

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 and Fasting

... *“Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders 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?

Consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of 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.

¹*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

²*And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.*

MATTHEW 4:1,2

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.

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 wore sackcloth; I afflicted myself with fasting; I prayed with head bowed on my chest.

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 worshipping 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.

. . . ²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. ³Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and 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

“Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”

ESTHER 4:16

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

~ BILL BRIGHT

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 a few days and then a one-meal-a-day fast for the other days, 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

¹⁶“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

MATTHEW 6:16-18

“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

1. Seek the Lord.

Commit to prayer and Bible reading the times you usually allocate for meals. Join the regular prayer meetings. 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

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

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 far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power 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!

Preparation for the Fast

What does it mean to Honor God?

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

REVELATION 4:11

READ

Isaiah 43:1-7 • Revelation 4:9-11 • Matthew 15:1-9 • Psalm 86:10-12

What is the purpose of life? Why do we exist? God was pleased to create us for His own glory and honor. If we are called by His name, we are to live to give Him honor and glory.

What does it mean to honor God? The word “honor” (*doxa* in Greek) originally means value, esteem of the highest degree, dignity. When we give honor to God, we are giving Him the precious value and reverence that He deserves. It should reflect in everything we do and say.

It is not enough to merely honor God outwardly. God desires honor that comes from our hearts. The Lord said, through the prophet Isaiah, that some people honor God with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him (Isaiah 29:13). To honor God means to worship Him with all of our hearts, to acknowledge His absolute power and authority, to surrender our lives completely to Him, and to pledge our total allegiance to His command and will. When we honor other persons, we speak highly of their achievements, but when we honor God, it is not just for what He has done—it is for who He is.

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God,
and to enjoy him forever.”

~Westminster Catechism

REFLECT

Based on Matthew 15:1-9, why did Jesus say that the religious leaders failed to honor God? How do you think a person's heart can be far from or close to God?

In Psalm 86:10-12, how did the Psalmist honor God? What do you think it means to honor God? How can you give God the value, esteem, and reverence due Him?

RESPOND

What do you believe is your purpose in life? Why did God make you, and what did He make you for?

Would you say that your life is giving honor, glory, and pleasure to God? How can you honor God in your life every day?

1 DAY

Honor God's Name

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain."

DEUTERONOMY 5:11

READ

Exodus 20:24 • Malachi 3:16 • Matthew 5:33-37
Ephesians 4:15,25,29 • Colossians 3:8,9; 4:6

God commanded His people not to take His name in vain. Misusing God's name expresses disrespect for Him because the name of the Lord represents the person and nature of God. Instead, as God's people, we are exhorted to honor and respect Him through our every word. As Jesus taught His disciples to pray, we are to hallow the name of the Father (Matthew 6:9). That means we are to give God the highest and greatest honor in our lives.

As God's children, we are forbidden from misusing, mistreating, and abusing God's name and character. This includes swearing falsely (Matthew 5:33-37). This sin involves lying but using God's name in trying to validate what one is claiming to be true. All of our conversation should be honest and not hypocritical. This commandment should affect what is in our hearts, as well as how we behave and how we speak.

Here is David's prayer about honoring God through his words and life:

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

~PSALM 19:14

REFLECT

What are God's promises for those who honor His name?

Malachi 3:16

Exodus 20:24

Based on the following verses, how are we to honor God with our words and speech?

Ephesians 4:15,25,29

Colossians 3:8,9; 4:6

RESPOND

Make an honest assessment of the words that come out of your mouth. Repent of any negative, pessimistic, deceptive, or discouraging words or curses you may have spoken. Ask the Lord to give you the grace to speak words that will be truthful, edifying, and gracious so that your words will honor God.

How can you speak the truth in love? What's one thing you should stop doing and one thing you should start doing to honor God with your words and speech?

Honor God with our Worship

*“Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me, and to
the blameless I will show my salvation.”*

PSALM 50:23 (NIV 1984)

DAY

2

READ

Psalm 96 • Psalm 116:16-18 • John 4:23,24

1 Timothy 1:17 • Hebrews 10:19-23

Psalm 50 is a psalm written by Asaph, one of David's chief musicians. God declares that the man or woman who offers thanksgiving and praise brings honor and glory to Him.

The English word “worship” comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word, *weorthscipe* (i.e., worth ship). It is the recognition of and a response to the worth of God. When we value the worth of people, we usually do something to demonstrate their worth. Psalm 96:8 says, *Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. Those who value the LORD will bring praise offerings to Him.*

Why do we worship? God is looking for true worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and truth. God is Spirit. It means He is present everywhere and He can be worshiped anywhere, at any time, by His people. He desires to reveal Himself to us and through us.

He is all-powerful, all-knowing, and always in control. Our situations and capacities are limited, but God is limitless. As we worship the LORD, we draw near to God, and He draws near to us (James 4:8) and we, consequently, respond to His presence. We express our worship and love for Him with all humility, gratitude, and devotion.

God is looking for true
worshipers who will
worship Him in spirit
and truth.

REFLECT

What are some things that have happened in the last twelve months that you can thank God for? How have the situations you've faced taught you to worship God more, in spite of the bad and in gratitude for the good?

What can you learn about worship from Psalm 96?

RESPOND

Do you have a time and place for daily worship, prayer, and Bible reading?
How can you carve out time to grow in your relationship with God every day?

What are some things you have to say no to in order to prioritize God in your life? (e.g. distractions on social media, arriving late for a prayer meeting or worship service, being conscious of what people may think of you during a time of worship)

DAY 3

Honor God with our Wealth

⁹*Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
¹⁰then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

PROVERBS 3:9,10

READ

Proverbs 3:9,10 • 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Psalm 24:1 • Malachi 3:8-12

Everything we have comes from God and, therefore, everything belongs to Him. Every talent, skill, knowledge, and resource we have is His gift to us. In fact, the earth is His—the world and everyone in it. This brings us to the issue of wealth and what to do with it. How can we honor God with our wealth? How do we use it in such a way that our wealth can serve God's purposes on earth?

Firstfruits was a Jewish feast held in the early spring at the beginning of the grain harvest. It was a time of thanksgiving for God's provision. Just as the offering of firstfruits was an occasion of thanksgiving, so we give to God with glad and grateful hearts. Honoring God with our wealth is acknowledging Him as our source, and therefore we give back to Him the first—and the best—of what He has given us.

When we honor God with our wealth, we demonstrate that God, and not our possessions, has the first place in our lives, and our resources belong to Him. We are only managers or stewards of God's resources. Giving our tithes and offerings to God helps us conquer greed and properly manage God's resources, enables us to bless others, and positions us to receive God's promised blessings.

God, not our possessions,
has the first place in our
lives, and our resources
belong to Him.

REFLECT

What can you learn about God from the following passages?

1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Psalm 24:1

What are the promises in God's Word for those who honor the Lord with their wealth?

Proverbs 3:9,10

Malachi 3:8-12

RESPOND

Are you honoring God with your wealth? How can you put Him first in your budget and before your financial needs this year?

What are you believing God for in terms of wealth this year? How can you use your wealth to bless others and lead them to Him?

DAY

4

Honor God with our Bodies

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19, 20

READ

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 • 1 Corinthians 10:31 • 2 Timothy 2:20-22

Usually, New Year's resolutions include something about eating right and exercising—maybe because of the abundance of holiday food or it's a good way to start the year. Whatever the reason may be, physical health is an important aspect of honoring God because if our bodies are not healthy, we will be stifled in glorifying God.

In fact, the Apostle Paul tells us why we need to take care of our bodies. First, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Yes, the very Spirit of God lives in every believer.

Second, our bodies belong to God. These are gifts from God and we have a responsibility to take care of what we've been given and keep it healthy.

**Your body is the temple of
the Holy Spirit.**

Third, we can honor God with our bodies. We are to flee from sexual immorality and glorify God with our lives.

Honoring God with our bodies is not merely for the purpose of losing weight, looking nicer, or living longer. We choose to honor God with our bodies because God created us, Jesus purchased us with His blood, and now the Holy Spirit lives in us.

REFLECT

According to 2 Timothy 2:20-22, what kinds of vessels are there? Which one do you think God wants you to be? What does a vessel for honorable use look like? What is it for?

As a believer, what are some truths you can learn from 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 about your body and how you ought to live?

RESPOND

What do you need to flee or turn away from so that you may honor God with your body? Do you believe God can give you the grace and strength to overcome sin and temptation?

What kind of life do you think honors God? How can you live for His glory and purpose every day of your life?

Honor God with our Service

DAY

5

*¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:
¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. . . .*

1 PETER 4:10,11

READ

1 Peter 4:7-11 • 1 Samuel 12:24 • Joshua 22:1-5
Joshua 24:15 • Psalm 100:1, 2

It is said that the Romans minted a coin that had a picture of an ox on both sides. On one side, the ox stood by an altar with the inscription: “for sacrifice”; on the other side, the ox was yoked to a plough with the inscription: “for service.” The coin was a reminder that Rome gave every citizen the unique privilege to give themselves either for sacrifice or for service.

As Christians, we have the privilege of being used by God every single day of our lives by serving one another in a way that honors God.

We do this by first using the gifts God has given us by His grace. Like a gifted piano player who brings joy to the audience by playing, every time we use God's gift to serve one another, people are edified and God is glorified.

We honor God as we use
the strength He has given
us to serve others.

We also honor God as we use the strength He has given us to serve others. If we rely just on our own power and strength, we will not serve others. How often have we said, “I'll serve Him as long as He gives me strength”? The Bible says, “Your days shall equal your strength.” God will give you the strength to serve Him by serving others and, in so doing, God will be praised and glorified.

REFLECT

What were the Apostle Peter's instructions in 1 Peter 4:7-11?

How are we to serve God?

1 Samuel 12:24

Joshua 22:1-5

Psalms 100:2

RESPOND

Do you rely on your own strength to accomplish things? How can you rely on the strength God has given you to do the tasks He has called you to do?

What gifts do you have that you can use to serve God and others? How can you serve a family member, classmate, colleague, friend, or neighbor this week?

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 • Wisdom

MY MINISTRY

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

PRAYER PARTNER

“Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.”

MATTHEW 18:19

SCHEDULE

1 Fasting Options

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

Prayer meeting to attend:

2 Fasting Options

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

Prayer meeting to attend:

3 Fasting Options

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

Prayer meeting to attend:

4 Fasting Options

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

Prayer meeting to attend:

5 Fasting Options

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

Prayer meeting to attend:
