

# WHY PRAY & FAST

Communication is fundamental in any healthy relationship and prayer is how we communicate with God. As is the case in all families and relationships, there are times and seasons when we need to re-connect with one another by pulling back from the busyness and distractions of life. This is why in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, we see God's people commit to seasons of extra prayer and fasting that is focused on the current health of our relationship with God and one another.

Fasting is choosing to abstain from food for a certain period of time in order to seek God. It is an intensified form of prayer that aides us in getting into "spiritual shape" not unlike physical training and conditioning. The Bible tells us that we are in a spiritual conflict with sin and spiritual forces that erode our relationship with God and people (Eph. 6:12). Jesus said that some of the struggles we face can only be addressed through prayer and fasting (Mt. 17:21). Fasting with prayer gets us into a position where we can more easily hear from the Lord.

Isaiah 58:6-14 lists the effects that fasting can have on our personal lives and in our world. Fasting: helps us to remember to value other people (v.6), become more generous with our time and resources (v.7), find healing emotionally and relationally (v.8), get direction from God on life decisions (v.9), address relational conflict in our life (v.9), recover things we've neglected (v.12), and restore intimacy with God (v.14). If you want to see breakthrough in your life, fast and pray, and be expectant for how God will move in your life as a result.



# RENEW

PRAYER AND FASTING  
DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

We invite you a season of fasting for revival and renewal. This year we challenge you to fast one meal three days a week for one month. When deciding which meal to fast, choose one that will be a sacrifice, not one that you regularly skip. On the days that you fast utilize this handout to guide your time with the Lord by reading the scripture and praying through that day's prayer point along with a point from each of the other prayer categories (Nation, Community, Personal).

## WEEK 1

**DAY 1: Read-** Exodus 23:10-12

**Pray-** For God to renew and refresh you through Sabbath keeping.

**DAY 2: Read-** Joshua 24:14-18

**Pray-** Renew your commitment to serve the Lord only.

**DAY 3: Read-** 1 Samuel 7:2-6

**Pray-** Repent of any idols you have been worshiping (money, work, family, sports, self, addiction, sexual immorality, pornography) and take physical steps if appropriate to rid your life of reminders of the idols.

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## WEEK 2

**DAY 1: Read-** 1 Kings 15:11-14

**Pray-** For God to reveal any relationships that need to be cut out of your life so you can grow closer to him.

**DAY 2: Read-** 2 Kings 12:1-5

**Pray-** Thank the Lord for the spiritual mentors and pastors he has placed in your life.

**DAY 3: Read-** 2 Kings 23:1-3

**Pray-** Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal truths from the Bible whenever you read it and for the strength to obey his commands.

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## WEEK 3

**DAY 1: Read-** Nehemiah 9:1-3

**Pray-** For God to create in you a hunger for his Word.

**DAY 2: Read-** Jeremiah 31:1-4

**Pray-** Ask God to rebuild an area of your life that is broken and barren.

**DAY 3: Read-** Micah 7:18-20

**Pray-** Praise God for his love, compassion, and forgiveness.

## WEEK 4

**DAY 1: Read-** Colossians 3:9-11

**Pray-** Ask the Creator to make himself known to you in a fresh way.

**DAY 2: Read-** 2 Corinthians 4:14-18

**Pray-** Ask Jesus to give you eyes to see the unseen and focus on eternity.

**DAY 3: Read-** Ephesians. 4:21-24

**Pray-** Ask the Spirit to renew your thoughts and attitudes and to make you holy.

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## PRAYER POINTS

### NATION

- Identify an idol in American culture that distracts people from God's holiness and pray about it.
- Pray for God to heal the hateful divides in our nation by giving people his mercy and compassion.
- Pray for a spiritual awakening in our nation and for the Church to have a renewed voice of hope.

### COMMUNITY

- Pray for schools and local businesses to be strengthened through God's grace and provision.
- Pray for churches in our community to be strengthened in unity, mission and heaven impact.
- Pray for your co-workers, family members, school teachers to be touched by God's Spirit.

### PERSONAL

- Pray for God to heal an emotional wound or a particularly difficult relationship
- Pray for a deeper understanding of God's love and grace
- Pray for direction for a life decision coming up