Happy New Year!

We have seen the goodness of God in 2023! In every season, God has walked with us as we have committed to following Him. We are getting ready to ring in the new year, and we want to set aside time to be in the presence of God, seeking His heart for each of us personally and as a church family.

For many years now, we have devoted ourselves to a Week of Prayer in the beginning of January and a 21-day fast. Fasting is an important way for us to focus on the Lord. In Scripture we see that Moses fasted, Esther fasted, and even Jesus fasted! When Moses fasted, He dedicated time to be with the Lord, and God gave Him the ten commandments. When Esther fasted, she prepared for her purpose for that day and time. And when Jesus fasted, the power of the Holy Spirit protected Him from the lies of the enemy and then brought Him into His season of ministry.

Throughout these stories and others, we see that fasting is a dedicated time of sacrifice, usually with a restricted diet or completely giving up food. But fasting is not really about the sacrifice itself. It's not about what is given up, but it's about what you focus on instead.

Whether you choose to give up certain foods, social media, or certain activities for 21 days, use this time to practice spiritual discipline, to remove distractions and focus on the Lord, His Word, and what Holy Spirit wants to speak to you.

We NEED Holy Spirit. We need Him to lead us, to guide us, to direct us, and to help us walk according to His purposes for each of us and our families every single day. We have to be in tune with Him. So, let's commit to this together. Plan to come out for the Week of Prayer, January 7<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup>, and even now, begin thinking about what would be the best thing for you to fast for 21 days.

In previous years, we've seen God do amazing things during the Week of Prayer. And as we have fasted together, God has spoken to hearts of individuals and answered many prayers. We know that God wants to speak to you and He wants to speak to us as His church. Let's be ready for it!

We believe we will see the goodness of God in 2024 because He is here, so anything is possible!

Blessings, PASTORS MATT & HOLLY BATTISTA LEAD PASTORS