

Victory Worship Center



Daniel Fast Guide

We are so glad you have decided to participate in an extended time of prayer, fasting and personal devotion. There really is no better way to reset our spiritual compass and bring about refreshing in every area of our lives than through prayer and fasting.

Fasting

**Important Note: Fasting requires reasonable precautions. If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast, especially if you are taking any medication, have a chronic condition, or are pregnant or nursing a baby.*

As you prepare to fast, it is important to choose a fasting plan that works for you. While this section provides some general information about different types of fasts, as well as some suggestions on how to create your own fasting plan, it is important to mention that there is nothing more inherently spiritual about one type of fast as opposed to another.

These are simply guidelines and suggestions on different things you can do. Do not let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. Keep the main thing the main thing, which is drawing closer to God. Remember, this is a time to disconnect enough from your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God. Here are a few tips to keep in mind before getting started:

The Daniel Fast

The Daniel fast is a great model to follow and one that is extremely effective for spiritual focus, bodily discipline, and purification of the body and soul. It is probably one of the most commonly referred-to fasts; however, within the Daniel fast there is room for broad interpretation. In the book of Daniel we find two different times where the prophet Daniel fasted.

Daniel 1 states that he only ate vegetables and water, and in Daniel 10, while the passage does not give a specific list of foods that Daniel ate, it does state that he ate no rich (or choice) foods, as well as no meat or wine. So based on these two verses, we can see that either of these, or combinations of the two, constitute a Daniel fast.

Again, it is important to mention that there is nothing inherently spiritual about one type of fast as opposed to another. The foundation of the Daniel fast is fruits and vegetables. Some starchy vegetables and dairy could be included, but that depends on the individual. Your goal should be to seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. Just remember: find your personal Fast Zone.

The Daniel Fast – Victory Worship Center Church

“But Daniel purposed in his heart...” (Daniel 1:8)

7-STEPS FOR THE DANIEL FAST

1) Be Specific

Daniel was not vague in his objection to the Babylonian diet. He defined the problem immediately.

- a. The king’s food was against Old Testament dietary laws
- b. Daniel and his friends had vowed against wine
- c. The king’s food had been offered up to idols/demons

2) Fast as a Spiritual Commitment

The Daniel fast involves a spiritual commitment to God. “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself” (Daniel 1:8)

3) Reflect Inner Desire By Outer Discipline

Many people have a desire for better health, but they cannot discipline themselves to avoid unhealthy food choices. The physical health you seek from God may be more than an answer to prayer. Your physical health may be linked to any of the following factors:

- a. Your food choices
- b. The level of your spiritual commitment as reflected in constant prayer during the fast.
- c. Your time commitment. If you determine to fast for a certain time, keep it. For example, if you determine to fast for 10 days, don’t stop on Day 9 or if you determine to fast for 21 days, don’t stop on Day 20.
- d. Your testimony commitment. Your fast is a statement of faith to God that you want Him to heal your body.

Faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast.

4) Pray to Perceive Sin’s Role in Poor Health

Reference James 5:13-20

- Sin is sometimes related to the cause of sickness
- Lack of health/healing may be the result of spiritual rebellion
- Lack of health/healing may be due to sin of wrong intake, i.e. drugs, pornography, etc.
- Repentance is linked to health according to James
- Elders have a role in healing both spiritual and physical health
- Sick people must desire to be well
- The anointing oil could mean:
 - o Medicine for healing
 - o Symbolic of the Holy Spirit, or
 - o It could be baptism
- Prayer alone may not gain healing, faith is the major factor
- In Greek there are several words for “sick”. James uses “Kanino”, which not only includes disease, but also means weak or weary.
- Attitude is important. James said, “Are there any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.”

5) Fast as a Statement of Faith to Others

Daniel was making a statement of faith when he asked for only vegetables to eat and water to drink, then dared the

overseer to compare the appearance of the sons of Israel with the young men who ate the king’s food.

6) Learn the Effects of the Food You Eat

Why are some foods good for us, and other foods not? What does certain food do to your body? If we really knew, there would likely be some things we would never eat again.

7) Yield All Results to God

Daniel said, “As you see fit, deal with your servants” (Daniel 1:13).

Day 1: Return to Me

“Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” – Joel 2:12 NIV

Throughout the Old Testament, you find numerous models and examples of fasting. Just reading those examples, one could assume that fasting is for the purpose of gaining God’s forgiveness. Such was the case in this Scripture from Joel. God called them to repentance that was demonstrated through fasting, mourning, & weeping.

Although such a fast in the Old Testament is seen time & time again, under the New Covenant every one of our sins was paid for and atoned for through the finished work of Christ on the cross! Every wrong we’ve ever done, every sin we’ll ever commit, had been forgiven; when we accept Christ, we live in the New Covenant of grace & forgiveness.

First Thessalonians 5:9 tells us that, “God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (NIV). So then, why do we devote ourselves to fasting & prayer?

As we walk with God, there are times we can feel far from Him or disconnected. Even though we’ve been born again & walk in grace and forgiveness, Joel’s words resonate deep within us. There are times we realize that, even though we have chosen to follow Christ, the flame of our love for Him has begun to grow cold. We’ve lost the fire of devotion that used to burn so strong within me.

Times of fasting aren’t just about denying your flesh. It’s about pressing in to Christ & seeking after His face. These next twenty-one days can result in a new richness, a rewarding connection with the Father. No matter where you are in your walk with Jesus, you can always take a step closer to Jesus.

Bible Reading Plan: Psalms 1-2

Prayer Focus: As we begin this time of prayer & fasting, let’s turn our hearts toward God. Make a commitment to seek Him daily. Pray that your love for Christ will be increased and your passion for Him will be reignited over the next twenty-one days.

Day 2: HIS Voice

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” – John 10:27

John 10:27 provides us a promise that we can hear & know God's voice. He is speaking. God never stops communicating to us, but sometimes with all the hustle & bustle of our daily lives, we stop being able to hear Him clearly. Between the cell calls, text messages, e-mails, Facebook messages, Tweets, advertisements, and all the other things that bombard us & require our focus, it's easy to let the white noise all around us bombard us and drown out the voice that's most important – our Father's. Although God never stopped speaking, we begin to feel confused & disconnected.

During this season of fasting & prayer, we become intentional about drowning out all the competing distractions & giving our focus and attention to seeking God, and becoming keenly aware of His voice. When we seek His voice, we have His promise that we will hear Him & know Him. If you want to tune out the white noise & hear God's voice, you have to come to Him first & foremost with a heart willing to listen & obey what He says (Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 66:2). When you begin to seek Him you will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13).

The more we practice being in His presence, the clearer and more recognizable His voice becomes. It's no different than in our natural relationships, where you begin to pick up the mannerisms of your friends or can complete their sentences. Spending time with God connects you with His heart & acquaints you with His voice.

Bible Reading: Luke 1

Prayer Focus: In this time of fasting, what is your mind tuned to? What distractions do you need to remove so that you can focus on God? Prepare your heart to hear the voice of God, and ask Him to help you remove distractions that keep you from focusing on Him & hearing His voice clearly.

Day 3: Living Sacrifice

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.” – Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Throughout the New Testament, there are several metaphors of what the Christian life looks like. Whether it's crucifying your flesh (Galatians 5:24), carrying your cross (Luke 9:23), running a race (Hebrews 12:1), or becoming a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1), they all indicate an element

of sacrifice and self-denial. What's obvious from these various comparisons is that you cannot live a life dedicated as a Christ-follower consumed with your flesh.

With the exception of running a race, each of these comparisons has a central theme – as a Christ-follower, you're a dead man walking. As Christ-followers we have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20) & therefore our life is not our own. This process of crucifying our flesh & allowing our Spirit to rule doesn't happen overnight. Jesus told the disciples that their Spirit was willing but their flesh was weak (Matthew 26:41), Paul described his seemingly never-ending battle with the flesh in Romans 7:15, and Paul took great lengths to bring his flesh into submission.

Fasting is a powerful tool to help crucify your flesh & help you become less aware of the desires of your flesh and more conscious of the Holy Spirit's voice.

Prayer Focus: Are there areas in your life where you've been allowing your flesh to be dominant? What areas do you need to crucify the flesh in?

Day 4: Fasting Removes Unbelief

“Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” – Matthew 17:18-21

When we pray and fast, we don't do so to change God or His will; by praying and fasting, we are the ones changed. Coming into alignment with God helps us curb our doubts and fears. When we pray and fast, the thing that leaves- the thing that goes out-is our unbelief. It is when we have faith to believe that we can pray with confidence and know that “nothing will be impossible.”

As God to strengthen your heart to fully believe Him and His Word. It is okay to recognize and acknowledge if you struggle with unbelief. That's the first step in allowing God to strengthen your faith and bring you into alignment with His plan for your life.

Fasting Tip: On the third day of your fast, you may experience a headache, flu-like achiness, intense sugar or carb cravings, slight nausea, or fatigue. This is a normal response to detoxification, so make sure you allow yourself some time to rest and keep your fluid intake high. The fourth day is usually much better physically, so hang in there!

Bible Reading Plan: Luke 2

Prayer Focus: What do you need faith to believe for? Align yourself with God's Word and will during the fast. Release your unbelief. Pray with confidence, knowing "nothing will be impossible" for you.

Day 5: Fasting for Purpose

"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."
– Jeremiah 33:3

Some people live their entire lives unsure or unaware of what God has destined & planned for them. They walk through life in this cloud of uncertainty, not completely sure what God placed them on this earth to do. What I know to be true is that, regardless of whether you're seeking the overall plan and purpose of God for your life or seeking direction on specific decisions or opportunities, God has the answers. As Jeremiah 33:3 promises, if we call out to God, He will answer us & tell us things we do not know!

Periods of fasting & prayer allow us to call out to God & allow Him to speak to us. If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to open His earthly ministry through a period of fasting & prayer, how much more should we set time apart to seek God regarding His purposes & plans for our lives?

During this time of fasting & prayer, God will begin to reveal His destiny & plan for your life if you'll choose to seek after Him and let His plan become the focus of your life. We have His Word on it!

Prayer Focus: What has called you to do? What are the next steps God is calling you to take in your life?

Day 6: Fervent Prayer

“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” – James 5:16

Fervency speaks to our level of intensity, passion, and persistence. Many times, we can lose our passion in prayer or stop praying for certain things altogether because we lose heart or give up. But God invites us to keep them before Him and trust Him for an answer in His time (Matthew 7:7-11).

The Old Testament prophet Elijah practiced a lifestyle of fervent, intense prayer and witnessed incredible miracles in his lifetime. In the book of Kings, the story is told of a woman whose only son became ill and died (1 Kings 17:17-24). When Elijah heard the news, he quickly took action and did what he knew best – he fervently cried out to God. Elijah fully believed that God could bring the boy back to life, and he prayed not just once but three times that the boy's soul would return to him. He prayed fervently and repeatedly, and he wasn't going to give up. This was the result: “Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived” (verse 22).

Elijah's prayer was answered through his persistence and fervency. God hears your prayers as well and will bring an answer in His perfect timing. But don't be discouraged or disheartened if

the answer takes time to arrive or is not exactly what you expected. Commit to praying to God with passion and persistence, trusting the answer will come in God's perfect way at the perfect time.

Bible Reading Plan: Psalm 3-5

Prayer Focus: As you come to the end of this first week, continue to pray fervently for the main areas of concern in your life. Trust God to bring an answer as you journal your thoughts and inspirations through this time.

Day 7: What's the Cost?

“When He had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. – John 19:30

When Jesus died on the cross, He totally & completely paid the price for you and I to walk in fellowship again with our Father. He destroyed the separation between God and man. Those powerful words He uttered on the cross before His death speak to the totality of what He did for us- IT IS FINISHED!

You cannot earn your way to heaven. You don't earn God's love. You can't earn His favor or His pleasure. Those were already purchased & provided for you. Fasting doesn't change God's heart toward us, it doesn't earn us answered prayers. Rather, it's a time for us to seek after Him & bring our heart in alignment with His.

As you do, you'll be reminded that you are a beloved child of God. You'll be reminded you were worth enough to God for Him to sacrifice His Son for your sake. You'll be reminded He has pleasure in you. You'll be reminded of the depth of His love, mercy, & compassion for you.

Prayer Focus: How does understanding the New Covenant of grace change the focus of your fast? As you pray and seek after God, let His voice be the loudest voice you hear.

Day 8 – What About Your Isaac?

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.” – Genesis 22:15-18

God came to Abraham & gave him a promise. God would give him a son. Even at an old age (where it would naturally be impossible), God had given him a vision for generations to come. It was an exciting time for him & God delivered on that promise, and he had a son named Isaac. It wouldn't be long after that God gave Abraham a command that seemed almost counter-intuitive.

He was told to take his son Isaac and to sacrifice him to God. Abraham completely obeyed, taking Isaac to be sacrificed. It wasn't until the moment he was about to lower the knife & sacrifice everything that God spoke & told him to put his knife aside. Scripture records that Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his dream & lay everything down in obedience to Christ was the key that allowed his destiny to unfold.

As you spend time fasting & seeking God, God will begin to speak to you about your destiny, His specific plans for your life, and may make some promises to you. Each of us will face a test in light of God's promise – would we be willing to sacrifice every dream & every promise out of simple obedience to our Father? How you answer that question determines the extent to which God can use you.

Prayer Focus: It's so easy to put our dreams or promises from God on a pedestal & make them an idol in our lives. Ask yourself this question: if _____ didn't happen, would it negatively

impact my relationship with God? If I never saw _____ dream come to pass, would I still love God with the same passion I do today?

Day 9 – Are You Listening?

But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.” – Genesis 22:11-12

Like we mentioned yesterday, God had brought a dream to fruition in Abraham’s life. Yet, despite it all, God sent him out to sacrifice his dream. God told him to take his son up to the mountain and to make him a sacrifice to God. He had made a seemingly impossible request – lay down the life of your son simply because you love God. Abraham went to do as he was told, gathered his supplies and set out in obedience to God’s instruction.

Abraham took Isaac to the altar, bound him and laid him on the altar. Abraham raised the knife, firmly cemented in his heart that he would obey God no matter the cost, no matter the sacrifice. Then, God called out to him – don’t do it! God had led him to that altar, God had allowed him to prove his devotion. Yet, in the final moment, God spoke & spared him from going through with one of the most painful things he’d ever faced.

What would have happened if Abraham had stopped listening? If Abraham decided he already had the complete revelation of God’s will for his life?

Sometimes we get an instruction & we proceed to obey, but it is important that we be constantly open to God giving us the next step in our lives. Not just during times of fasting, but throughout our lives, God is constantly speaking. Don’t ever get so caught up in yesterday’s revelation or yesterday’s instruction that you don’t seek His face over today.

Prayer Focus: What is God saying to you TODAY?

Day 10 – Forgiveness, Part 1

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. – Mark 11:25-26

Virtually every time Jesus taught His followers to pray, He instructed them to forgive. It's even modeled in the Lord's prayer (forgive us AS we forgive others). One cannot separate prayer & forgiveness. As we are in this season of fasting & prayer, it's important that we take time to make sure we've forgiven those who have hurt us or wronged us in some way.

Although I think we all know that we are compelled by Christ to forgive, I think few of us have a proper understanding of what that actually means. In fact, oftentimes, our flawed beliefs about what forgiveness is, actually hinders us from stepping into it. Forgiveness is not denial. It doesn't convince you that you this situation didn't really happen. Forgiveness is not repression or burying your anger. Forgiveness is not even forgetting or letting people walk all over you.

What forgiveness really means is that we release their control over our heart. It means we choose not to hold those things against people that we were holding against them. It means we release our right for revenge or retribution. It means that, the things that they have done to us cannot control what is in our heart. Forgiveness is a conduit for God's grace to work in those areas where you've been wronged. Forgiveness allows you to release this situation into God's hands & trust Him more completely.

Prayer Focus: As you're spending time with God today, is there anyone you've realized that you need to forgive? Ask God to help you to release the hold they have on your heart.

Day 11 – Forgiveness, pt 2

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. – Mark 11:25-26

We know that Jesus teaches that if we don't forgive, we won't be forgiven. Most of us assume that God is petty (like we are), thinking it's God saying, "Well then, if you won't forgive them, then I know how to fix you – I won't forgive you." That's not what Jesus was saying at all. What He's saying is much more profound.

God is the author of forgiveness, He demonstrated the most significant and amazing act of mercy & forgiveness by Christ's death on the cross! God is attempting to do a work of forgiveness in you & through you toward the person who offended you. When you resist that work & choose not to forgive, you are resisting the very work God is trying to do in your own heart. It's that resistance that makes it impossible for you to receive and benefit from God's move in your own life.

Choosing to forgive is an uphill battle, because it defies everything your flesh & emotions crave. Forgiveness requires that you make a choice to live with the consequences of their behavior without holding it against them. Although it's far from easy, forgiveness is partnering together with God to allow Him to work in your heart & theirs.

Choose to partner together with God & release any bitterness or resentment toward anyone. You'll find increased power in your prayer when you approach your Father with a heart free from offense.

Prayer Focus: Think back to those people you realized yesterday you needed to forgive & take time to pray for them, asking God to bless them and their families.

Day 12 – What if I Stumble?

“For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity.” – Proverbs 24:16

Inevitably during a time of fasting & prayer, people start to wonder, “What if I just can’t go without my coffee like I thought I could?” or, “I just couldn’t resist that brownie, is God mad at me?” So often, especially in certain backgrounds or traditions, that if you break a fast it would have been better you had never started at all. While the idea of holding true to your fast is important, the idea that if you fail or if you neglect an element of your fast, you’ve somehow angered or disappointed God is dangerous.

A fast is a challenging process. It’s a time you’ve set aside to lay down things you enjoy (it’s not really a fast if you decide to fast something you don’t like and don’t consume anyway). God sees that act of sacrifice & devotion. If you do fall during your fast, Proverbs 24:16 provides us with great advice & instruction – get back up!

It’s not how many times you fall, it’s how many times you get back up! True failure only occurs when you choose not to get back up. Don’t allow Satan to turn your time of fasting into some form of condemnation because you fall short. Instead, take comfort that, when you draw near to God, He draws near to you (James 4:8).

Prayer Focus: Ask God to make His grace more real to you today, that you would experience and walk in greater revelations of His grace than ever before.

Day 13 – Declutter

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” -Romans 8:5-6

Clutter happens naturally. If you have an empty space in your house, it typically won’t stay empty long. It’s almost like an empty space is a magnet for clutter. Unless we want our entire

home to be overwhelmed with clutter, we have to be intentional about decluttering & deep cleaning.

The same thing has a way of happening spiritually. Even sometimes when we're praying daily, reading our Bibles, and going to church, the pressures & temptations of our day to day life build up until eventually they almost consume our lives.

Fasting helps us to declutter our lives & create space for God. We can cast off the old habits, mindsets, and attitudes to bring them into alignment with the truth of God's Word. Fasting helps restore the passion that has a tendency to turn into duties.

Bible Reading Plan: Luke 6

Prayer Focus: Ask God if there are any old habits, mindsets, or attitudes that He'd like to help you declutter from your life. Pray as David did in Psalm 51:10-12 that God will cleanse your heart, renew your spirit, and restore the joy of your salvation.

Day 14 – Bold Prayer

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” – Hebrews 4:16

Oftentimes as believers, we have a very timid approach to our prayer. Maybe that's because it sounds humble. Or, maybe it's because we believe God to be angry. Even though this timidity seems spiritual or holy, the instruction in Scripture is to come boldly before God's throne. This attitude of timidity is a stark contrast to Scripture teaching us that, upon Christ's death on the cross, the veil in the temple separated, removing the barrier between God & man.

As believers, our communion with God has been restored, and as such, we are able to boldly & confidently approach God. You don't need to be timid or shy when you begin to pray & seek God. God not only knows your requests before you ask, but He desires the relationship with you where you bring those requests to Him confidently in prayer.

As we continue this time of prayer & fasting, pray confidently & boldly, knowing that God is for you & desires that relationship with you.

Prayer Focus: Are there specific requests or breakthroughs you need in your life? Take time to boldly bring those requests before God.

Day 15 – The Spirit Is Willing

And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am no really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. - Romans 7:18-20, NLT

There's an internal war that rages within each of us. Paul described this so well in Romans 7. Though we desire to do the right thing, we don't have the power to do so in our own efforts and we mess up.

The good news is that we don't have to rely on our own strength to make right decisions. We don't have to be dominated by our sinful nature and end up doing the things we don't want to do. But the only way we can live this kind of life is by yielding to the Holy Spirit and relying on the strength of Jesus Christ, not our own.

When we're facing struggles, we must rely on God's power alive within us through the Holy Spirit. When we are board again, the Holy Spirit resides in us and places in us the desire to do what is pleasing to God (Hebrews 10:16). The Holy Spirit always wants to do what is right and to uphold the perfect will of God, pleasing the Father in every way.

It is our job to lay down our stubborn fleshly will and yield to the will of God. In that moment, the Holy Spirit will be there to help us. Let's learn to yield to and become totally reliant upon the Holy Spirit.

"[Prayer] turns ordinary mortals in to men of power. It brings power. It brings fire. It brings rain. It brings life. It brings God." – Samuel Chadwick

Bible Reading Plan: Proverbs 1

Prayer Focus: Are there areas in your life causing an internal struggle? Make a decision today to yield to the Holy Spirit and lean on His strength, not your own, to overcome obstacles of sin and selfishness in your life. Surrender and release those areas to God, knowing He will help you.

Bible Reading Plan: Psalm 3-5

Prayer Focus: As you close out this first week, continue to pray fervently for the main areas of concern in your life. Trust God to bring an answer as you journal your thoughts and inspirations through this time.

Day 16 – Relationships are Two-Way Street

'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.' – Jeremiah 33:3

We have a promise in Scripture that teaches us that when we call out to God, he will answer us. Sometimes, in our fervency of prayer, we forget that relationships are always a two-way street. If you think about it in purely natural terms, you generally don't gravitate toward friends who dominate the conversation & won't let you get a word in edgewise.

The same thing applies in our relationship with God. We sometimes forget that our relationship with God was never intended to be a monologue, but rather a constant state of communion & relationship. We ask God to forgive our sin (and we know by Scripture He will), but we don't

pause to let Him communicate His forgiveness back to us. We tell God we're confused about the direction we're supposed to take, but then we don't stop & get His direction.

Much like a natural relationship will be skewed if you fail to make it a two-way street, your relationship with God will be lacking if you don't pause & let Him speak back to you. Call to Him & He will answer.

Prayer Focus: As you spend time in prayer, pause & let God answer. Take time to not just make requests, but to hear Him.

Day 17 – Unwavering Faith

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. – James 1:6

What do you expect when you pray?

When we pray with earnest expectation, we are exercising our faith. The earnest prayer of a righteous people produces powerful results (James 5:16), and the most earnest prayers come from us when we recognize our need for God.

There can be a natural tendency to shrink back when praying for the seemingly impossible, but we must remember that nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37). If we know the promises that God has given us, and understand His character and the principles by which He works, we can pray with confidence and trust Him for the answers.

What has caused you to waver in your expectation with God? James reminds us that faith and wavering are actually contradictory – James said “nothing wavering”. Know that God never wavers in His love for you. You can trust Him completely.

“When we depend upon organizations, we get what organizations can do; when we depend upon education, we get what education can do; when we depend upon man, we get what man can do; but when we depend upon prayer, we get what God can do.” – A.C. Dixon

Bible Reading Plan: Luke 7

Prayer Focus: What are you trusting God for in this season? How can you line up your expectations with the Word of God when you pray? Find promises in His Word that answer your need and write them down today.

Day 18 – Seek God First

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. – Matthew 6:33

Oftentimes in prayer & fasting, our priority becomes getting our own requests, petitions, and needs attended to. Although God is interested in our requests & needs, if all of our prayer is focused on our comforts and our needs, then our relationship with God becomes less as God & man and becomes more of an entitled son making demands of his father.

For prayer to be at it’s most effectual, the priority can’t be simply getting your needs met. The focus of prayer is relationship with God, connecting with His plans, and praying out His purposes. When you seek HIM first (not what He can do for you, but purely relationship with Him), the rest gets handled. The motive makes all the difference.

“Put first things first and we get second things thrown in: put second things first and we lose *both* first and second things.” – C.S. Lewis

Prayer Focus: Today, take time to get quiet before God & find out what He wants you to pray. Pray in connection with His purposes.

Day 19 – Humility

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” – James 4:6

If you’re like most of us, you’re perpetually in need of God’s mercy & grace. You make mistakes, bad decisions, or get involved in some sin that requires God to forgive you & have mercy on you. The good news is that God is quick to extend mercy, but there’s a condition.

Scripture tells us that God resists the proud. That term resist would be best defined as, “the range in battle against”. Pride puts you in a position of being in war with your Creator. Quite the contrary, we’re told that God gives more grace to the humble.

Humility makes you a candidate for the mercy of God to be manifest in your life. Pride is the only thing that will separate you from the mercy of God, because pride will cause you to believe you aren’t in need of asking for it. As you continue in this time of prayer & fasting, remember that humility is key. Keep your heart humble in front of God & be a candidate for an outpouring of His mercy.

Prayer Focus: Ask for & receive God’s mercy fresh & new today.

DAY 20 - Agreement with the Will of God

Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? - Amos 3:3, NKJV

In the heart of every believer is the desire to walk closely with God. We know that He, too, desires a close relationship with each one of us. A key to having a strong level of spiritual intimacy with God is living in agreement with His will for your life.

In Genesis 5:22, we read Enoch and see that his life modeled a long journey, walking consistently with God, for it says, “Enoch walked with God three hundred years.” Enoch lived a powerful life. He was a man who walked in agreement with God’s will and lived a life pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:5).

It is one thing to *know* God’s will for our lives; it’s another to live in agreement with His will. In order to enjoy the best life that God has for us, we must first understand that God does not change, but we sometimes must. Let’s earnestly seek to know and agree with God’s will. The level of our agreement with God will determine the degree of closeness in our walk with Him.

“I believe firmly, that the moment our hearts are emptied of pride and selfishness and ambition and self seeking, and everything that is contrary to God’s law, the Holy Ghost will come and fill every corner of our hearts; but if we are full of pride and conceit, and ambition and self seeking, and pleasure and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God; and I believe many a man is praying to God to fill him when he is full already with something else.

Before we pray that God would fill us, I believe we ought to pray Him to empty us.” – D. L. Moody

Bible Reading Plan: Luke 3

Prayer Focus: Pray today that you can walk in agreement with God and enjoy the life He desires you to have in Christ.

DAY 21 - When Grace Comes Down

For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.- John 1:17, NKJV

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a personal visit with God? What would He say about the state of humanity? About religion? About propensity toward sin? There is no need to wonder about what God is like or would say, because to know Him we have only to look at Jesus. In Jesus we have received grace, but there is even something more we have received: *truth*.

The kind of truth in today’s scripture is not a list of laws and rules such as were given to Moses. Make no mistake – the revelation of God through the word of the Law was glorious. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai after receiving the Ten Commandments, his face shone so brightly with the glory of God that he had to wear a veil (Exodus 34:33-35). But the word of the Law cannot compare with the word of *life* that has been revealed through Jesus Christ!

In John 1:18 we learn that no one, not even Moses, with his glimpse of God’s back has ever seen God. But Jesus has not only seen God – He *is* God. The truth that John was speaking about is a clear and unveiled vision of the true nature of God.

Looking at God through the lens of legalism and religion is like looking at Him through a veil. Only when we see Him through Jesus Christ can we truly get a glimpse into His heart. It is from a state of grace, not legalism, that we will find real and lasting transformation (2Corinthians 3:7-18)

“I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am.” – John Newton

Bible Reading Plan: Luke 4

Prayer Focus: Have you been looking at God through the veil of legalism and religion? In Jesus, we see the full revelation of the nature of God: His love and holiness, mercy and justice, compassion and power all perfectly and beautifully expressed. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you see God through the eyes of grace and truth given to us in Jesus Christ.