

seek



21 days of prayer & fasting
January 9th-29th 2012

Fasting is one of the most powerful weapons God has given us for our daily lives.

It is the giving up of food for a certain period of time and dedicating that time to pray and seek God. The combination of prayer and fasting enables us to have supernatural breakthrough in an area or areas of our lives.

In Matthew 6 Jesus says, “When you give”, “When you pray” and “When you fast”. Fasting is a principle that God intended for everyone to practice. It is not a punishment; it is a privilege! It involves sacrifice, but the spiritual benefits far outweigh the natural sacrifice.

I look forward to hearing the many testimonies of miraculous breakthrough that take place in 2012 because of our commitment to seek Him first as we begin the year.

Michael
Assistant Pastor
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Basic Guide to Fasting

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. Suggestions for types of fasts are found below.

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.

Medical Conditions

Often people have medical conditions (E.g. Diabetes) that prevent them from fasting. If you do have a medical condition, please use wisdom. Fasting food may not be possible for you. If you still feel you should fast, please seek professional medical advice about how you should approach your fasting. Alternatively you may like to simply fast a certain type of food that will not be detrimental to your health. Another option is to fast certain activities from your life (E.g. Television, Facebook etc.)

How to End

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

Types of Fasts

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 sun up 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!

In addition to fasting food you may also want to give up other distractions such as television and social media and dedicate more time to prayer while you are fasting.

Prayer Topics

This is a guide to some of the things you can be praying for over this period of prayer and fasting.

Seeking God

'But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.' **Matthew 6:33**

Above all else in prayer seek God and His will for our lives, our church and our nation.

Thanksgiving

'always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' **Ephesians 5:20**

Come to God always to thank Him for everything, no matter the season or situation.

Those in Authority

'I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.' **1 Timothy 2:1-2**

It is vital that we honour and pray for those that God has placed in authority over us. Pray for:

- Local, State and Federal Governments
- Bosses and Supervisors
- Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade
- Parents

Children

'People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." 16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.' **Mark 10:13-16**

Children are incredibly precious to Jesus and must be protected and nurtured in the things of God. Pray for:

- Your Children
- Our Children's Ministry (The team and all the children)
- Children of our community

Youth

'Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.'
1 Timothy 4:12

Teenagers are being attacked on all fronts in our society, but as Paul told Timothy God doesn't limit what young people are capable of. Pray for:

- Your teenagers
- Our Youth Ministry (The team and all the young people)
- Young People in our local high schools

Marriage

'Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.' **Hebrews 13:4**

Marriage is one the bedrocks of our society and is a covenant with God. Let's believe for strong marriages that shape the future of our community.

Pray for:

- Your Marriage
- Future Spouse (if single)
- Marriages in our church and community.
- Protection of the institution of marriage to remain between a man and a woman.

Church Leadership

'The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.'
1 Timothy 5:17

The church is Jesus answer for this world. Pray for:

- Our pastors
- Church leaders of ministries
- Churches and their pastors across our nation.

Provision

'Give us today our daily bread.' **Matthew 6:11**

God is the source of all our provision. He provides for our needs and also for our ministry to others. Pray for:

- Personal finances
 - For your daily needs
 - For your ministry
- Provision for others
- Church finances – provision to accomplish our vision.

The Economy

'Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Genesis 1:26

God has called us to have dominion and prosper both personally and as a nation. Pray for:

- Business Owners
- Favour for employees
- Those seeking employment
- The Australian Economy

Healing

'But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.' **Isaiah 53:5**

'And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.'

James 5:15

Pray for:

- Health and healing for yourself and family
- Health and healing for our church
- Opportunities to lay hands on the sick.

Labourers to the Harvest Field

'Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.' **Matt 9:38**

Pray for opportunities:

- For you to personally reach people
- For labourers to reach those you know.
- For our church to reach our community.

Unbelievers

'Brothers, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is, that they may get salvation.' **Romans 10:1 (BBE)**

Pray for people you personally want to see come to Christ, that their eyes would be open and they would recognize their need for a Saviour.

The Media

'Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.'

Phil 4:8

The media holds a lot of influence over the mindsets being shaped in our nation. Pray for:

- Christians who are called to be influential in the media.
- Wholesome and pure content to be created.
- Media organizations to take a stand against impure and ungodly content.

Missions

'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,'

Matt 28:19

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' **Acts 1:8**

We are called to make disciples of nations.

Pray for God to direct you how you can have influence in your:

- Jerusalem (immediate City)
- Judea (Our state)
- Samaria (Our nation)
- Ends of the Earth (Overseas Nations)

Pray for:

- Those serving God in other nations.
- Our CCOM campus and students in Lahore, Pakistan.



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