

2014 PRAYER AND FASTING



EVERY NATION
GREATER TORONTO AREA

"I keep asking that the God
of our Lord Jesus Christ, the
glorious Father, may give
you the Spirit of wisdom
and revelation, so that you
may know him better."

EPHESIANS 1:17



**KNOWING
GOD
BETTER**

We are calling on everyone to join our prayer and fasting. This is the time of year when we corporately consecrate ourselves, our families, and ministries to God. Believe God for victories and breakthroughs in every area of your life this year.

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PRAYER & FASTING

... "Consecrate yourselves,
for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things
among you."

JOSHUA 3:5

Throughout history, God has called on His people to humble themselves through fasting and prayer. Fasting is a spiritual weapon God uses to advance His kingdom, change the destiny of nations, spark revival, and bring victory in people's lives. There is something powerful that happens when we voluntarily humble ourselves, seek God's will, and agree with Him for His purposes to be fulfilled.

As a spiritual family, we begin each new year with a season of prayer and fasting. It is our way of humbling ourselves before God and consecrating to Him the upcoming year. It is also the time when we corporately come into agreement and believe together for breakthroughs in our personal lives, families, finances, and churches.

Over the years, as a result of this time of prayer, we have seen people receive healing, salvation, promotion, direction, family restoration, miraculous provision, and tremendous growth in their discipleship groups and churches. One of the highlights is always seeing and hearing testimonies of how God answers over and beyond what people ask.

As you begin your fast this year, believe in your heart, by faith, that this is your year of miracles and answered prayers.

WHY FAST?

Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly.
Summon the elders and all who live in the land to
the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to
the LORD. JOEL 1:14

When a man is willing to set
aside the legitimate appetites
of the body to concentrate
on the work of praying, he is
demonstrating that he means
business, that he is seeking
with all his heart, and will not
let God go unless He answers.

• ARTHUR WALLIS

1. Jesus fasted.

¹Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. MATTHEW 4:1,2

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. LUKE 4:14

Before He began His ministry, Jesus fasted forty days. He knew He was going to need spiritual strength to fulfill His purposes. Fasting makes us physically weak but spiritually strong and prepares us to do God's work.

2. Fasting is an act of humility and consecration.

... I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting. . . . PSALM 35:13

Humility results in the grace of God. When we humble ourselves in prayer, we have instant access to the heart of God. As we deny ourselves as an act of consecration, we are better able to exercise self-control. We can keep our emotions and desires under control.

3. Fasting helps us become sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

While 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." ACTS 13:2

When we deny ourselves of our natural cravings, our spiritual antennas become sharper. We become more sensitive to His voice as we divest ourselves of worldly distractions. We are better able to focus on God and submit to His will. This opens the door for the Holy Spirit into our lives.

4. Fasting brings revival.

²... in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. ³So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. DANIEL 9:2,3

Fasting helps us prevail in prayer and intercession. Daniel understood that Israel was headed for destruction. He also knew that in times like these, there is only one recourse—intercession through praying and fasting. Throughout human history, God has brought revival and delivered nations from destruction in response to prayer and fasting.

5. Fasting is healthy.

Fasting cleanses your digestive system from toxins. Doctors consider fasting a cure for certain allergies and diseases. By learning to deny ourselves and exercising discipline, fasting breaks unhealthy addictions in our lives.

PREPARING TO FAST

Fasting reduces the power of self so that the Holy Spirit can do a more intense work within us.

• BILL BRIGHT

"Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." ESTHER 4:16

1. Be in faith!

Prayerfully and thoughtfully fill out the prayer points page of this guide. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Be clear and specific about your faith goals in your personal life, family, finances, and church. These are what you will be believing God for during the fast and the entire year. Expect God to answer. Maintain a thankful heart throughout and after the fast.

2. Commit to a type of fast.

We encourage everyone to commit to a "water only" or "liquid fast" during this season of prayer and fasting. However, we understand that some are unable to do so because of certain circumstances, such as pregnancy, a physically demanding profession, and medical conditions. If you belong to this category, there are alternatives—you may choose to do a combination fast. You may do a liquid fast for three days and then a one-meal-a-day fast for the next four, for example, or any other combination according to your need or situation. Pray about the kind of fast you will undertake and commit to it. Do not decide on a day-to-day basis. Commit before the fast and be determined. Ask God for grace.

3. Plan your calendar.

Limit your physical and social activities during this period. You need to conserve physical energy and devote more time to prayer and reading the Bible.

4. Prepare spiritually.

More than anything, our annual fast is a time when we believe God for a fresh encounter with Him. Be prepared to have the Holy Spirit put His finger on an area in your life that needs to change. Repentance is the foundation of prayer and fasting. Be ready to repent and change, and be transformed. Surrender everything to Him. Be completely open.

5. Prepare physically.

Be smart as you enter into this fast. Do not go to a buffet restaurant on the eve of the fast, hoping to stock up on food in your body. The key is to gradually prepare your body. Start eating smaller portions and meals seven days before you begin your fast. Avoid food that is high in sugar and fat. Two days prior to the fast, eat raw fruit and vegetables only. Consult a physician if you need to.

DURING THE FAST

The record of the whole Bible indicates that prayer and fasting combined constitute the strongest weapon committed to God's believers.

• DR. MARY RUTH SWOPE

¹⁶"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that it will not be obvious to men 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." MATTHEW 6:16-18

1. Seek the Lord.

Commit to prayer and Bible reading the times you usually allocate for meals. Join at least one prayer meeting in your local church. There will be daily prayer meetings scheduled in every local church throughout the fast. Call the nearest church for their schedule. Be ready to respond when you hear from God.

This guide also has a devotional that we encourage you to go through during the fast.

2. Commit to change.

Whatever God tells you or puts His finger upon, apply it immediately. If you need to make restitution, immediately contact people you have broken relationships with. If there are habits that need to change, make the adjustment immediately. Ask your group leader to hold you accountable.

3. Practical tips

- Avoid medical and even natural herbal drugs. However, if you are under medication, these should only be withdrawn upon the advice of your doctor.
- Limit your physical activity and exercise. If you have a workout routine, adjust it accordingly. A daily two to five kilometer walk should be your maximum amount of exercise during an extended fast.
- Rest as much as you can.
- Maintain an attitude of prayer throughout the day. Intercede for your family, pastors, church, nation, our missionaries, world missions, etc.
- Drink plenty of clean water.
- As your body adjusts, be prepared for temporary bouts of physical weakness as well as mental annoyances like impatience, irritability, and anxiety.

BREAKING THE FAST

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. ACTS 14:23

If our fasting is not unto God, we have failed. Physical benefits, success in prayer, the enduring with power, spiritual insights—these must never replace God as the center of our fasting.

• RICHARD FOSTER

1. Reintroduce solid food gradually.

You should break your fast the same way you prepared for it. It will take your body just as many days you fasted to adjust to a normal diet. Begin eating gradually. Don't eat solid food immediately after your fast. Start with fruits, juices, and salad. Then, you can begin adding vegetables and boiled potato. Take it slowly from there. Eat small portions spread throughout the day.

2. Continue praying.

Don't let your prayer life end on the day you finish the fast. Build from the momentum you gained during the fast. Let it transform your prayer and devotional life. Carry the newfound passion with you throughout the year.

3. Be expectant.

Be in faith and believe God to answer your prayers soon! Don't give up, persevere in prayer even if you don't see the answers immediately. Make sure you keep the copy of your prayer points. You can check it at the end of the year and see how God has answered your prayers. It can be your thanksgiving list at the end of the year.

CONCLUSION

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us . . . EPHESIANS 3:20

Our annual prayer and fasting gives us the opportunity to realign our lives according to His will and consecrate the coming year to Him. As we humble ourselves corporately to Him in prayer, we can expect Him to move mightily in our midst. God's will is for all of us to experience breakthrough and victory in our lives. Be in faith for God to move miraculously in your life this year beyond what you can ask or imagine. You have a fresh mandate. Be ready to accomplish greater things for God this year!

JANUARY 2014
DEVOTIONAL

Knowing God Better

READ

¹⁵For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.** ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may KNOW what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

EPHESIANS 1: 15-23 ESV

This guide will be used as an outline for our 5 days of corporate fasting. The prayer guide at the end will help you as you join us in prayer and fasting.

The letters of Apostle Paul contain some of the most powerful prayers in the Bible. They give us a glimpse into Paul's prayer life - he is often in intercession for the churches and his prayer life is an inspiring model for how we can pray for one another. He and other New Testament church leaders wrote prayers we now call "Apostolic Prayers." Using these apostolic prayers in our own times of prayer helps develop our life in the Spirit, matures our walk of obedience, and grounds us in biblical doctrine. We encourage everyone to pray them daily.

Some of the notable "Apostolic Prayers" in the Bible include: Paul's prayer to receive the Spirit's power so that Jesus' presence would manifest in us, so we experience more of God's love (Ephesians 3: 16 - 19), Paul's prayer for God's love to abound in us (Philippians 1: 9 - 11), Paul's prayer to know God's will and to be fruitful in ministry (Colossians 1: 9 - 11), Paul's prayer to be made spiritually mature and walk in the fullness of our destiny in God (2 Thessalonians 1: 11 - 12), Paul's prayer that God's Word will increase in its influence (2 Thessalonians 3: 1 - 5), and the prayer in Acts for the impartation of boldness by releasing healing, signs and wonders (Acts 4: 29 - 31).

One of the greatest "Apostolic Prayers" of Paul is his prayer in Ephesians 1:15 -23. We will take the next five days to take a closer look at this important prayer of

thanksgiving. In the original Greek language Paul's prayer is a single sentence. Paul prays the church will gain fresh and deeper insight into God's powerful working and rich gifts in Christ. We believe as we begin to meditate on this passage and pray it back to God there will be this same release of insight and power in our lives and church to know God more.

REFLECT

- What are your thoughts after initially reading and meditating on Paul's Ephesians 1 prayer?

- What are you expecting from this season of consecration with prayer and fasting?

RESPOND

- Look at the prayer and fasting schedule and decide when and how you will fast.

PURPOSE OF CONSECRATION & THE DEVOTIONAL

God repeatedly tells His people throughout scripture to set themselves and their time apart. God's people are encouraged to consecrate themselves as a means of reaffirming God as their source of life and intentionally pursuing His heart. We have provided a daily devotional for the purpose of inspiration and greater unity during these days of consecration. Each devotional will include a section called READ with key scriptures for study and memorization. A second section of the devotional called REFLECT will provide a brief study as the heart of the devotional. Finally, we will conclude each day with a section called RESPOND, which will assist you in applying the revelation gained from the READ and REFLECT portions.



Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation

READ

Isaiah 11:1-5
Proverbs 4:7

1 Corinthians 3:18-20
Proverbs 19:8

1 Corinthians 2:6-12
John 16:13-15

James 3:17

If you noticed as you read above, when Paul prays for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation the word spirit was capitalized. Spirit is capitalized in Ephesians 1:17 because it is a name, referring to a person. Paul was praying for a greater impartation of the Holy Spirit and for the Holy Spirit's presence to increase our wisdom and revelation, or our wisdom and understanding. Scripture is clear that the Holy Spirit is the one who reveals Jesus to us and helps us grow in our knowledge of Him. Thus, if we want more wisdom and understanding to know God, what we really want is more of God's Spirit. More of God's Spirit equals more of God.

The beauty of this prayer is that we are praying in accordance with God's will, according to 1 Corinthians 2:6-12, and can thus pray in total faith, fully expecting to receive what we have asked. Even more than we want to know God, God wants us to know Him. God wants to reveal mighty things to us by His Spirit that are not naturally knowable. He wants us to seek a holy, heavenly wisdom so we can know, understand and experience things from His perspective.

REFLECT

- How has your own wisdom kept you from more fully receiving God's Spirit of wisdom and revelation?

- What stands out to you most about how scripture describes Heavenly wisdom?

- Why is it so important for us to seek the Spirit of wisdom?

- Why is revelation/understanding important to pair with wisdom?

RESPOND

- Repent for how being wise in your own eyes has kept you from more of God's wisdom.
- Ask the Lord to impart more of His Spirit, and thus the spirit of wisdom and revelation in your life.
- Ask the Lord to help you value and seek wisdom.

When you give God your first through fasting, prayer and giving at the beginning of the year, you set the course for the entire year.

• JENSEN FRANKLIN



To Know Him Better

READ

John 17:3

Matthew 7:21-23

Philippians 3:7-11

Jeremiah 29:12-13

John 14:20-21

Luke 10:21-22

Hosea 6:3, 6

It says in Ephesians 1:16-17, "I..." (the Apostle Paul) "do not cease to give thanks for you" (I did not stop) "making mention of you in my prayers" (here's the prayer) **"that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him."** He goes on to describe the Spirit of revelation. It's the eyes of our heart or our understanding being enlightened; that **you may know God better** or that you might experience God more by experiencing three things: (1) what is the hope to which he has called you (2) what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints (3) what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe. As our hearts are enlightened in these three areas we grow in intimacy with God and the knowledge of God.

As John 17:3 highlights, we do not have to wait to experience eternal life. Too often we long for life in Heaven, but we can experience eternal life today, right here on earth, when we choose to know Jesus, all day every day. When we think of eternal life we think of life without struggles or pain, life full of joy, peace, health and strength. We can experience these things to a greater degree here on earth when we focus on simply knowing God. It's great to want to use your time, talent and treasure for God's Kingdom, but truly God needs nothing from you or I. He wants our heart and He wants relationship with us. He wants us to know Him. Far more than you want to know God, God wants to be known by you.

REFLECT

What does it mean to know God better?

Why is it significant that disciples worked mighty miracles, but were cast out of heaven for not knowing Jesus?

Why is knowing God better so important?

What do you think it would look like for you personally to know God better?

Fasting confirms our utter dependence upon God by finding in Him a source of sustenance beyond food.

• DALLAS WILLIARD

RESPOND

- Thank God that He wants you to know Him even more than you want to know Him.
- Ask the Lord to show you specific ways you can get to know Him better.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into a greater knowledge of God.



God's Calling in our Lives

READ

1 Peter 2:9
Romans 11:29

Isaiah 43:1-4
Mark 12:28-31

Hebrews 9:14-15
Colossians 1:27

1 John 3:1

Paul prays we would know the hope of our calling because even knowing we have a great calling in Christ should produce great hope in us. While we each have a unique and individual calling in Christ, I believe Paul was speaking more specifically to the hope and calling we all share in Christ. I am very excited about the unique things God has called me to personally, but none of those things matter or are achievable apart from the highest calling of simply knowing and loving God. Our daily and eternal hope cannot rest in our dreams or destiny, but rather in knowing God. Our "calling" has no hope apart from Him. So, I pray you would find a new depth of hope in the highest calling and greatest commandment of loving God and loving people.

REFLECT

- Why is it important to focus on the greatest commandment as our greatest calling?

- Of the scriptures provided, which speaks to you most about what God has called you to?

- How does knowing what God has called you to give you great and lasting hope?

RESPOND

- Repent (if necessary) for focusing too much on your personal calling and not enough on the highest calling.
- Ask the Lord to help you find great hope in pursuing the highest calling of knowing and loving Him.

In Shansi I found Chinese Christians who were accustomed to spend time in fasting and prayer. They recognized that this fasting, which so many dislike, which requires faith in God, since it makes one feel weak and poorly, is really a Divinely appointed means of grace. Perhaps the greatest hindrance to our work is our own imagined strength; and in fasting we learn what poor, weak creatures we are - dependent on a meal of meat for the little strength which we are so apt to lean upon.

• HUDSON TAYLOR



Understanding Who We are as God's Inheritance

READ

Exodus 19:4-6
Exodus 34:14

Psalms 16:5-6
Lamentations 3:22-25

Psalms 33:12
Deuteronomy 7:6

1 Peter 1:3-5
Hebrews 9:16-22

Matthew 19:28-30

Before someone dies their final wishes are often written down and described as their "Last Will and Testament." This document details their wishes and how their belongings are to be distributed to their loved ones. The New Testament can be seen as Jesus' "last will and testament." The New Testament details for us Jesus' wishes for us after His time here on earth, all we have been given as a result of His death, and how we go about laying claim to that inheritance. An inheritance is a great blessing because those are gifts you yourself did not earn and have no right to. However, the difficult thing about an inheritance is that it can only be claimed after a death. Jesus had to die and shed His blood in order for us to have access to our inheritance, things we have no right to on our own. Jesus' death also opened the door for God to claim us as His inheritance. We belong to God! We are His!

REFLECT

- What does it mean that we are God's inheritance and He is ours?

- How should having God as your inheritance produce great joy in you?

- Why should knowing God has chosen you as His inheritance remind you of your great worth and purpose?

Bear up the hands that hang down, by faith and prayer; support the tottering knees. Have you any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace and persevere therein, and mercy will come down

• JOHN WESLEY

RESPOND

- Ask the Lord to show you more fully what it means to be His inheritance.
- Ask the Lord to teach you how to live with the realization that He is your inheritance.
- Write out how life might look differently for you as you live more in view of these truths.



Experiencing God's Power in Our Lives

READ

Romans 8:9-11

John 14:12-14

Acts 1:8

Luke 10:17-20

1 Cor. 2:4-5

Philippians 3:10-11

Philippians 2:13

Ephesians 3:16-20

1 Corinthians 4:20

Sometimes with the busyness of life and our seeming familiarity with the gospel we can forget about the exceeding greatness of God's power. To even say that God's power and the power He has shown towards us is exceedingly great is a huge understatement. However, God wants us to more fully know and experience His power. In order to experience His power towards us, for us and in us we must first attempt to understand the reality of His power. To do this let's look at Moses' request of God. Moses asked to see God's glory and God answered by providing His Name, "I AM that I AM." Just like God's glory, God's power is expressed and explained in His Name, I AM. If you need wisdom, healing, provision, favor, faith, peace, hope, joy, life, etc there is power available to you for all of those things because HE IS. He is all that we need. So, the more we know Him, the more we experience His power.

REFLECT

- How have you seen God's great power toward you?

- What areas do you need more faith in God's power for your life?

- What do you think keeps you from accessing more of God's power in your life?

RESPOND

- Repent for times you have forgotten or diminished in your mind the greatness of God's power.
- Ask the Lord to help you know Him more fully so you can experience and understand His power to a greater degree.
- Thank God for the many ways you have witnessed His power in your life and for how He wants to reveal more of Himself to you.

Our greatest victories
are won on our knees
and with empty
stomachs.

• JULIO C. RUIBAL

This year, I am believing God for . . .

Personal Faith Goals

Spiritual Revival • Physical Healing • Prosperity and Abundance • Rich Generosity

My Family

Restoration of Relationships • Household Salvation

My School/Career

Excellence • Promotion

My Ministry

Victory Group Growth • Salvation of Colleagues, Classmates, Bosses, Employees

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." MATTHEW 18:19

PRAYER PARTNER

Jesus is our greatest role model for how to live a life of prayer - often withdrawing in private to converse with his Father, being open in his dependency of the Father in his public ministry and frequently praying as death drew near. He also taught his disciples how to pray with the great model prayer that we know today as the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

We encourage you to use The Lord's Prayer as a daily guide for your prayer as we go through this week and this year.

1. PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

Our Father

- Pray for greater revelation of God (Eph 1:17-19)
- Pray for growth in God's fatherly love

Your Name

- Pray for courage, wisdom & power to be an effective witness
- Pray for people to repent & believe the Gospel

2. DESTINY AND AUTHORITY

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Your Kingdom

- Pray for Bethel: church planting, the harvest, Ps. Rice, Ps. James, church leaders, the Ministry Team, Life Groups
- Pray for Every Nation Ministries, campus ministries, Ten Days Missions, and other outreaches
- Pray for civil leaders

Your Will

- Pray for wisdom to apply Scripture in every day life
- Pray for leading of the Spirit in every day life

3. PROVISION

"Give us this day our daily bread..."

Daily Bread

- Pray for the church's provision, missions, and Bethel Build
- Pray for your own provision & ability to be generous

4. RELATIONSHIPS

"...and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Forgive Us

- Search your heart, examine your life, repent and ask for your own forgiveness
- Consider your many relationships and forgive others

5. SPIRITUAL WARFARE

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Temptation & Evil

- Pray for your own sanctification
- Pray for your own spiritual strength and protection
- Pray for the same for others

6. PRIORITIES

"For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory."

Your Glory

- Pray for a greater revelation of the glory to come
- Pray for God to be glorified through you and the church

7. FAITH

"AMEN. Let it be so."

SCHEDULE

1

Fasting Options

- ☐ Water fast
- ☐ Liquid fast
- ☐ Eat one meal only
- ☐ Others:

Prayer meeting to attend:

- ☐ 6am
- ☐ 12nn
- ☐ 7pm

2

Fasting Options

- ☐ Water fast
- ☐ Liquid fast
- ☐ Eat one meal only
- ☐ Others:

Prayer meeting to attend:

- ☐ 6am
- ☐ 12nn
- ☐ 7pm

3

Fasting Options

- ☐ Water fast
- ☐ Liquid fast
- ☐ Eat one meal only
- ☐ Others:

Prayer meeting to attend:

- ☐ 6am
- ☐ 12nn
- ☐ 7pm

4

Fasting Options

- ☐ Water fast
- ☐ Liquid fast
- ☐ Eat one meal only
- ☐ Others:

Prayer meeting to attend:

- ☐ 6am
- ☐ 12nn
- ☐ 7pm

5

Fasting Options

- ☐ Water fast
- ☐ Liquid fast
- ☐ Eat one meal only
- ☐ Others:

Prayer meeting to attend:

- ☐ 6am
- ☐ 12nn
- ☐ 7pm

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