



June 2020: A season of prayer & fasting

Seeking God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation

@ospel COMMUNITY
RIVERMONT

WEEK 2: DAY 1

Monday: Fasting & Praying

FAST OF ABSTENTION

The spiritual discipline of fasting is **abstaining** from something meaningful, like food, in order to seek the heart of God.

On each Monday—June 8, 15, & 22—we are corporately fasting by abstention **in order seek the heart of God for racial reconciliation.**

SOME FASTING IDEAS:

- **Social media/Entertainment**
- **Food:** A meal or a type of food.
- **Comforts:** Examples—going a day without air conditioning, waking up early to pray, etc.

ISAIAH 58 FAST

FAST OF ENGAGEMENT

In Isaiah 58, God confronts his people in the midst of their fasting and calls them to a fast of engagement: to do justice and love their neighbors.

During our season of fasting, we invite you to engage in actions associated with at least one of these three categories.

CATEGORIES OF ENGAGEMENT:

- **Education:** Learn about the history of racial injustice (resources forthcoming).
- **Relationship:** Connect with a person from a different ethnicity.
- **Service:** Prayerfully extend a hand of service to a friend or neighbor of a different ethnicity.



pause. breathe.

take two minutes of silence and stillness before the Lord. take deep breaths. ask the Lord to speak to your heart today.

A black and white photograph showing a person's hands clasped in prayer over an open Bible. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame, with fingers interlaced. The Bible is open, showing text on both pages, and is resting on a dark surface. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the hands and the pages of the book.

Monday Scripture

MATTHEW 23:23
ISAIAH 58:1-12

"[Do not] neglect the weightier matters of the law - justice and mercy..."

A group of people are gathered on a porch, engaged in prayer. A man in the center, wearing a baseball cap and a polo shirt, has his hands raised in a gesture of prayer. To his left, a woman with long hair is also in prayer. To his right, another person is visible, and further right, a man is bowing his head. The background shows the wooden railing and siding of the porch. The entire image is overlaid with a dark, semi-transparent filter.

MONDAY PRAYER: PAY ATTENTION

Lord Jesus,

Give us eyes to see the world, our neighbors, and ourselves as You do. Bring to mind and open our eyes to see - to truly see - those around us who may be suffering. Move us toward those who may be misery and in need in our lives. Help us to move slowly, to pay attention to those around us. As You do, Lord God, move us to prayer. Move us to love those around us as you do. We need You, and we're listening to Your voice.

Amen.

SLOWING DOWN TO SEE THOSE AROUND US

WEEK 2: DAY 2

Tuesday

ONENESS



pause. breathe.

take two minutes of silence and stillness before the Lord. take deep breaths. ask the Lord to speak to your heart today.



Tuesday Scripture

ROMANS 12:3-6a

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31

“...in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.”



TUESDAY PRAYER: ONE IN CHRIST

All-knowing Father,

In Christ we are one, we belong to each other. As we look to You as the head of the Body, may we be continually aware of how You designed the body to work. May we not see ourselves more highly than we should, but let us seek true unity among other believers – especially those who are different from us. You have invited us into a community of interdependence. It takes each of us to make Your Body complete, as we each have a different work to do. We gladly submit to Your design and agree that we are not complete unless we are living and working in unity with all believers.
Amen.

BOUND TOGETHER IN LOVE

WEEK 2: DAY 3

Wednesday

PEACEMAKERS



pause. breathe.

take two minutes of silence and stillness before the Lord. take deep breaths. ask the Lord to speak to your heart today.



Wednesday Scripture

MATTHEW 5:11
EPHESIANS 2:10

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for
they will be called children of God.”



WEDNESDAY PRAYER: MAKE PEACE

Father God,

Give us eyes to see just how deeply rooted sin is in our own flesh and hearts. Help us, by Your Spirit, to look soberly at ourselves and our culture and to realize there is so much work to be done still and to mourn the brokenness that remains. But God, may all of this searching cause us to hunger and thirst for You to move in and through us afresh. As we come back to a place of dependence on you, would you move us by your love, power and strength to be peacemakers in our culture as we seek justice and racial reconciliation - for you say that this is the way that is blessed. May we walk in the good works that you have prepared for us to do with wisdom, gentleness, and humility.
Amen.

JOINING JESUS IN MAKING PEACE

WEEK 2: DAY 4

Thursday

CONFESSION



pause. breathe.

take two minutes of silence and stillness before the Lord. take deep breaths. ask the Lord to speak to your heart today.



Thursday Scripture

DANIEL 9:3-5
ISAIAH 58:6-7

"The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him."



THURSDAY PRAYER: CONFESSION

O Gracious Lord,

Your love endures forever among Your people, even though we fail to keep Your commands and follow You whole-heartedly. You keep Your promise and redeem our rebellious hearts. We acknowledge the iniquity of our culture in the mistreatment of the marginalized and prejudice toward those who look different from us. We ask that You shine your face upon the dark places of our hearts and flood our faith with rushing waters to loose the bonds of injustice. May we not grow weary of turning from our rebellion, but instead, may Your steadfast love stir our hearts to be broken for what breaks Yours.
Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR BROKENNESS

WEEK 2: DAY 5

Friday | Juneteenth

FREEDOM



pause. breathe.

take two minutes of silence and stillness before the Lord. take deep breaths. ask the Lord to speak to your heart today.

// LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD //

On January 1st, **1863**, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became the law of the land in the Northern and Southern Colonies of the United States of America. The Country's Civil War had ended, as the South surrendered to the North and this weary and divided country reluctantly began trying to pick up the pieces of the nation's common life.

Juneteenth, Justice, & Us

On **June 19th, 1865**, two and a half years after the Executive's Emancipation Proclamation, news arrives among enslaved communities for the first time in the town of Galveston, TX, that all enslaved peoples are now free peoples, with equal rights as citizens in this country. Two and a half years. This day has been commemorated throughout the decades as **Juneteenth**, the day many enslaved peoples in the South began to learn of the freedom they legally had for years.

// WHY JUNETEENTH MATTERS //

Juneteenth can help us remember and tell the truth about our history of racial oppression and its bearing on the present culture. It's not enough to simply know when freedom for every person became the law of the land; we must also know the **resistance** with which that law was met and how long it took for word of liberation to make it to enslaved peoples.



Juneteenth,
Justice,
& Us

Slavery was illegal, but many white Americans did not want it to be. And they fought it to their dying breath.

The racialized terrorism known as lynching reached its peak **25 years after** slaves were legally freed.

Juneteenth helps us to remember how long it can take to see the land catch up to its own laws. The holiday helps us realize that many forms of racism did not go away, they simply evolved. **And more than**

anything, Juneteenth calls us to remember that changing laws cannot undo the prejudice that poisons hearts.

Only Jesus can do that..

// JUNETEENTH REMEMBRANCE IN 2020 //

It is not enough to say, “Down with racism!”. We must be committed to the radical undoing of its toxic effects in our laws and in our hearts. We must address the modern impact of the legacy of institutional racism in the forms of slavery such as Chattel Slavery, “Jim Crow” Segregation, Redlining, Mass Incarceration, the 13th Amendment, and on and on. **But most severely, we must confront the racial prejudice and bias that lies within our own hearts.**

Juneteenth, Justice, & Us

Fighting for justice in communities ravaged by a long history of institutional racism simply will not be enough to change the hearts of humanity. We can't do away with racism overnight. Not even in a generation can our 400 years of colonial and national history be undone. And this darkness cannot be pushed back by human hands alone. **We need a deep, sustained work of the Holy Spirit through the gospel of Jesus Christ.** And it must start among the people of God.

// THE WAY FORWARD //

The solution to this is not simply apologies or actions motivated guilt, shame, or self-righteous indignation. Rather, **what if we were committed to radical hospitality among a diverse cross-section of peoples, as much as our contexts allow?** What if we went out of our way to build relationships with those who have experienced racial injustice in order to see, hear, feel, and deeply listen to their stories?

Juneteenth, Justice, & Us

On this Juneteenth Holiday, let us be reminded that **freedom being the law of the land doesn't mean all in the land are free.** Let us labor for justice and reconciliation in our church and city until the laws of the land are just, and until the land catches up with its laws—with liberty and justice for all. And in the end let us remember, that spending a thousand lifetimes trying to tame the chaos of the world won't do a thing to tame the chaos in our hearts. Only Jesus can do that. **Jesus is the true and better Juneteenth.**

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Freedom being the law of
the land doesn't mean all in
the land are free.

JUNETEENTH



Friday Scripture

ROMANS 6:1-14
GALATIANS 5:1

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."



FRIDAY PRAYER: FREEDOM

O Gracious Lord,

Your love endures forever among Your people, even though we fail to keep Your commands and follow You whole-heartedly. You keep Your promise and redeem our rebellious hearts. We acknowledge the iniquity of our culture in the mistreatment of the marginalized and prejudice toward those who look different from us. We ask that You shine your face upon the dark places of our hearts and flood our faith with rushing waters to loose the bonds of injustice. May we not grow weary of turning from our rebellion, but instead, may Your steadfast love stir our hearts to be broken for what breaks Yours.
Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR BROKENNESS

WEEK 2: DAY 6

Saturday: Sabbath

REST



stop. rest.

today, we sabbath. we learn to rest in the peace of God, which is the Hebrew word, "shalom." We rest to remember: It is the Lord who does the work. today, we are loved. let us rest.