



HIGHER EXPECTATIONS
COMMUNITY CHURCH

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

As we start a new year, we want to set our spiritual direction upward to God. As we start the year, we will be practicing two spiritual disciplines together, prayer and fasting.

During this time, we will fast from 6:00AM to 6:00PM each day abstaining from sweets and meats. This is a partial fast, during this time we want to reflect on God's grace and find times to be with God alone.

This can be done by waking up early and during quiet time before everyone else in the house is up, or you can take your lunch break at work and spend time alone with God in the park or your office.

Additionally, we suggest reading through the Gospel of John and journaling what the Lord is teaching you.

We will gather each Sunday at 6pm starting January 7, 2024, for a time of corporate prayer.

Corporate Prayer Sunday Evenings @ 6:00PM

January 7, 2024

January 14, 2024

January 21, 2024

January 28, 2024

We want to encourage you to add fasting to your prayer time as you seek the Lord's guidance for your life and our church. Please see more information on fasting below.

Fasting Times:

January 8, 2024 - January 28, 2024

Fasting Basics

SIMPLY STATED, BIBLICAL FASTING IS REFRAINING FROM FOOD FOR A SPIRITUAL PURPOSE.

According to the Bible, there are three duties of every Christian: give, pray, and fast.

Biblical fasting takes a lot of discipline and strength—strength which you can only receive from God. Your private discipline will bring you rewards in Heaven, says Matthew 6. 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.

Why should I fast?

Do you desire a deeper, more intimate and powerful relationship with the Lord?

Do you need the tender touch of God in your life?

Is there a dream inside you that only He can make possible?

Are you in need of a fresh encounter?

Are you ready to have heightened sensitivity to the desires of God?

Do you need to break away from sins that have been holding you hostage?

Is there a friend or loved one that needs Salvation?

Do you desire to know God's will for your life?

Are you in need of healing or a miracle?

BIBLICAL FASTING FOCUS

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

ROMANS 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service."

MATTHEW 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

ISAIAH 58:6

"[Is] not this the fast that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

We encourage you to seek the Lord in prayer and let your decisions about your biblical fasting come from Him. Ask the Lord to show you areas to target during your time of fasting and prayer. We believe that, as we pray and seek God and give Him our best at the first of the year, He will bless our ENTIRE year (Matthew 6:33)!

Fasting Types

There are several types of fasting. The one you choose is between you and God. He will honor your best sacrifice.

Full Fast

Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

The Daniel Fast

Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread. Drink water and juice. Eat fruits and vegetables.

3-Day Fast

This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Partial Fast

A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sunup to sundown. You can select from three types of fasting — a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Scripture References for Fasting:

Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-15, Luke 18:9-14

Relation to Prayer and Reading of the Word:

1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18, Nehemiah 1:4, Daniel 9:3, 20, Joel 2:12, Luke 2:37, Acts 10:30, Acts 13:2

Corporate Fasting:

1 Samuel 7:5-6, Ezra 8:21-23, Nehemiah 9:1-3, Joel 2:15-16, Jonah 3:5-10, Acts 27:33-37

Remember that it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8). May God greatly bless you as you fast!

Fasting Tips

WHETHER YOU ARE BEGINNING A PRIVATE FAST, OR FASTING CORPORATELY AS WE DO EACH YEAR AT THE HEC, I BELIEVE YOU WILL FIND THESE TIPS HELPFUL.

-Pastor Bryant Lee

How to Begin

Start with a clear goal. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Pray daily and read the Bible.

Preparing Spiritually

Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that try to hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Deciding What to Fast

The type of fasting you choose is up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may desire to fast like Daniel, who abstained from sweets and meats,

and the only liquid he drank was water. Remember to replace that time with prayer and Bible study.

Deciding How Long

You may fast as long as you like. Most can easily fast from one to three days, but you may feel the grace to go longer, even as much as 21 to 40 days. Use wisdom and pray for guidance. Beginners are advised to start slow.

What to Expect

When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to praise and worship. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face.

How to End

Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.