

twenty-one days of

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and **FASTING**

## Twenty-One Days of Prayer and Fasting — January 11-31, 2021

21 Days of Prayer & Fasting is a time when we intentionally seek God every day for three weeks in prayer as we trust in Him to move in powerful ways.

*Our soul is stuffed with small things, and there is no room for the great. If we are full of what the world offers, then perhaps a fast might express, or even increase, our soul's appetite for God. —John Piper*

The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God. Biblical fasting is a willing abstinence from food for a set period of time. The intent is not to simply be hungry, but to focus our body, mind and soul on God. From the Old Testament through the life of Jesus and into thousands of years of Church history, fasting has been considered a core practice for all those who are Christ-followers across the globe.

Today, we live in a culture of excess. We overconsume food, entertainment and luxury while addiction and brokenness runs rampant. For so many of us, the desires of our body have come to hold power over us. In the battle with our “flesh,” we have become its slave, not its master. Fasting is the first step towards freedom from this bondage as we give the Holy Spirit access and space to change and shape our desires and habits.

### **4 Ways to Fast**

#### **1. Complete Fast** (we recommend: one – two days a week)

In this type of fast, you abstain from food for 2-3 meals a day while drinking only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option (often, people will skip breakfast and lunch and then break their fast by eating dinner). There is not a wrong way to do this fast. The heart of this practice is simply to make a conscious decision to abstain from food for whatever number of meals you choose.

#### **2. Selective Fast** (we recommend: the entire 21 days)

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the *Daniel Fast*, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food. Based on dietary restrictions and individual needs, the selective fast may be a better option than the complete fast.

#### **3. Partial or Intermittent Fast** (we recommend: 2-3 days a week)

This fast is sometimes called the *Jewish Fast* and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00am to 3:00pm, or skipping breakfast and lunch each day.

#### **4. Soul Fast** (we recommend: the entire 21 days)

If you have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, there are other ways to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. You might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the “fast” and use that time to pray or serve.

*A biblical fast can be defined as simply abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. It was encouraged and expected by Jesus that believers would fast (Matt. 6:17-18, Matt. 9:15). Many abstain from food, television and other forms of entertainment during this time and spend that time drawing closer to God instead. What makes this time of fasting rich is by using the time to pray, read the Bible and worship God. Simply said – if fasting is not coupled with prayer and Bible reading, it’s simply a diet. – Bill Bright*

#### **17 Ways to Experience & Maintain Personal Revival**

- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unconfessed sin in your life.
- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended and forgive all who have hurt you. Make restitution where God leads.
- Examine your motives in every word and deed. Ask the Lord to search and cleanse your heart daily.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your walk against complacency and mediocrity.
- Praise and give thanks to God continually in all ways on all days, regardless of your circumstances.
- Refuse to obey your carnal (worldly) nature (Galatians 5:16-17).
- Surrender your life to Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Develop utter dependence on Him with total submission and humility.
- Study the attributes of God.
- Hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matthew 5:6).
- Love God with all of your heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).
- Appropriate the continual fullness and control of the Holy Spirit by faith on the basis of God’s command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14-15).
- Daily read, study, meditate on, and memorize God’s holy, inspired, inerrant Word (Colossians 3:16).
- Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- Fast and pray one 24-hour period each week.
- Seek to share Christ daily as a way of life.
- Determine to live a holy, godly life of obedience and faith.
- Start or join a home or church Bible study group that emphasizes revival and a holy life.

## **Prayer and Fasting Schedule:**

*“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” - Joel 2:12 (ESV)*

### **WEEK 1: RETURN TO OUR FOCUS ON JESUS (January 11-17)**

Monday: Worshipping Him – John 4:23

Tuesday: Surrendered to Him – Romans 12:1

Wednesday: Dependence on Him – Zechariah 4:6

Thursday: Committed to Him – Proverbs 3:6

Friday: Obeying Him – 1 John 5:3

Saturday: Experiencing Him – 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

### **WEEK 2: RETURN TO GOD’S WORK IN ME (January 18-24)**

Monday: Freedom from Bondage – Galatians 5:1

Tuesday: Healing from Disease – Isaiah 53:5

Wednesday: Vision for My Life – Habakkuk 2:2-3

Thursday: Blessing over Trouble – Philippians 4:19

Friday: Victory over the Enemy – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Saturday: Miracles for the Impossible – Matthew 19:26

### **WEEK 3: RETURN TO OUR MISSION TOGETHER (January 25-31)**

Monday: Revival in Our Nation – 2 Chronicles 7:14

Tuesday: Building of Our Church – Matthew 16:18

Wednesday: Fighting for Our Families – Nehemiah 4:14

Thursday: Reaching Our Sphere of Influence – Acts 1:8

Friday: Salvation for Our Generation – 2 Peter 3:9

Saturday: More Workers for the Kingdom- Matthew 9:37-38

## **Sources:**

John Piper, *Desiring God*

Church of the Highlands Prayer and Fasting Resources

Bill Bright, *Fasting and Prayer Guide*

Summit Church Fasting and Prayer Guide