



21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

DIGITAL GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

THEME: HUMILITY

KEY VERSE

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

(2 Chronicles 7:14)

"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way." (Psalm 25:9)

"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." (James 4:6b)

As we begin this year together, we are intentionally humbling ourselves through prayer and fasting. This positions us for God's grace and guidance in our lives individually and as a church. Our hearts' desire is the Holy Spirit would form us to become more like Jesus as we seek Him together and surrender to the will of our Heavenly Father.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is communicating and communing with God. We spend intentional time talking to God, listening to God, and enjoying time in His presence. We can do this anytime and anywhere, individually and corporately.

Jesus encourages us in prayer: "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matt. 6:6).

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is going without all food for an extended period of time for the purpose of seeking God. It is usually in response to an event or situation. Most fasts listed in Scripture last for part of a day or several days. For fasts that are longer, we strongly recommend that it should be Spirit-led and confirmed by wise counsel in your life.

Fasting is less about us getting something from God and more about us offering our whole selves to God. It is a spiritual practice where we surrender our basic desires and needs for food so that we may learn that "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

(Matthew 4:4)



"Prayer is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible. Fasting is the other hand, the one with which we let go of the visible." Andrew Murray

Each week we are providing our focus, key text(s), prompts, practices, and prayers. We encourage you to carve out sufficient time each week to process these things alone and with your community. Don't rush! This is a season to slow down, create margin, and make ourselves more available to Jesus.

WEEK 01

FOCUS: HUMBLING OURSELVES BY STARTING WITH CONFESSION + SEEKING DIRECTION

KEY TEXT FOR REFLECTION

"You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high."
(Isaiah 58:4b)

God desires for us to live a life of obedience and love, not just going through the motions of religion. Before we humble ourselves with prayer and fasting to seek God for direction, we must humble ourselves by starting with confession.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

- + Are there any obvious sins in my life that I need to confess?
- + Are there any blind spots in my life that I can invite the Holy Spirit and trusted friends to speak into?
- + If Jesus were physically with me all day, what words or actions would I hide from Him? Why?
- + Who have I hurt—intentionally or carelessly—and have I sought their forgiveness?
- + What lie am I believing that keeps me stuck in my sin?
- + "I can't change," "God won't forgive me," "It's not that bad," etc.
- + What practical step of obedience can I take this week to turn away from sin?
- + Delete an app, make a call, set a boundary, ask for help, etc.

PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT

- + Pick a time this week, as the Spirit leads, to fast and pray, focusing on confession + seeking direction
- + Start where you are, not where you want to be or think you should be.
- + Example: skip a meal and use that time to seek God in prayer.
- + Confess your sin to God (use 1 John 1:9 as a framework)
- + Example: "God, I confess my sin of ____ to You. I acknowledge that it is wrong, and I ask for Your forgiveness. Thank You that I am forgiven by You because of Your faithfulness and justice. I ask that You would purify me of all unrighteousness by the power of Your Holy Spirit."
- + Confess your sin to others
- + James 5:16 "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed..."
- + We confess our sins to God for forgiveness and to others for healing.
- + Reconcile any broken relationships (see Matthew 5:23-24)

PRAYERS TO OFFER

- + Psalm 139:23-24 "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting."
- + Psalm 51:10 "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."
- + Use Proverbs 3:5-6 as a prayer framework to surrender to God, and ask Him to lead you

WEEK 02

FOCUS: HUMBLING OURSELVES BY SUBMITTING TO PREPARATION

KEY TEXTS FOR REFLECTION

"He humbled you...to teach you..."
(Deuteronomy 8:2-3)

"led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where... he was tempted" (Luke 4:1)

"Jesus returned...in the power of the Spirit..." (Luke 4:14)

God will humble us and test us in order to prepare us for the next season He has for us. A wilderness season may actually be preparation, not punishment. This week we turn our attention to surrendering to God's plan for our lives, using God's people and God's Son as an example.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

- + Are there any areas of growth in my life I am resisting because it may be uncomfortable?
- + What is preventing me from following the Spirit wherever He leads me?
- + Where do I feel tested right now, and how is my response revealing what is in my heart?
- + Is there anything I would be unwilling to surrender if God asked me to? Why?
- + What rhythms in my life are barriers to allowing God to prepare me?

PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT

- + Pick a time this week, as the Spirit leads, to fast and pray, focusing on submitting to preparation. Consider stretching yourself more this week than last.
- + Remove something from your life for an extended period of time, as the Spirit leads, that is hindering you in some way.
- + Examples: social media, entertainment, hobby, certain food/drink, relationship, etc.

PRAYERS TO OFFER

- + Use James 4:7 as a prayer framework to surrender to God.
- + Example: "God, I desire to submit my whole life to You, every area. Holy Spirit, show me right now what areas I am withholding from You, and give me the courage to walk in bold obedience as You lead me. I ask for Your strength to resist the enemy in every way so that I may walk in faithfulness to Your ways."
- + Use Hebrews 12:1-3 as a prayer framework to ask God to reveal areas that are hindering you from running your race and following Jesus.

WEEK 03

**FOCUS: HUMBLING OURSELVES
THROUGH SELFLESS INTERCESSION**

KEY TEXTS FOR REFLECTION

- + Esther 4:16
- + 2 Samuel 12:15-17,
- + Deuteronomy 9:18-29,
- + Nehemiah 1

We see multiple biblical examples of individuals and groups of people praying and fasting on behalf of others. These acts of selfless humility show the great lengths that we can go to for the sake of others. This week we turn our attention to the needs of others around us by praying and fasting on their behalf.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

- + How often do you spend dedicated time praying for others? Is this something you should do more? If so, what might that look like?
- + What rhythms have you put in place to regularly remind you of the needs of others in your life and your community?
- + Who do you have an intentional relationship with that does not yet know Jesus? Have you been consistently praying for them?
- + What burdens do you have for injustices in our world? How can you prayerfully intercede for these and practically get involved?
- + How might fasting regularly allow you serve others better?
- + Example: donating the money you would have used for a meal; serving meals; buying food for a local food bank

PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT

- + Pick a time this week, as the Spirit leads, to fast and pray, focusing on selflessly interceding for others. Consider stretching yourself more this week than last.
- + Create a prayer list you can regularly reference and update as new prayer needs come up.
- + Reach out to some people you prayed for to encourage them.

PRAYERS TO OFFER

- + Use 1 Timothy 2:1-4 as a prayer framework with others as the focus.
- + Make requests, gives thanks for others, pray for salvation, ask the Spirit to show you needs of others
- + Use Ephesians 1:15-23 as a prayer framework with others as the focus.
- + Use Ephesians 3:14-21 as a prayer framework with others as the focus.

WEEK 04

**FOCUS: HUMBLING OURSELVES BY
SURRENDERED DEVOTION**

KEY TEXTS FOR REFLECTION

"Worshiped night and day, fasting and praying" (Luke 2:37)

"Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice...this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1-2)

Humility is not a passive posture but a permanent posture. We are called to offer the entirety of ourselves to God as an ongoing act of worship. This week we turn our attention to the ongoing act of humility and worship commended by Paul and exemplified by Anna.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

- + What am I willing to give up in order to fully follow Jesus? What am I withholding?
- + What areas of my life have I not fully surrendered? Why?
- + What steps can I take this week to move into an active posture of surrender?
- + What ongoing rhythms can I establish to center my life around Jesus and worship?
- + What fears or lies are preventing me from fully surrendering to God in every area?

PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT

- + Pick a time this week, as the Spirit leads, to fast and pray, focusing on offering yourself in surrendered devotion. Consider stretching yourself more this week than last.
- + Create a Rule of Life to establish rhythms of devotion to Jesus (see next page).
- + Simplify your life by removing something that is using your resources but not helping you become like Jesus.
- + Sign up to use your gifts to serve here at CityLight.

PRAYERS TO OFFER

- + Use Matthew 6:9-13 as a prayer framework to offer yourself to God.
- + Use John 3:30 as a prayer prompt to seek where God needs to become greater in your life.
- + Read Luke 14:25-35, and process that passage in prayer with God.

RULE OF LIFE TEMPLATE

We never accidentally drift into Christ-likeness. In order to become more like Jesus, we must orient our whole lives around Him: to know Him and live like Him. A Rule of Life is a tool that can help us organize our lives so that we are intentionally and consistently putting spiritual practices into our regular rhythms.

Use this template as a guide to help you begin putting these pieces in place. Feel free to start where we are, and revisit this once or twice a year and make any necessary changes. Again, this is a tool to help you become more like Jesus, not a religious weight to hinder your relationship with Him.

	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY SEASONALLY OR ANNUALLY
SCRIPTURE <i>Committed time to engage the Bible through reading, meditating, studying, or memorizing</i>			
PRAYER <i>Committed time to commune with God + communicate with Him by speaking + listening</i>			
FASTING <i>Intentionally going without food for a set period of time in order to offer my whole self to God + seek Him</i>			
SABBATH <i>Setting aside a day to stop work, rest, worship God, + enjoy His blessings</i>			
SOLITUDE <i>An intentional time set aside to be present to God without any noise, distraction, or agenda</i>			
GENEROSITY <i>Intentionally stewarding my resources to bless others</i>			
COMMUNITY <i>Engaging in intentional time with others to love, encourage, support, + grow together</i>			
SERVICE <i>Intentionally using my time + gifts to serve others + meet their needs</i>			
WITNESS <i>Intentionally investing in relationships with those who do not yet know Jesus with the prayer + hope of seeing them saved by Jesus</i>			