YOUR FAST

AFTER YOUR FAST

Ending your fast properly is just as important as beginning your fast properly. Just as you prepared yourself to begin a fast, you must prepare yourself to stop or break your fast.

Here are a few questions you can ask yourself as you end your fast;

- What are the key lessons learned?
- What new habits or disciplines do you want to keep?
- What dreams and visions have you seen pertaining to your personal walk with the Lord?

BREAKING YOUR FAST

Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly, reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.

EXPECT RESULTS

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray and seek God's face; consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence. The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

SEEK GOALS

FORWARD

If nothing changed in your life over the next year, would you be satisfied? Am I willing to change what I am doing to achieve different results next year? The Word says in 1 Corinthians 9:26, “So I do not run without a goal. I fight like a boxer who is hitting something –not just the air.” Indecision is the greatest thief of opportunity –Jim Rohn. Goals keep us moving forward and give us hope. Goals are specific and timely. Goals are best written down. They are practical and measurable. Most importantly goals are most successful when prayed about and submitted to God.

I invite you to join us on this journey as we set our goals, offering God our best. I want to encourage you to desire it, be a dreamer, picture it accomplished, have a plan, work your plan. Do not abandon your goal when the going gets tough. I encourage you to remain fully focused, let Christ be at the forefront of your thoughts and the guide of your heart and watch how He ordains your footsteps.

Pastor Josh Reece
Vertical Church

SEEK GOALS: FAMILY

FAMILY

These goals will allow me to realize my dreams and aspirations as a family and as an individual within my family. It will enrich my faith, strengthen my character and enrich my family's life so we are fulfilled, happy, confident and always close.

These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my family:

Do I maintain a loving and supportive relationship with members of my family? Am I currently improving or mending relationships that are fragile or broken? Am I the kind of son, daughter, husband, wife, parent, etc that God wants me to be?

GOALS

1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

SEEK GOALS: HEALTH

HEALTH

Physical health impacts all areas of my life. These goals will help me to remain healthy, fit and energetic so that I can enjoy life to the fullest and have the energy to pursue all of my goals. When I take care of my health it glorifies God, for I am His masterpiece.

These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my health: Do I make sure my diet is healthy? Do I factor regular physical activity into my week? Do I get enough sleep? What is the biggest barrier that stands in the way of me achieving optimal health?

GOALS

1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

SEEK GOALS: FINANCIAL

FINANCES

Through these goals I will develop a spending plan to help me live within my means and be free to use the financial resources that God has given me for more than just paying monthly bills. I will develop a plan to save for the future as well as develop a giving strategy to glorify God and discover His principles to govern financial stewardship, giving and blessing.

These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my finances: How much of my spending is on unnecessary items? Am I able to distinguish between 'wants' and 'needs'? How can I use my finances to honor God?

GOALS

1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

SEEK GOALS: CAREER

CAREER

It is important to have clear, defined goals and boundaries concerning my career. These goals will help me manage the way my time is spent at my place of employment and help me to avoid the ability of my workplace to dominate the whole of my life, to the detriment of all other areas.

These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my career: Does my career fit with my financial goals? Is my career what I want to be doing 5 or 10 years from now? Does my current position demand too much overtime or traveling time, robbing my family of my time and energy? Does my work help or hinder my Biblical priorities, principles and spiritual goals?

GOALS

1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

SEEK GOALS: COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY

These goals are not just about whether or not I need interaction with an extended group of people, but also about how I can serve God in the context of my church and local community. My relationships with others is important as I seek to represent Christ to the world. My goals will help me to build intentional friendships while supporting my church and my community. These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my involvement in community: Am I aware of needs in my community or church that God has equipped me to help fulfill? Do I position myself and act on occasions to make even a little difference in someone's life thus creating genuine relationships?

GOALS

- 1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

- 2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

SEEK GOALS: SPIRITUAL

SPIRITUAL

I firmly believe that I am called to a life of consistent spiritual growth. Fundamental to my relationship with God is my knowledge of God and my obedience to Him. My goals will help me grow in my relationship with God and increase my ability to understand the purpose He has for me.

These are some questions I can keep before me as I set my goals concerning my spiritual walk: Do I know and believe the truth about God? Do I spend time praying each day? Do I take time to read the Word? Do I attend church regularly? Do I have people in my life that know and believe the truth about God?

GOALS

1. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

GOALS

2. _____
action step 1: _____
action step 2: _____
action step 3: _____

21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

LESS OF ME/MORE OF HIM

Be challenged to do more than abstain from food, but set yourself apart mentally, physically, and spiritually through fasting. God promises that He will be found if we seek Him wholeheartedly. He is a near God who hears our prayers and is attentive. Dive in and draw closer to God than ever before.

Directions:

Pray and read the scripture below. To take it further, scan the QR code for the daily devotion.

DAY 1:

The theme for week one is Your First Love. What does this mean exactly? One central issue as it relates to those who have lost their first love is a shift in focus, attention, and intense love for Jesus.

Read **Matthew chapter 22 and focus on verse 37**



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 2:

Read Matthew 6:1-24

So much in this chapter relates to the fast you are undertaking. Take time to take notes as you go, and always put a month and year next to any notes you take or verses that minister to you.



DAY 3:

Read Matthew 6:25-34

Take time to note the specific verses that speak to you, even date them in your Bible to reflect on later.

Today, focus on gratitude. What an amazing word! We have so much to be thankful for!

Did you know that your level of gratitude could directly affect your attitude? What are you thankful for?



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 4:

Perhaps you've never felt close to God. Or maybe you've had seasons of intimacy, but you've allowed the cares of life to pull you away from that closeness with Him. When we often decide to return to Him, to return to our first love, we believe that we must span a great distance to get to where He is. We think this distance can be bridged by hard work, many good deeds, attending church, and a religious life. But in reality, God is never far from you.

Read Psalm 139 and focus on verses 7 and 8.



DAY 5:

When you begin to get a true vision of who Jesus really is, you can see Him and walk in faith. The job of the enemy is to get your eyes off Jesus and onto the conditions around you because as long as you are looking at Jesus, the enemy knows you can do the impossible.

Read all of Ephesians chapter 6.

Highlight parts that are most meaningful for you



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 6:

There is something called "The Second Touch," the key is that you become so hungry that you say, "Lord, I appreciate the first touch. I appreciate when You saved me and when You gave me light that I've never seen before. But now I'm serving You, and I need You to touch me a second time and clarify my vision."

Read the entire story in Mark chapter 8 and focus on verses 22-26.

Highlight most meaningful parts for you.



DAY 7:

A lot of Christians don't understand the power of God's grace. They are forgiven and they are on their way to heaven, but they think they have to pay for what they did by being sad and beating up on themselves when nothing could be further from the truth. Grace wins! But until you acknowledge and accept that, you will allow the enemy to steal your joy.

Read all of Psalm 32 and Psalm 51. Remember to take note of anything that stands out to you as you read.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 8:

The enemy's job is to pull us away from God's house and His purposes because he knows that if we come out from under the covering of the Father, he can take everything away from us, not only our finances but also our reputation, our name, and our witness for Jesus. In these last days, we need to have a 'made-up mind' to STAY in God's house where there is love, peace, safety, and blessing ... for our families and us.

Read **Jeremiah 29** and focus on verses 12-14



DAY 9:

God will put you in a place where He can bless you, and the enemy knows that as long as you stay under the covering of the Father's house, then the enemy cannot destroy your life. When you come out from under the authority God has appointed for your life, that's when the enemy will release his attack.

Read **all of Numbers 22**. Highlight parts that are most meaningful for you.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 10:

If you will remain under what God has put over you, then God will put under you the many things you're supposed to have authority over. I want you to understand the word authority comes from the word author, and God is the author of authority.

Read all of Luke chapter 7.

Take note of anything that speaks to you personally.



DAY 11:

Welcome to Day 11, the official halfway point of this 21-day fast. Over the last few days, we have taken long, hard looks at the parts of us that keep us from returning fully to Jesus. We can declare our desire to yield fully to Him, but we must remove barriers. These walls of pride and independence must be replaced with the only thing that can make these walls fall—surrender.

Your experience with God should "cut to the heart." It should lead to a deep desire to give up everything else and follow after God with your whole heart!

Read Joel chapter 2, Psalm chapter 47, and Colossians chapter 3.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 12:

To know the mind of God, you must look into His Word. Scripture says, "Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8).

Read Isaiah 6 and 2 Samuel 6. Highlight parts that are most meaningful for you.



DAY 13:

Our worship attracts our Father. No one can praise or worship Him for us. Our worship is special and unique and comes from our personal relationship with Him. But music isn't a requirement for worship. Worship expresses 'reverence and adoration, which can be done in word AND deed without ever singing a word.

Read Isaiah 6 and 1 Peter 2. Mark the passages that speak to you personally today.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 14:

There is a simple plan for your sin, and it DOESN'T involve shame, guilt, or condemnation. It is as simple as confession, repentance, and forgiveness. There is nothing you can do to pay for your sin. Jesus Christ made the payment on the cross.

Read 1 John 1 and Romans chapters 7 and 8.

Mark the parts that are most meaningful for you.



DAY 15:

Welcome to week three! This is when you will sense that the end is closer than ever. By now, if you have faithfully committed to each day of this study, you have dealt with so many powerful principles and have spent time with the Lord, eliminating many of the roadblocks the enemy throws up to keep you from returning to God in meaningful ways.

This week, we begin to look at returning to your purpose and calling. You have a purpose for being here! Who are you, and why are you here?

Read Joshua 5 and Hebrews 2. Mark the parts that are most meaningful for you.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 16:

What is your vision? What is it you're believing God for? Is there something you've prayed for secretly because you couldn't work up the courage to tell someone? I want to challenge you to believe that all things are possible.

Read 2 Corinthians 12 and Psalm 25. Remember to highlight the places that speak to you specifically today.



DAY 17:

Proper placement in life is critically important to our effectiveness and success. God is trying to overemphasize that you don't just go out in life anywhere you want to go, doing anything you want to do just because you feel like it. If you are a child of God, He has a plan for your life.

Read Deuteronomy 12. Take time to take notes as you go, and always put a month and year next to any notes you take or verses that minister to you.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 18:

You need to know that God is still speaking today and calling people to be a part of His kingdom's purpose. He speaks through church services and through preachers. He will speak through circumstances and through other people. And He always speaks through His Word. You've got to learn to listen and hear God's voice. That's how He puts dreams in you! He will speak to you.

Read Jeremiah chapter 1 again and 2 Timothy 2:15. Note the most meaningful parts.



DAY 19:

The last three days of the fast are upon us. I pray that this journey has held great meaning for you. Your life matters to God. You were His idea, and He loves you more than you could ever imagine. But there is another called Satan who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. His primary mode of operation is deception and distraction. And, like Peter walking on the water, his attacks can come at the times of your greatest success.

Read Luke 14 and allow God to speak to you through His Word today.



21 DAYS DEVOTIONAL

DAY 20:

When you fast, you are taking your relationship with God to another level. He will speak to you things He would not reveal in a casual relationship.

God wants to reveal who you are and who you can be when His Spirit is upon you! This fast has been a journey up that mountain to a place of revelation and deeper understanding. Press in. Ask your questions. Take time to listen to His voice and meditate on His Word.

Read Revelation 3 and 1 Corinthians 2. Is God speaking to you through these verses today?



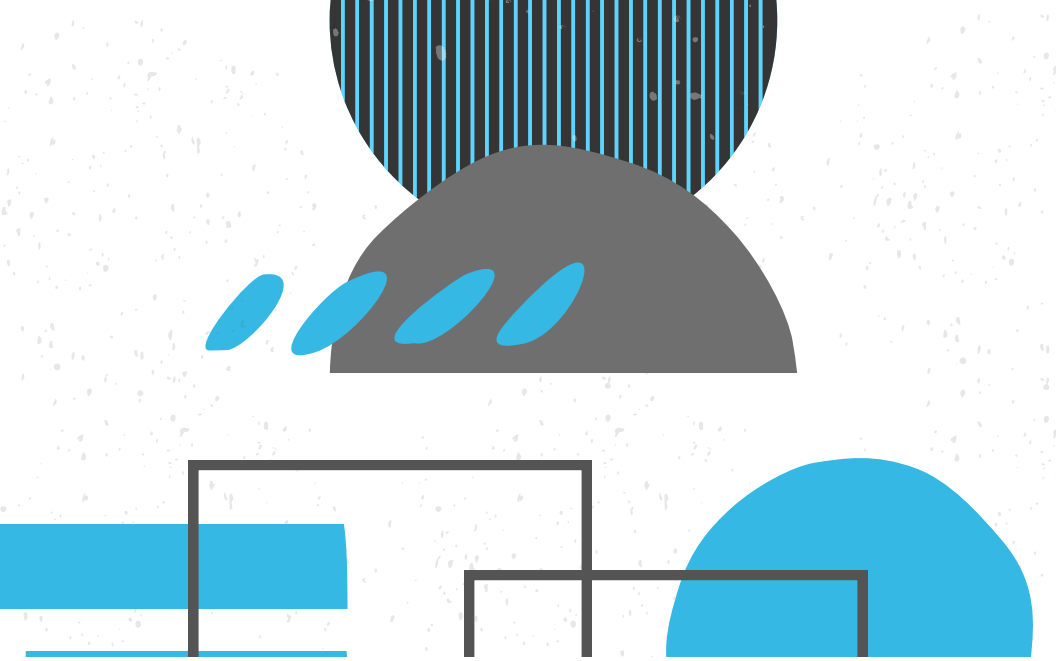
DAY 21:

Twenty-one days ago, we embarked on a journey with one goal: "Return to Me." We have talked about returning to Him and rending your heart and soul, bearing it all, and laying at the foot of the cross. In week two, we discussed the many obstacles and roadblocks the enemy will use to keep you from Jesus through distraction and deception. And in week three, we talked about returning to your purpose and finding your identity in Jesus—another returning to Him. Today, you celebrate the journey.

Take a moment right where you are to give adoration, worship, and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Read all of Matthew chapter 6 and Isaiah 61.





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