



*Enriching My  
Conversation  
With God*

*21 Days  
Of Prayer  
And Fasting*

*Daily  
Devotional  
Guide*



Grace Church  
1311 W. Hovey Ave.

## **Prayer Focus February 2015**

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### **Special Guest**

Dr. Elmer Towns

## Acknowledgement

Dear Grace Family,

This material has been compiled for your use during our 21 days of fasting and prayer by the staff of Grace Church. It is designed to help enrich your conversation with God as we partner together in prayer.

We thank Dr. Elmer Towns for his ministry to us as we commit to a time of diligent seeking God through fasting and prayer. Dr. Towns has been mightily used of God in enhancing the prayer ministry of churches across our nation.

Much of the material in this booklet and all of the 21 devotionals are excerpts from the book The Daniel Fast for Spiritual Breakthrough by Dr. Towns. **We are grateful for his permission to condense some of that material for this prayer campaign.** The entire book is a worthy read and I would encourage you to get a copy for your enjoyment.

I am looking forward to joining you as we prayer together.

Blessings,

Pastor Ed Searce

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*A Word from Pastor Ed. . .*

In October of 2011 Pastor Len and I went to Manipur for two weeks of ministry. It was a wonderful and challenging time of teaching and preaching. During our first week there, we often heard the phrase "Prayer Mountain". Naturally, curiosity caused us to inquire about this place. We were told it was on one of the mountains nearby the city of Churachandpur.

One day Dr. Jacky Simte took us to visit Prayer Mountain. The view was absolutely impressive. You could see for miles up and down the valley. The city of Churachandpur lay directly in front of you. It was a wonderful vantage point from which to pray for the people of the city.

There were numerous small concrete buildings (6x8) spread around the top of the mountain in which individuals would come to pray. Many of them would stay there for extended periods of time communing with and pouring their hearts out to God. Some would spend forty days of fasting and prayer on Prayer Mountain. My friend Jacky had done so in preparation for our two weeks of ministry.

On several occasions we read that Jesus left the disciples and went up on a mountain to pray. Many times major events followed these special times of communing with God. Is there something unique about praying on a mountain? No, not really, but the view is out of this world. **Fasting and prayer, whether on a mountain or in a valley, gives us a view from God's perspective.** It is absolutely awesome. It also gives us a fresh perspective of who we are.

Fasting and prayer are mentioned on many occasions throughout the Bible. Often we see entire groups of people coming together to fast and pray. It sets an example for us to follow today.

This is the third year that Grace Church has designated a special time for us as individuals and as a congregation to seek God. The Elders of Grace Church have issued a call for corporate fasting and prayer from Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday March 1<sup>st</sup>. The details are found inside this prayer booklet. Would you pray about joining others for this special time? May God grow each of us as we seek to enrich our conversation with God.

Blessings, *Pastor Ed*

## Grace Church 21 Days of Corporate Fasting and Prayer

Grace Church's time of corporate fasting and prayer begins on Sunday, February 8 and continues to Sunday, March 1. On March 1<sup>st</sup> we will have a combined service in the Sanctuary. Then together we will conclude our time of Fasting & Prayer by sharing a meal together in the Activity Center.

Our model for the period is known as a "Daniel Fast". Each of us should prayerfully ask God what our fast should entail. A few will not be able to abstain from food because of medical reasons. This is certainly understandable. However there are a number of ways an individual can enter into a time of fasting and prayer.

### Why designate a time of Fasting and Prayer?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline in which believers abstain from food or other things for the spiritual purpose of intensifying our hunger for God and enriching our conversation with Him.

- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God by demonstrating our HUMILITY before Him (Ezra 8:21; Psalm 69:10)
- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God through our REPENTENCE and CONFESSION of sin (1 Samuel 7:6; 1 Kings 21:27)
- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God by acknowledging our sole DEPENDENCE on Him (Deuteronomy 8:2-3; Matthew 4:1-4)
- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God by discerning His WILL and DIRECTION in our lives (Judges 20:26-28; Acts 13:1-3)
- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God by increasing our appetite to PRAY (Mark 1:35)
- ◆ *Fasting enriches our conversation* with God by increasing our appetite for Him and His WORD (Matthew 4:1-4; John 4:31-35)



## What Is the Primary Focus of the Daniel Fast?

(Dr. Elmer Towns)

As you enter the Daniel Fast, it is easy to focus on the food you give up or the activities you surrender. It's easy to focus on your abstinence and not on the basic purpose for which you are fasting. But remember that God is not impressed just because you stop eating altogether or you stop eating certain foods, even if you do it for your health. God is not impressed with the outward actions of your fast. The secret of any fast is not what you keep from entering the stomach but what comes out of the heart. God is primarily concerned with your inner person, not your outer body.

In Mark 9:29, Jesus described the spiritual energy needed to remove spiritual barriers: "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." So, you must give yourself completely to prayer *and* to fasting. The commitment of your outer body to fasting reflects your inner commitment to prayer. Notice also that the phrase "prayer and fasting" in this verse emphasizes continuous action. This means that you should fast more than once or make fasting a continuous practice. During your Daniel Fast, your decision of what you eat or what you withhold will have more influence on your prayer life than most other spiritual exercises. If you're flippant with the Daniel Fast, you're likely to be flippant with your prayer dedication.

The basic principles of discipleship were not *denial* or *self-discipline*, but following Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "If any one desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). This involves turning to the Lord and putting Him first in your life, and then turning away from anything that keeps you from following Him.

There are three words in this verse that should influence your Daniel Fast. First, the word "deny" means that you should get rid of anything that hinders your relationship with Christ. You must get off of the throne of your heart, and Jesus must sit there and control what you eat and drink. The second word is "daily." Following Jesus means 24-7 dedication, so your Daniel Fast requires a 10-day or 21-day vow accompanied with continuous prayer. The third word is "follow." Just as Jesus fasted in preparation for His spiritual work, so must you follow Jesus' example with a Daniel Fast for your spiritual vow. – Elmer Towns



## **A Few Suggestions to Consider**

The following are some suggestions from Dr. Elmer Towns' book The Daniel Fast for Spiritual Breakthrough (Used by permission)

### **Daniel Fast Suggestions**

Eliminate one meal a day and pray during that mealtime.

Eliminate two meals a day, and pray during their times.

Eliminate all desserts.

Eliminate all rich, superfluous foods eaten only for pleasure.

Eat only necessities, and only during mealtime (no snacks).

Eliminate all drinks except water (no coffee, tea, soda or purchased drinks).

### **Contemporary Interpretations of the Daniel Fast**

No text messaging or Facebook or Twitter communications that take your thoughts away from God.

No secular music; only praise and worship music.

No newspaper or pleasure reading; give that time to prayer.

No television; give that time to prayer.

No recreational sports; give that time to prayer.

No sex. "Both husband and wife to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time, so they can give themselves completely to prayer"

(1 Cor. 7:5, *NLT*)



### **My Time to Pray**

*Lord, I will deny myself enjoyment during my Daniel Fast  
so that I can seek Your will in my life.*

*I count it a privilege to give up my "pleasant food"  
for Your glory and as a commitment of my prayer.*

*Lord, I have made a spiritual vow to You that I will  
faithfully fast and pray for 10 days or 21 days.*

*Lord, give me strong outer discipline to keep my outer vow  
to You, and give me strong inner commitment  
to pray faithfully for the answer I seek.*

*Amen.*

## My Commitment to Fast and Pray

(As a way of bringing focus to your time of fasting and praying, answer the following questions.)

**My Goal:** I am asking God to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**My Fast:** (what I will withhold) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**My Prayer:** (When I will pray)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**My Vow:** God being my strength, and grace being my basis, I commit myself to the Daniel Fast so that God will answer my prayer and give the thing for which I trust Him. Not my will Oh God but Yours be done.

Lord, I dedicate small things to express the greatness of Your supremacy in all of life.

Lord, I will be faithful in little expressions of my faith for great answers to prayer.

Lord, I vow to fulfill these small expressions of my love to You.

Amen.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Day One

### Your Private Prayer

<sup>17</sup> But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. *Matthew 6:17–18 (ESV)*

Which way is best to pray? Privately or with a group? Technically, both are best at different times. Just as you must walk on both your left and right legs, so you must pray both alone and with other people.

Left, right . . . left, right . . . left, right, it takes two legs to get anywhere. Those who hobble along on one leg don't get very far, nor do they go very fast. So, you must learn to pray both with groups and by yourself.

Technically, you are on a solo journey of faith, praying in the morning or evening—or—both—for God to work His will. (Phil. 2:12-13)

Solo prayer is about the private prayer closet. The *New Living Translation* translates it, "Go away by yourself . . . pray to your Father in private" (Matt. 6:6, *NLT*). The *Holman Christian Standard Bible* says, "Go into your private room" (Matt. 6:6, *CSB*). Because prayer is an intimate conversation with God, find your personal—usually quiet—place where you can meet alone with God.

Jesus practiced *solo-praying*, "As He was alone praying" (Luke 9:18, *NKJV*), and again, "He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone" (John 6:15, *NKJV*).

Remember when you are talking to God, you may be alone, but you are never lonely. The Lord will be there with you to hear you and encourage you. He answers prayer when there is no one but you and God in the conversation.

We are usually driven to prayer because of our need. That happened to Beth, my 12-year old middle school granddaughter. She was part of a puppet team at her church that planned a trip to a juvenile detention center. They were going to present the gospel through a puppet show to change the lives of young boys who had gotten into trouble with the law.

No one told Beth to fast, but she knew about the book that I had written, *Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough*. She decided to fast alone; she did not even tell her parents or friends what she planned to do. She planned to fast and pray that some of the young boys would pray to receive Christ.

Finally Beth said to her mother, "I plan to do a one-day Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement fast), from sundown to sundown." So she told her mother, "I am not eating this evening; I am fasting for some boys to get saved when Power Source (church youth group) presents the gospel at the juvenile detention center.

So on the afternoon of her fast, Beth ate a snack in her bedroom before the evening meal, but at sundown she did not eat; she only drank something for the evening meal. That evening she prayed especially for the gospel presentation.

The next morning she did not eat breakfast, only drank a glass of orange juice (because her grandfather drinks orange juice in the morning when he is fasting).

During lunch time she got permission to remain in her homeroom and did not go to the lunch room. She confessed, "All I could think about all afternoon was food."

God in heaven sees the simple things we do for Him. While Beth's fast may sound simple, this was a huge step of faith for a small girl. And doesn't God see the step of each of His children and reward them accordingly?

So what were the results? Several boys prayed to receive Christ at the end of the program.

*This is the first day of your 21 days of fasting and prayer. Savor the Word of God. While others will not see you in your times of fasting and prayer, God will. Ask Him for the strength to continue through the days you have committed to fasting and praying. (Pastor Ed Searce)*

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, when I pray alone, may I feel Your presence and may I pray with great faith?
- Lord, no one knows my heart but You; I pray that my heart will be in tune with your will.
- Lord, I call upon You for revival in my life, in my church and in our nation.

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**Day Two**  
**Joining Others**

*<sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, ... <sup>13</sup> And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying.... <sup>14</sup> All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*  
*Acts 1:12–14 (ESV)*

God responds when His people unite in prayer together. Jesus said, “Tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49, *NKJV*). What did they do? “These all continued with one accord in prayer” (Acts 1:14, *NKJV*). In response, “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost” (see Acts 2:1-4) and over 3,000 people were saved, baptized and added to the church. God can do the supernatural in response to corporate prayer. “While Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him” (Acts 12:5, *NLT*). As a result, an angel led Peter out of prison and he was delivered.

What can we learn from these scriptures? While Jesus has directed us to pray in secret He has also charged us to pray together. When we join our hearts and voices with other believers it becomes a concert of prayer. This is music in God’s ears. During your 21 days of Fasting and Prayer if possible take occasions to prayer with someone else in your family, or a close friend. Why? Praying together creates unity and unity gets results. Jesus said, “If two (or more) of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven” (Matt. 18:19, *NKJV*).

I (*Elmer Towns*) was converted because a group of people joined together every morning in united prayer for God to do the supernatural in a small place called Bona Bella, Georgia. Two brothers from Columbia Bible College pastored the Bona Bella Presbyterian Church in the summer of 1950. Attendance grew from around 20 to 50 people because of their enthusiasm; every day they held a prayer meeting from 5:00 am–8:00 am.

It was not a large prayer meeting. Bill Harding told the congregation, “Come and pray on your way to work.” Prayer could change their church, change their community, and change the world.

At that time, they were praying specifically for sixty young people to get saved. Names were typed on two sheets of paper then given to those who came to the meeting.

Those intercessors prayed for the sixty names on that paper, plus they prayed for revival, and finally they prayed, "Lord, may one of these young persons get saved and influence the world."

In July 1950, the brothers invited a college buddy to preach an evangelistic service. Every night, seven or eight young people were converted. *(Years later it was determined that 19 of those on this prayer list entered ministry)*

On July 25, 1950, I received Christ as Savior. That night I refused to go forward thinking I was already saved, but was under tremendous conviction of sin. When no one went forward that Thursday evening Bill Harding stood by the Communion table and said, "Someone is breaking the revival tonight because you have said, 'No!'"

I knew Bill was talking straight to my heart. He said, "Go home and kneel by your bed, look to heaven and say, 'I have never done it before, Jesus, come into my heart and save me.'" I prayed that request about 11:15 pm that evening and instantly knew that I was born again. My life has never been the same.

Just as that humble group of people gathered in prayer to transform their community and send missionaries into all the world, you can change the world through your Daniel prayer and fast. Just as God transformed Bona Bella, Georgia, He can transform the entire United States if enough people join together in intercessory prayer

– Elmer Towns©

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I ask that many fasting and praying will be effective.
- Lord, we ask for You to change the world through our prayers.
- Lord, we ask You to save our nation.

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### Day Three

#### Daily Commitment During Your Fast

*I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13 (ESV)*

You have made an original vow to fast and pray for a faith project. Now you must make a daily choice to continue your fast.

Remember, a choice involves all of your personality: your intellect, emotions and will. You first know with your mind, but knowledge by itself is not enough to change your life, nor will it get the prayer goal you seek. Your emotions can be stirred for this fast, but getting excited may only change the surface things. You may change a few things—while you're excited—but what about the long haul? Your life will be transformed when your will makes a choice based on what your mind knows, and when your emotions are stirred toward the prayer goal.

There are five things you need to commit to God in this fast. If you haven't done it yet, you should give to God the following five things: time, temple, talent, testimony and treasure.

First, you should commit your fast *time* to God. Pledge to begin and end according to the time limit you set in the checklist. If you are following the Daniel Fast with a group, promise to stay on your fast as long as the group fasts. *Lord, I promise to withhold food or other activities as long as my fast lasts.*

The second aspect of your Daniel Fast is your *temple*. You have pledged to eat healthy during this fast. You must commit your bodily temple to God. *Lord, I give my physical body to You. I will not eat or drink anything that will harm my body. I will refrain from alcohol, drugs, addiction and gluttony.*

The third part of your life to commit to God is your *talent*, or your abilities. In the Daniel Fast, this is committing your prayer ability to God. You must go beyond everything you have known about God and prayer in the past. You must pray many ways and at many times. *Lord, I promise to keep my prayer time during this fast. Help me learn to pray more effectively, and help me learn the intimacy of Your presence.*

The fourth aspect of your commitment is your *testimony*. Those who have joined you in your prayer goal will be watching you. You can be an encouragement to them as they are an encouragement to you. Be strong for all your friends who are watching you. *Lord, fill my life with Your presence.*



*Help me keep my fast strong to the end. Use my fast as a testimony to encourage others. May others see Christ in me.*

The fifth area is your *treasure*, or your money. Obviously, you are giving tithes and offerings to God, and usually through your church. If you're not, remember the challenge of God, " 'Bring all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and try Me now in this,' says the LORD of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing' " (Mal. 3:10). Remember, when you give all your money to God, He lets you use 90 percent for your needs. The 10 percent is used for His work. *Lord, I give all my treasures to You. Use them in your work.*

As you continue your Daniel Fast, you will face many temptations to quit. Remember, quitting is a decision just as beginning was a decision. However, the greatness of your decision to begin will outweigh any temptation to decide to quit. There's a lot to lose by quitting, and there is everything to gain by continuing to the end. You'll never know the completeness of what God will do if you give up too soon. You'll never know the joy of a job well done if you are not firm to the end.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- *Lord, I have purposed in my heart to intercede for a prayer –goal; I will not give up.*
- *Lord, I will not give in to my appetite to break my Daniel Fast. I will be strong to the end.*
- *Lord, I need Your strength to empower me. Help me realize, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). Amen.*

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#### **Day 4**

#### **Praying by Faith not Feelings**

*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. John 15:7 (ESV)*

When the disciples were faced with an insurmountable problem, Jesus told them, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22). With the proper faith, the disciples could remove barriers to get the work of God moving. Jesus told them, "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that these things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says" (v. 23). ... Jesus promised, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (v. 24).

However, we will not always get what we petition God for just because we pray for it. It's like starting up our personal computer. We need to type in our name and password, and sometimes several other commands, just to get our computer online. For my computer, I have to activate my virus-protection program, as well as hook up to my network system drive. Then when I have completed the login process by giving my computer all the appropriate commands, a musical chord is heard, and I know I am up and operating.

It is the same way with fasting and prayer we don't get our prayers answered just because we quit eating and begin asking. We must ask in Jesus's name, which means being in fellowship with him. We must ask according to the will of God and the Word of God - we can't have one without the other. We must confess all known sin before we ask, and we must harbor no ill will toward any when we want an answer to prayer.

But the biggest step of all is faith. We must ask in faith. Why? "Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who allegedly seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). With faith we can receive anything that God can give - if we honestly believe God will do what is promised. How much faith do you have?

What is Faith? Faith is affirming what God said in His Word. Affirming means we must want what God's Word promises, obey what God's Word commands, act on the conditions of God's Word and know that the promises of God's Word are real. Is that your response to God's Word? If so, you're living by faith. Now you can begin fasting and praying by faith.

Faith is not something we catch, like a disease. We can't become infected with faith by being exposed to people with faith. Faith is more like an ability, which grows through experience, practice, commitment and sacrifice. Look at the ability to run a marathon. No one can run 26 miles just because he or she wants to, just as no one has faith to move mountains just because he or she sincerely wants them removed. I've seen people pray for money, but it doesn't come just because they wanted it. It takes more than sincerity to get prayers answered.

We develop our faith in much the same way we develop our ability to run the marathon. It's like building up our muscles and endurance. First, you have to make a mental decision to run the marathon, realizing it will take long, hard practice runs. Then we have to change our diet, take vitamins, give up desserts and sweets and sacrifice time for practice. We'll have to spend hours running to build up our endurance. As the old saying goes: no pain, no gain.

We grow our faith the same way. It begins with the decision. We must decide that Jesus comes first - before work, entertainment or relationships. We built faith when we put him before everything.

We must discipline our eating and drinking habits for both running a marathon and building faith. Yes, I'm talking about physical food. But I'm also talking about controlling our emotional appetite. We can't grow faith on sexual fantasies, greed, gossip or self-exaltation.

I don't know of any overnight spiritual giants. Great faith is developed by daily experiences of Bible study, communion, worship and intercession. ... We grow our faith by successfully living through victories and defeats. Because our Christianity must affect every area of our lives, we develop our faith by all we do. (*Elmer Towns The Break Through Guide to Fasting pp. 283-285*)

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I acknowledge that faith means we desire what You desire. Make my desires yours.
- Lord, I desire to live according to Your will. I want you to control every aspect of my life.

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**Day Five**  
**Benefits of a Lengthy Fast**

*1 O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. 2 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled. 3 My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O LORD—how long?*  
*Psalm 6:1–3 (ESV)*

How long should you fast? Some people fast for one day; some fast for 10 days; others fast for 21 days; a few fast for 40 days.

It seems that the first time Daniel fasted for 10 days, it was a time preset by him. The second fast seems to reflect a period of time given to prayer, mourning and seeking God for an answer. An angel was sent to Daniel on the twenty-first day, saying, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words” (Dan. 10:12).

For whatever the length of your Daniel Fast, join in willingly and submit to your spiritual leadership (see Heb. 13:17). Never complain about the length, or about any other aspect of what your group is practicing in this fast. *Lord, I will fast strong to the end.*

**The Benefits of a Lengthy Fast**

*First* of all, ask how serious is the fasting goal for which you are praying? If it is an extremely imperative goal, then obviously you want to spend as much time in prayer as possible to make sure God hears and God answers. Sometimes God doesn’t respond to a quickly breathed prayer when we squeeze Him into our otherwise busy schedule.

*Second*, your prayer will grow in intensity as the fast time unrolls. You’ll develop more faith with time. Fasting for 10 or 21 days is like running a race; the closer to the finish line, the more your adrenaline begins to flow and you give it a “kick” to finish the race.

There’s a *third* reason you need time to fast. It takes time for your faith to grow. The more you pray about a project, the sharper your faith will become. Look at Abraham! When God first called him and promised to build a nation through his children, the Bible describes him as “weak in faith” (Rom. 4:19).

But God patiently strengthened Abraham’s faith so that he believed God could do what God promised. “And not being weak in faith . . . he did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God” (Rom. 4:19-20).

Perhaps you have weak faith as you begin your Daniel Fast. But as you continue fasting—day after day—you’ll find your faith being strengthened as you learn how to pray.

A *fourth* reason...a lengthy time of fasting and prayer will focus the goal in your heart. You will probably feel a growing burden as you continue to fast for your goal. It may take time for God to speak to your heart and show you the importance of the goal.

The *fifth* benefit of a lengthy fast is that it usually takes time to find sin in your life and deal with it by the blood of Christ. There may be a sin hidden in your heart, or you may be blinded to an otherwise obvious sin. Remember, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear” (Ps. 66:18). Because we justify some of our sin, we don’t see the hidden sin in our heart that hinders answers to prayer.

As you tarry in God’s presence, realize, “God does not hear sinners” (John 9:31) and “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden *His* face from you, So that He will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).

Finally, the *sixth* reason why you have a lengthy fast is that it takes time to search for God and find Him. When you search for something, it’s because you’ve lost it and you need it. Searching suggests a deep desire on our part.

At times, God doesn’t immediately disclose Himself. The psalmist exclaims, “Why do You hide Your face?” (Ps. 44:24). Perhaps God hides to see if we really want to find Him.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- *Lord, open my spiritual eyes progressively throughout this fast so that I may know You better at the end than I did at the beginning.*
- *Lord, as I wait in Your presence, reveal to me any sin lurking in my heart that would hinder my prayers.*
- *Lord, give me a resolute heart to pray continually, to pray sincerely and to pray in faith.*
- *Lord, I vow not to give up until the end of this fast. Amen.*

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**Day Six**  
**“Saying No”**

*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,  
and all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6:33 (ESV)*

The word “afflict” is tied to fasting on several occasions. The first time a believer is told to fast is in Leviticus 16:29. The old *King James* says, “Ye shall afflict your souls.” The *Living Bible* says, “Spend the day in self-examination and humility.” The *Holman Christian Standard Bible* translates it, “You are to practice self-denial.” The word “afflict” is constantly tied to fasting (see Lev. 16:29,34; Num. 29:7; Isa. 58:3,5).

Therefore, fasting is not something to be enjoyed, but rather a time of self-denial, abstinence, or affliction.

Therefore, in fasting you give up pleasure, and perhaps even necessities, to bring distress so you will pray with earnest or with more intensity.

Why do we do this? We don’t love pain, and pain itself does not please the heart of God. We fast or deprive ourselves for spiritual reasons. You are saying “no” to the old sinful nature. Isn’t this another way of showing repentance?

Afflicting yourself shows you want to get rid of sinful things in your life. Why? So you can get closer to God. Really, fasting gets answers to our *prayer-asking*.

So in this 21-day fast are you saying “no” to something that is pleasurable? Perhaps you are not eating meat or dairy products; and especially you’ve turned down sweets and your favorite snack. But really, aren’t you saying “yes” to God and His will for your life?

Sometimes we’re blinded to sin in our lives; maybe we’re controlled by a wrong attitude. Maybe we’ve gotten lax in our Christian commitment, or we’ve become hardened to the needs of other people. It’s the way termites get into our house—unnoticed. As we fast we recognize problems in our life and we pray to get rid of them.

Around twenty years ago a friend of mine discovered snakes had crawled inside the walls of his house and into his attic. He killed some with traps, but each time he soon discovered another. So he had to deal severely with the problem. He and his family had to live in a motel for almost a week, and a large tent was placed over his house and the snakes were gassed (and every other insect). Sometimes it takes severe actions to deal with a severe problem. Perhaps hidden sins have secretly

slipped into your life. The Psalmist prayed, “Don’t let me sin ignorantly, and don’t let sin control my life” (Psalm 19:13, *ELT*).

So why do we give up good things? We “afflict” ourselves to put God first in our life. We say “no” to good things, so we can say “yes” to the best things.

The issue is not whether these things are good, nor is the issue whether you enjoy them or whether you want them. The issue is who’s running your life? That’s another way of asking who’s sitting on the throne of your heart?

When you take control of your outward body by fasting, You begin to take control of your inward person.

There are two things that should happen when you say no. The negative repentance is when you abstain. You turn from sin. Christ gives you the power to say no whether you say no to a sinful thing, or whether you say no to something as good as one or two meals a day. But there is a positive action. Remember, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

Christ is in your heart because of salvation. So you yield to His inward strength and let Him give you strength to complete your Daniel Fast. “Thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14).

When you say no to some good things, it’s a reminder who’s the boss in your life. Sometimes we go through life thinking, *I’ve got to eat three square meals a day, or I deserve that entertainment or Everyone else is doing it; why can’t I?* While these are good things, and there’s nothing wrong with them, the issue is who’s running your life? This is another way of asking, Who’s sitting on the throne of your heart? Make sure.

When you give up some good things in life, you replace them with God who is best for your life. -Elmer Towns©

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I give up good things to seek Your best in my life.
- Lord, as I fast, show me any sinful desires or wrong attitudes that are keeping me from getting answers to prayer.

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**Day 7**  
**Persistence In You Fast**

*<sup>8</sup> I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. Luke 11:8–9*

There are so many distractions in modern life that keep us from praying. There are the cell phones, tweets, Facebook, television at home, and the radio in the car. These are all good things, but they can keep us from praying. How can we listen to God when so many voices demand our attention? How can we pray when there are so many interruptions?

We can't "come apart" into some mountain retreat and turn our backs on the bustle of life. No, but we can set aside time early in the morning or late at night for prayer. Begin your fast with a vow to pray at the same time each day. America faces a crisis. When you can't do anything about the problem, you can pray. God can do something.

Jesus tells the story of a sleeping man awakened by his neighbor who was knocking at his door frantically to borrow some bread in the middle of the night (Luke 11:5-10, *ELT*). The sleepy man replied, "Leave me alone, I'm sleeping, and so is my family."

The neighbor kept pounding on the door until he got the bread he needed. Jesus noted, "Though he will not rise and give him because he is a friend, yet because of his persistence, he will rise and give him as many as he needs. So I say to you, ask; it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Luke 11:8-9, *NKJV*).

Many years ago I learned this verse by remembering the first letter of each command, i.e., **A** for Ask, **S** for Seek, **K** for Knock. So **ASK** is an acronym which reminds us how to pray.

Wesley L. Duwel in his book, *Prevailing Prayer*, tells us why we should persevere in prayer:

To prevail is to be successful in the face of difficulty, to completely dominate, to overcome and tie up. Prevailing prayer is prayer that pushes right through all difficulties and obstacles, drives back all the opposing forces of Satan, and secures the will of God. Its purpose is to accomplish God's will on earth. Prevailing prayer not only takes the initiative, but continues on the offence for God until spiritual victory is won. (Wesley L. Duwel, *Prevailing Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), n.p.)



God knows our flesh is weak, and many times our inner man can't stand for God. The night before Jesus died, He took His disciples to the garden of Gethsemane. He asked, "Watch with Me" (Matt 26:38, *NKJV*). Jesus went alone to pray and came back and found them sleeping.

We must pray long, and at times we must struggle against our doubts, or our pessimism. The Christian life is not a coffee break, nor is it a summer vacation. The Christian life is a wrestling match and a battlefield. There is an enemy, Satan, who opposes God and therefore he opposes all that you are doing. Satan will oppose your fast, just as much as he opposes the faith project for which you are praying. So keep on praying.

The issue is "who will win—God or Satan?" Pray through obstacles, and pray through discouragement; don't give into your pessimism. Jesus encourages us, "Keep on praying and never give up" (Luke 18:1, *CEV*). Severe life-changing issues demand our complete dedication. Paul reminds us, "We are not fighting against humans. We are fighting against forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world" (Eph. 6:12, *CEV*). Prevailing prayer is an attitude that we learn in God's presence.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I am weak; give me strength to complete this Daniel Fast.
- Lord, I have completed seven days; help me pray and fast until the 21 days are up.
- Lord, give me the answer to which I am prevailing in prayer.

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**Day Eight**  
**Experiencing Intimacy with God**

*Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! You have said, 'Seek my face.' My heart says to you, 'Your face, LORD, do I seek.'*  
*Psalm 27:7-8*

The first recorded spoken words of Jesus occurred when He was 12 years old. Mary and Joseph had brought the family to Jerusalem for a feast. They probably traveled in a large group and had assumed Jesus was with them as they began returning home. But He was not. They searched for a couple of days until they found Him in the Temple. When asked why, Jesus answered, *"Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"* (Luke 2:49).

Many people read that story and emphasize that Jesus was in the house of God. *As good as that point is, the emphasis is that Jesus sought intimacy with God in His house. Jesus called God His Father, a term of intimacy.*

This close, intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father is seen throughout His earthly life. We see it at Christ's baptism (*"You are my beloved Son; with You I am well pleased"* Luke 3:22); His Transfiguration (*"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him"* Matt.17:5) and in the Garden of Gethsemane (*"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will but what you will."* Mark 14:26)

In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself by three names. He revealed Himself as Elohim (God the powerful Creator); Yahweh/Jehovah ("I Am Who I Am") and Adonai (master and Lord).

As we move to the New Testament Jesus taught His disciples they had a new relationship with God, 'Father' (Matt. 6:9). Because of this relationship, we are invited to approach Him with the confidence and joy of a child running into the arms of their loving dad.

Intimacy is enjoying the presence of God. When you come to your time of prayer, remember that you, too, can sit in the presence of the heavenly Father. Enjoy Him, beginning your prayers the way Paul taught us to approach the Father: *"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"* (Gal. 4:6).

There are several ways to describe the intimacy and actions that lead to experiencing intimacy with your heavenly Father.

*First, intimacy is being there.* You don't get intimacy with God by methods, techniques or even correct formulas in prayer. You get intimacy by drawing close to your heavenly Father. *"How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. (Ps. 84:1-2).*

*Second, intimacy is seeking the Father's presence.* The Father is sitting on the throne of heaven. Why don't you go crawl up onto His lap? Just as a child on earth goes to sit with his or her earthly father, you can do the same with your heavenly Father. *"One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple"(Ps. 27:4).*

*Third, let intimacy develop.* Some people just don't feel connected to God. How can they get past the "asking" phase of prayer to intimacy prayer? The simple answer is to give it time. Go into God's presence and wait.

The psalmist tells us, *"My soul, wait silently for God alone" (Ps. 62:5)*

*Fourth, true intimacy balances the tension between reverence and relationship.* God is the Creator of the universe; we reverence Him, bowing in His presence to cry out, "Holy, Holy, Holy." That's the almighty side of the door. But when we step through the door, we find ourselves in the presence of our heavenly Father—Abba Father—Papa. We can enter close up and metaphorically throw our arms around His neck and tell him, "I love You."

Reverence binds worshipers to their God.  
Relationship binds children to their father;

#### **-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I will wait in Your presence, not asking for anything, but waiting in Your presence, seeking to know You better.
- Lord, I want to know You intimately, more intimately than I know anyone on earth.
- Lord, teach me when to reverence You and when to seek Your intimacy.

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**Day Nine**  
**Begin with Giving Thanks**

*And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15 (ESV)*

Recently I was asked, “Why do you always begin your prayer giving thanks to God for answers?” I never thought about it until I was asked. Scripture reveals to us “those who give thanks develop one of the greatest Christ virtues of all”.

The word “thanksgiving” comes from *eucharisteo*, the root meaning of “grace.” When you tell someone “thank you,” you are communicating “grace” to them and you receive “grace” from God.

*Thanksgiving puts you on praying ground.* When you come into God’s presence with a grateful heart, He recognizes your sincerity and listens to your request. The wonderful thing about thanksgiving is that it takes away self-centered living. You rely on other people to help you, and you rely on God.

Paul teaches us to attach thanksgivings to our prayers, “In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6, *NKJV*). Did you see that “thanksgiving” comes before making “requests”? That’s God’s divine priority.

*A thankful heart is an obedient heart.* Note how many times in the Psalms we are commanded to give thanks (see Ps. 30:4; 97:12; 105:1; 106:1; 47; 107:1; 118:1; 29; 136:1-3; 26). So when you pray with thanksgiving, you become obedient.

Paul said, “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2, *NKJV*). Note how often Paul gave thanks (see Romans 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 1:3; Philem. 4). Don’t you realize that being obedient puts you close to the heart of God? Isn’t that the place where we get answers to prayer?

We are facing many political and social battles as we pray the Daniel Fast. Notice what Daniel did when things turned against him because his enemies in the political court had a civic law passed prohibiting him from praying. Did he quit? “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home . . . he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave *thanks* before his God” (Dan. 6:10, *NKJV*).

Because Daniel knew that God had answered his prayers in the past, he gave thanks. Isn’t it hard to thank God for problems and barriers in our life? But Daniel teaches us to continue giving thanks even as we face barriers.

*A thankful prayer or attitude will be a testimony to others.* Paul tells the believers in Thessalonica to “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”. (1 Thes. 5:18)

What are we to be thankful for? Be thankful for your fellow workers, rather than yelling at them. Be thankful for your children, rather than criticizing them. Thank God for our government, and all those who rule over us. We should be thankful that we don't live under a dictator, nor do we despair with no hope, and no reason to live.

Today, thank God for what food you have, for the clothes on your body, and for whatever shelter you have. Thank God for family, friends, and the nation in which you live. Thank God for every possession you own, but most of all thank God for all He has done through the death of Jesus Christ for you.

*Thanksgiving stirs our memory of Christ's death.* Some Christian groups call the Communion service the Eucharist. That word comes from eucharisteo, which means “giving thanks.”

In looking forward to His death, Jesus initiated giving thanks. “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me’ ” (Luke 22:19). So we eat with thanksgiving.

Then Jesus took the cup and repeated the same formula: “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you’ ” (Matt. 26:27).

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I thank You for your grace and peace through Jesus Christ.
- Lord, thank You for hearing me in the past, and answering my prayers.
- Lord, thank You for protecting me from danger . . . both known and unknown.
- Lord, thank You for my nation, its government and the leaders over me.

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**Day Ten**  
**Fasting to Increase My Hunger for God**

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man  
who takes refuge in Him! Psalm 34:8*

I had been fasting for several days, and it was going well. A good friend asked, “What great answer to prayer have you gotten because of your fast?”

“I’m not fasting to get an answer to prayer,” was my immediate response. “Then why are you putting yourself through all this torture if you’re not fasting to get an answer to prayer?”

“I’m fasting to know God intimately,” I said. “My fast is not about getting things from God. I’m fasting to experience God more intimately.”

When you spend time with God, it’s a satisfying experience. Those who are meeting God experience deep joy. It’s an intimacy that’s hard to describe or put into words. Let’s examine what happens to your fellowship with God when you fast.

When your car is almost out of gas it begins to skip and cough to tell you it’s about to stall. In the same way, if you are used to eating three meals a day—then you miss three meals—your stomach will let you know it’s time for a refill. So when you don’t eat—because you’re fasting—you get signals from your body on a regular basis, “feed me.” Every signal should remind you of the purpose of your Fast. Every time your stomach “growsl” or “gurgles,” you are reminded that “this fast is for God.” Physical hunger pangs then become a reminder to turn that hunger towards seeking God. It’s one thing to hunger for food; it’s a greater thing to hunger for God’s presence in your life.

Jesus called Himself bread: “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger” (John 6:35). We eat for strength and for life; but God also gave us the gift of food to enjoy. Doesn’t food satisfy us? Cool, crispy watermelon on a hot humid day! Hot, steaming pizza on a cool evening! Sizzling steak when we’re extra hungry! So think of the satisfaction we get from Jesus when we bring our empty heart to Him. Jesus gives satisfying life, for He promised, “He who comes to Me shall never hunger” (John 6:35). As we fast, we find that Jesus fills every yearning of the heart. When we got saved, we invited Jesus to live in our hearts, and He entered our earthly life to give us eternal life. When we fast, we focus on Jesus who lives within. As we read the Scriptures, we

take Christ into our life anew; for Jesus is “the Word [of God]” (John 1:1). So read much Scripture when you are fasting. The Bible—Jesus’ words—renews our will to live for God and sharpens our mind to think on God.

You will often experience deeper fellowship, or communion, with Christ during a fast than at any other time. Take a few moments and read John 15:1-8. In verse 4 Jesus says, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me”. The words “abides in me,” means that we have fellowship, or communion, with Christ. When Jesus says, “I in you,” that’s when we have union with Christ. This is the union that begins at salvation because we take Christ into our heart (see John 7:12; Eph. 5:17). We are united to Christ by salvation. So where is Christ when you fast? He’s living in your heart. As we allow our fellowship with Christ to grow, one of the results will be spiritual fruit that will glorify the Father.

As you get ready to pray, reflect on the words of Jesus in John 15:9: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.”

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Jesus, may I be conscious of Your deep abiding love for me throughout this day.
- Lord, deepen my hunger and desire to seek and know You.
- Lord, as I abide in You, produce the spiritual fruit that glorifies the Father

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**Day 11**  
**Prayer is Asking**

<sup>13</sup> *Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* <sup>14</sup> *If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.*  
*John 14:13–14 (ESV)*

Remember, prayer is a relationship with God, and part of that relationship is *prayer-asking*. Why does God want us to ask Him for anything? Isn't God all-knowing? Can our *prayer-asking* make any difference?

Didn't Jesus say, "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matt. 6:8, *NKJV*)? So, why are we *prayer-asking* for God to work?

Because prayer is relationship with God; have you ever thought of the possibility that God wants to spend time with you?

Fourteen time Grammy Award winner Ricky Skaggs read my book, *Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough* and sent word he wanted to spend the day with me just to learn about fasting and prayer. So we spent a Wednesday in September 2007 together.

Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb Mt. Everest, also read the same book and sent word that he wanted to chat with me about fasting. I was making plans to travel to New Zealand to have "tea" with Sir Hillary and talk about fasting, but he died before I could meet with him.

Asking is an elementary form of dependence upon God. When you ask your mother-in-law for advice, doesn't that show that you trust her and you want her opinion?

Asking puts you in partnership with God. If you ask someone to help you on a project, doesn't that mean the two of you will work together? As you work together you get closer and perhaps you become friends. How close does it put you with God when you fast and *pray-ask* for His help?

You should *pray-ask* because God wants to be asked. Remember, Jesus said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7, *NKJV*). Don't parents enjoy their children asking them for something? Sure! Think about your Heavenly Father and how it makes God feel when you ask for something?



And what about your happiness? Jesus said, “Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full” (John 16:24). To put Jesus’ statement into contemporary words, “You are going to be happy when I answer your prayers” (John 16:24, *Amplified*). So if you fast and pray for 21 days and God answers, you will be happy; and so will God.

So, *prayer-asking* leads to fellowship. When you *pray-ask*, your fellowship with your Heavenly Father is enriched. When we ask our human parents, we get as close to them as possible and obey them simply to get the things we want. So *prayer-asking* will deepen your relationship with God because you will get closer to Him and obey Him. And don’t both you and God agree that you want Him to be glorified.

When Jesus said to *pray-ask* in His name, He was not suggesting some sort of mantra, or a secret code that opened up locked things. Jesus wasn’t even suggesting that we just add His name to the end of our prayers.

To *pray-ask* in Jesus’ name is to take full advantage of His death that took away our sins (John 1:29), because His blood cleansed us from every sin (see 1 John 1:7). So, praying in Jesus’ name takes advantage of our salvation accomplished on the cross.

Also, remember that Jesus is standing at the right hand of God the Father in heaven making intercession for us (Heb. 7:24-25). So when we *pray-ask* in Jesus’ name, we are asking Jesus to be our intercessor to the Heavenly Father. One last thing about praying in Jesus’ name! When you were converted, you asked Jesus to come into your life (John 1:12), so *pray-ask* in Jesus’ name because He lives in your heart – by Elmer Towns©

**-My Time to Pray-**

- God, Jesus is sitting at Your right hand in glory, and I am positionally “in Him.” Now I come through Christ to get answers for which I am fasting.
- Lord, give me faith to believe You for the answer for which I am fasting. “I believe, help Thou my unbelief.” Amen.

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**Day Twelve**  
**Fasting to Worship God**

*But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. John 4:23*

John chapter four recounts the meeting between Jesus and a Samaritan woman outside the village of Sychar. As they engage in conversation, the topic turns to worship. The Samaritans, who were part Jew and part Gentile in their heritage, worshipped on Mount Gerizim, located in Samaria. The Jews worshiped God at the Temple in Jerusalem. Which is right, she asks. Jesus, in His reply says, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father... God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth”. The conversation can be found in John 4:1-26

What does it mean to worship God in spirit and in truth? In Psalm 103, David wrote, “Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!” (Ps. 103:1). We are called to approach God with all our heart; that means nothing is held back or nothing is hidden from His view. This is key to a true worshipper of God.

When we worship God, we move out of ourselves and get closer to Him, perhaps closer than ever before. We move away from our prayers and our petitions, and we focus on Him and His glory. When we worship God, we are not asking for something for ourselves, nor are we asking to get out of trouble or for Him to protect us. Our worship has nothing to do with ourselves; it has everything to do with God.

The writer of Hebrews says, “Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name” (Heb. 13:15). Just as a peach tree produces peaches, so our mouths should produce the words of praise and gratitude that come from our hearts because we are thankful that God has saved us. Our worship reflects a heart that is fully focused on the greatness and goodness of God.

Worship keeps us from becoming bogged down in the circumstances of life. Worship focuses our life on something greater than our present limitations. Praise keeps us from being self-centered and negative. Think about what worship teaches us. Every time we praise God, we begin to learn something more about God—what He has done for us, and what He has promised He will do for us in the future. And as we learn more and

more of what He has done for us, it deepens our relationship with Him. Maybe this is why the disciples “were continually in the temple praising and blessing God” (Luke 24:53), and why Paul dedicated the book of Ephesians “to the praise and glory of His grace” (Eph. 1:6).

Moses became discouraged as he attempted to lead the Jews from slavery in Egypt to the promised blessings of Canaan. Their complaining and stubbornness, along with the episode involving the Golden Calf of Exodus 32. Moses begged God, “Please, show me your glory” (Exodus 33:12-21). God responds by taking Moses to Mount Sinai and proclaiming to Moses, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Exodus 34:1-7). The response? “Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped” verse 8.

Practice the continual presence of God in your life. David said, “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth” (Ps. 34:1). As you go through this day, consciously look for the little ways that you see God in your life. Say a short prayer of thanksgiving for everything He does. The more you praise and thank God for what He is doing in your life, the more His presence will be manifested in your life.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I will worship You from the bottom of my heart and I will not hold back any part of myself in my worship.
- Lord, I will continually bless Your name and worship You in the big and little things of my life.
- Lord, forgive me when I haven't seen Your presence in my life; when I am unaware of Your working in my life. Help me see more clearly as You develop Your will for my life, and teach me to be thankful for what You are doing.

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**Day Thirteen**  
**Fasting to Locate Sin**

*Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.  
Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose  
spirit there is no deceit...I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my  
iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you  
forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

*Psalms 32:1-2, 5*

In October of 1973, the students of Liberty University experienced the presence of God in a revival that resulted in a fast for 60 hours. The usual Wednesday night prayer meeting ended a little after 9:00 p.m., and the revival that transformed many lives began about 10:30 p.m. About 35 students were scattered in small groups throughout the auditorium when a weeping young man stood behind the pulpit to announce, "You all think I'm saved, but I'm not. . . ." He confessed his sins of lying, cheating on tests, being an egotist, and several other sins. The shocked students listened intently until he went down to fall on the pulpit stairs to pray. Some went to pray with him; others prayed for him in small groups. A reverential spirit gripped the room. Then over the sound of whispered prayers, another boy stood behind the pulpit. He, too, began, "You think I'm saved, but I've never received Christ . . ." He too confessed his sins and went down the other side of the pulpit to pray. Several joined him.

Throughout the night other students and church members felt a sudden urge to "come down to the church." Some received a phone call from friends; others awakened by the Holy Spirit. By 6:00 a.m. more than 2,000 people filled the auditorium. God's presence was in the church and no one wanted to leave. When students got so tired they couldn't stay awake, they slept under the pews; some even slept on the floor in the back foyer. When Jesus was there, who could leave? The crowd swelled to more than 4,000.

Many who had previously professed salvation were truly born again because they had only made an outward confession that wasn't of the heart. God showed many the hidden sin of their hearts. The proud had been boastful but now saw it as a sin of arrogance against God. Those who had many small sins that didn't hurt anyone, repented when they realized their sin was against God. And of course there were some sensational testimonies of those who were hiding besetting sins.

Here's where the fasting comes in: Almost no one left the church to go out for a meal. Christ was the Bread of Life, and fellowshiping with Him satisfied any hunger that one may have had. People were so busy meeting with God that they didn't take the time to eat; no, they didn't want to eat. In that 60-hour revival, God blessed the students of Liberty University because they fulfilled scripture: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

This revival was about the Holy Spirit showing people their sin when they sought God's face and fasted and repented of their sin. You are now in 21-days of prayer and fasting. Perhaps God led you into this time to show you some sin of attitude, actions or contemplation. Perhaps God wants you to deal with a sin before He gives you the big breakout you seek.

When you fast for a long time, you begin to see things as God sees them. When you see how terrible your sin is, you don't have to "make" yourself repent. You don't have to make yourself give up a sin that's hard to give up. Fasting in God's presence gives you strength, and you say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

One of the things that made King David a 'man after God's own heart' was that when he did allow sin to enter his life, he repented, confessed and recommitted himself to walking in righteousness. This spirit is seen in Psalms 32 and 51, both written by him. Take a few minutes to read these Psalms and ask God to show you areas of your life He wants you to confess to, repent of and walk in righteousness by His grace.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, take away my blindness and show me any sin that blocks Your blessing in my life.
- Lord, I confess my sin (by name), and I ask You to forgive me and cleanse me. Amen.

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### **Day Fourteen** **Don't Violate Your Fast**

*When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay Ecclesiastes 5:4-5*

Perhaps you have made fasting part of this 21 days. Or perhaps you made a vow to pray more, or at a specific time. What happens when you slip and eat something that you vowed that you wouldn't eat? Or a day comes and goes and you failed to spend time praying? That's a tough question. Tough, because the slip is against God; you violated your promise to God. Tough, because the slip is also against yourself; you promised yourself to pray and fast.

To *violate* a fast is to breach the limits of your diet or the length of your vow that you made to God.

To *break* a fast is to come to the completion of the time and commitment of the fast and begin eating a normal diet.

While on a 10 day fast I walked out to the receptionist in the School of Religion where my office is located. It was the Halloween season and the receptionist had a dish of "friendly" candy corn on her desk. It was her way of saying hello to those who come to Liberty University's School of Religion.

I began talking to her about a project and without thinking I popped a couple of candy corn pieces into my mouth and began chewing them. Before I could swallow, the impact of food—just a little—in my mouth dawned on me.

"Ohh!" I smacked my forehead, realizing what a foolish act I had just committed.

In the Old Testament there was a severe penalty for presumptuous sin (intentionally sinning) and less penalty for sins of ignorance (not realizing you were breaking God's law; see Num. 15:29-31). So what do you do if you violate your fast or prayer goal? Ask God to forgive you. "If we confess our sins, He . . . forgives" (1 John 1:9). Then ask God to keep you from doing it again, "Keep me from hidden faults" (Ps. 19:12, *ELT*). Then, pick up from that point, recommit yourself to what you have vowed and move forward!

“But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Don't get down on yourself, because “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). The word “all” means that God forgives deep sins like murder and theft, but He also forgives things like broken promises. Then realize that God deals with you in mercy, just as He dealt with Paul who confessed his many sins but recognized, “God had mercy on me” (1 Tim. 1:13, *TLB*). Then look to Jesus for the grace and enablement to fulfill your vow, whether to fasting or to praying; “I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.” Phil. 4:13

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I enter this time of prayer and fasting with all my integrity, and I will keep it to the end.
- Lord, if I ignorantly violate my fast, forgive me for my unintended mistake.
- Lord, if I presumptuously violate my Daniel Fast, forgive me and strengthen my will. I will begin anew to keep the vow I made to You.
- Lord, deal with me in mercy, and give me strength to pray and fast; hear the intercessions of my heart for the spiritual goals I've set.

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**Day Fifteen**  
**The Prayer of Crucifixion**

*But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.*

*Galatians 6:14*

One of the best known verses penned by the Apostle Paul is Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ in me. And the life I live I now live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

What does Paul mean when he says that he was crucified with Christ? Our crucifixion is a past action; our old nature was crucified when Christ died. We are not to *do it*, but *receive* it. Christ was crucified in the past, and Paul identified with the cross in his life that he lived after the crucifixion. When we "crucify" ourselves, we receive what Christ has done and we apply His death to our sin. Paul said, "I through the law died to the law that I might live to God" (Gal. 2:19). That means we yield ourselves to God and receive His life to triumph over temptation and sin.

This type of life is more about completely yielding ourselves (the inner person) to God rather than doing something to get victory. It's not about us being victorious but Christ being victorious through us. Some call this the "crucified life," while others call it the "transformed life" or the "victorious life." Some refer to it as the "exchanged life".

Paul told us how this exchanged life takes place: "God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). When we are "crucified" to the world, we take up all that the cross symbolizes. It means humiliation, degradation and an end to sin. So when we take up the cross, we yield ourselves to God and determine to sin no more.

That doesn't mean we lose our sin nature. No, we still have an old nature that will tempt us to sin (see 1 John 1:8). But we surrender ourselves to God to get His victory over it. His death gave us life, so we get the energy of Christ's life when we receive His crucifixion.

When we "crucify" ourselves, we yield to Christ so that what He thinks of us matters more than what others think of us. We no longer live to look good to others. Oh yes, we are good neighbors and good testimonies; and we don't want to do stupid things or look weird. But we quit the hypocrite's role to make people think we are something we're not .



So to crucify yourself, you please God first, family second and others third. We live for a new purpose, one suggested by John the Baptist: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

When we crucify ourselves, we live by a new value system. We give up our inner compulsions for self-power, self-protection, self-success, and gathering “stuff.” We give everything to God for His control, and we use what He lets us use.

We no longer have to “win” for selfish reasons. We learn that losing everything to God is much more satisfying than winning the world. For when we lose to God, we win the most important thing in life—being in the center of God’s will.

To crucify our self is another way of dealing with our pride. In the act of yielding completely to God, we become more humble. Didn’t James tell us, “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (Jas. 4:10)? So our humility is important to God if He’s going to use us.

Most likely, self-crucifixion comes in small, intentional acts when we give part of our life to God. Small, unrecognizable victories over self-pleasure or self-promotion or satisfying your lust will often not be seen by others, but they will lead to the greatest amount of spiritual growth in our lives.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I acknowledge that I have a big “ego”; teach me to put Christ first in all I do. Teach me humility.
- Lord, I can’t crucify myself by anything I pray or do; I receive the benefit of Christ’s death to forgive my sin.
- Lord, I can’t become more spiritual by my self-effort. I receive the life of Jesus that comes from His triumph over death. I yield to Christ and will be strong against temptation in His indwelling presence.

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**Day Sixteen**  
**Weeping While Praying**

*A time to weep, and a time to laugh. (Ecclesiastes 3:4)*

Have you ever prayed so hard that you began to weep? Maybe when you got saved you were so convicted of your sin that you wept before God. Today, let's talk about weeping as you pray. Will tears help your prayers get answered? When should we weep with our prayers?

When we shed tears before God, it probably means God has touched the very center of our feelings.

*Many people weep when they first come to Jesus.* A woman who was broken over her sin came and stood behind Jesus as He ate at a banquet in Simon the Pharisee's house. "[She] stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil" (Luke 7:38). There's nothing wrong with weeping our way to the cross for salvation.

*Sometimes we weep over the death of someone close to us,* even if it was his or her time to die. When Mary's brother Lazarus died, "Jesus saw her weeping" (John 11:33). It's only natural to cry when a part of your life is taken away in death.

*Sometimes our memory causes us to weep.* The Jews who were taken captive to Babylon remembered the good times in the Promised Land and the presence of God in the Temple. Their sin led to God's punishment, and Babylon took them into captivity. They cried, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1). There is a time to put away enjoyment and weep over the memory of what we have lost.

*Sometimes we will weep over lost loved ones.* Perhaps you have added to your fast prayer for the salvation of lost people who are special to you. Paul felt that way when he prayed for lost Jews: "I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:2-3). His tears were not for what he lost, but for those who were lost.

*Sometimes we will weep over sins in our life.* Every sin is against God, but when we come to realize our sin has personally hurt God, it's then that we weep. Out of his deep repentance, David wrote Psalm 51, which reflected his deep repentance with tears before God.

“For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me (Ps. 51:3). “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight. . . . Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities (Ps. 51:4,9). It’s much easier to search for your sin when you deal with it in a biblical way. If you harden your heart and act as if you have no sin, God will eventually break your heart and He will deal harshly with your sin. If you know anything about God, He’ll be more severe on your sin than you will be. So deal with it yourself and save yourself some added pain.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, show me the sin that hinders my prayer life; I’ll confess and repent.
- Lord, I repent and turn from sin that blocks my fellowship with You
- Lord, Your forgiveness feels good; I enjoy praying in Your presence.

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**Day Seventeen**  
**Introspective Prayer**

*In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord . . . my soul refused to be comforted. (Ecclesiastes 3:4)*

Have you ever felt like you were wandering in a desert and you didn't know which way to go? The horizon seemed distant, and nothing was familiar. Have you ever felt lost and didn't know which way to turn? When you cried out to God, did it seem like He wasn't there? When that happens, most people retreat into introspective prayer.

*Some people complain to God or they complain about God.* Instead of reaching up to God or reaching out to others, they retreat inward. They blame themselves, and as a result, they feel even more hopeless and helpless.

Job's prayers are perhaps the best example in the Bible of introspective prayers. He did nothing wrong; there was no outward sin in his life that he should be judged by God. Yet most people know well that he was the victim of violence, family loss, theft and bankruptcy. The day we all dread financially came to Job, yet "he fell to the ground and worshiped" (Job 1:20). Instead of complaining, Job exercised faith in God.

There may be times in your life when you feel abandoned by God. Maybe the prayer project for which you are fasting has you discouraged. Maybe you're doubting that God will answer, and you're about to give up. Yet the Bible is filled with promises that God will come to us when we completely throw ourselves on His mercy and beg for His presence.

*Sometimes it's taking a wrong turn on the pathways that has us stranded in the desert.* We've made the wrong decision and missed God's will. So we didn't commit a sin of rebellion or deliberate transgression. Maybe we ignored God's instructions, or we didn't seek His plan for our life. Maybe that's why the One in heaven is silent.

*Sometimes we get lost in the desert because we are inattentive.* Maybe God was trying to direct our lives, but we were too busy with our own business to do His will. So God let us get lost so we will feel the consequences of a life without God's presence.

When God talks to us and we don't listen, what does He do? He can yell—He can also shout—but usually does something different. God does the opposite; He stops talking. He's silent until we're ready to listen to Him. By seemingly abandoning us for a while, God gets our attention and we desperately search for Him.

There's one great thing we learn from being lost in the desert—we learn self-knowledge. One of the best lessons we can learn in life is what we can't do in life. It's even a better gift than learning what we can do. The foundation of self-knowledge is the basis upon which you build the rest of your life. We build a well-rounded spirituality when we build on a proper understanding of ourselves.

How does a blind person walk? Not very knowingly. They miss a lot that they would like to see, and they trip over things they can't see. They end up seeing only their failures, and they live in a world of darkness.

When you're self-blinded, you end up feeling sorry for yourself and you punish yourself for the wrong decisions of your life or the mistakes you've made.

When you take an introspective journey into your innermost being, you must take God with you to tell you what is really wrong and what you must do to get well. Because He is truth and He will tell you the truth.

God will reveal to us the things we need to know about ourselves, and He will hide what we shouldn't see. God will not show you all your wickedness; none of us could take it.

The prayer of introspection should bring us to the place of forgiveness. When we look away from our sins and failure to Jesus Christ, we seek cleansing. Forgiveness is a new beginning, because God allows you to start over again.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, sometimes it feels good when I begin my introspection, but it feels so frustrating when I stay there.
- Lord, I know that in myself is no good thing; I look to You in Scripture to find the perfect will for my life.
- Lord, I confess my sin of self-pity and ask for Your cleansing and forgiveness by the blood of Christ.
- Lord, I will walk the straight and narrow path to fulfill Your will for my life. Amen.

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**Day Eighteen**  
**Resting in Praying**

*Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation*  
(Psalm 62:1).

If you are fasting from food, you are letting your body rest. That means your stomach is resting and the heart is not working as hard to digest your food. Don't forget about your soul. It also needs some rest. Jesus invited us, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29, *NLT*). You must continue to get stronger spiritually by seeking occasional rest.

**Why Silence?** *We love noise.* Think of all the constant noise within your life, television, cell phone, email, video games, twitter, facebook, etc. We can get streaming noise without stop. What did Paul mean, "Aspire to lead a quiet life" (1 Thess. 4:11)? What did God mean, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. 30:15)? There is power in silence before God. It's not the absence of words that gives us strength; it's God's presence that empowers us. We don't learn as much when we're talking as when we're listening.

Also, *we get strength from being quiet in God's presence.* Just as our tired physical muscles need rest to regain their strength, so our tired souls need rest to regain determination and courage to work for God.

*You can communicate with God in silence.* Most people think silence is wasted time because nothing is happening. But does communication happen only with talking? No! Think of two people in love; they can sit for the longest time, looking into one another's eyes, with no sound from their mouths, yet they are communicating. Their presence with one another communicates love. But that type of love has to grow in understanding, acceptance and relationship. Do you have a relationship with God that allows you to sit silently in His presence without talking?

**Rest in God.** God considers rest so important that He decreed one day out of every seven was a day of rest. Note the fourth commandment:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God (Exod. 20:8-10). Why did God create a Sabbath day? Because He first rested on the first Sabbath. "Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God

ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done” (Gen. 2:1-2). Did God need to rest from His work because He was tired? No! God is omnipotent, which means He is all-powerful. He created all things without effort. God was not tired, but He rested.

Because God finished and then rested, He invites you to finish each week in His presence, on His day, with His assembly of people. You should rest—or finish—the work of each week in His presence.

We must sit silently in God’s presence to practice the presence of God. The Jews observed the Sabbath (which means “rest”) as a symbol of their covenant with God they took a day off so they could rest. But more than physical rest, it was a day of worship, learning and spiritual exercise.

In this chapter, we’ve discussed silence before God. But there comes a time for words. Talk to God intimately, talk to God about Himself. Tell God what you enjoy about your fast. Meditate on the great things He did in creation. Then turn your thoughts to the great things God did in salvation. Finally, end up thanking God for the things He has done in your life.

After you’ve talked to God awhile, stop talking and listen to His voice through His Word. *As you read the Scriptures, what is God saying to you? As you meditate on Scriptures, what does God want you to do? As you wait in God’s presence, how does He want you to pray, and for what should you pray? As you wait, ask God to reveal His presence to you.* The written Word of God must become the living Word of God in your heart.

#### **-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, forgive me when I do all the talking in Your presence; I will listen and be quiet. I will learn.
- Lord, forgive me for making my prayer request more important than resting in Your presence and enjoying intimacy with You.
- Lord, I will come apart to fellowship with You in Your presence at a certain time each day.
- Lord, give me spiritual strength to pray for my prayer project, and help me continue asking to the end of my fast. Amen.

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## **Day Nineteen** **Urgent Prayer**

*As the young deer being chased stays long enough for a drink of water in a mountain stream, so my soul pants for God (Psalm 42:1, ELT).*

When you pray urgently, it probably means you're praying with all your heart, and you keep praying because you really need an answer. Urgent prayers come out of a growing need. Urgency of heart produces urgency in prayer.

What about desperation? You pray desperately when there is an immediate crisis. Peter was walking on the water toward Jesus. His eyes were fixed on Jesus. Isn't that the way we should walk our Christian life? Then, "But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" (Matt. 14:30). What is a desperate prayer? You panic, or you're in a hole with no way out. You've tried everything, but every door is closed. There's no way out of your problem if God doesn't intervene.

### **Preparing to Pray Urgently or Desperately**

*First, get mentally prepared for emergencies.* Part of your preparation is knowing that difficulty will come. Ask God to prepare you for future times of trials and testings. Technically, you can't prepare for an emergency, but you can ask God to give you the ability to deal with an emergency when it comes. Ask God to give you peace in the emergency, and then ask God to give you wisdom to react properly in times of crisis.

*Second, memorize verses that point you to God in time of trouble.* When an emergency comes, you will not have time to look up Bible references to encourage you. But if they are hidden in your heart, God can bring them to your mind (Ps 46:1, Psalm 27:5, Psalm 34:6, Psalm 56:3, Psalm 121:1-2, 2 Chronicles 14:11).

*Third, know when to move from urgent prayers to desperate prayers.* You pray urgently for a project because it is a spiritual need. But then a deadline approaches. Your prayers move from urgency to desperation. You cry out, "Lord, do it now!" Remember, there is a proper time for desperately crying out to God with tears and deep passion.

*Fourth, jump right into your prayers.* Don't think about what you are going to pray—just pray. Don't consult your prayer lists; also, don't think about how you will frame your request, just pray. Don't get ready to pray—just pray. If you are in desperation, open your heart and yell, "Help, Lord!"



*Fifth, keep your scheduled times of prayer.* As you approach emergencies, you will cry out instantly and wholeheartedly. When a problem comes, immediately lay the problem at God's feet. But don't let an emergency rob you of your foundation of continuing prayer. As you continue in your fast, don't forget about all the other problems in your life and in the lives of your friends and relatives. Keep bringing those before your Father in heaven.

If you have been missing one or two meals a day to pray, then keep that schedule. Remember, it's in those scheduled times of prayer that you find strength. You will need continuing strength in times of crisis, so be faithful in your committed times of prayer.

*Sixth, bring God into the crisis.* You are fasting and praying for a spiritual victory. Make sure the fast goal is God's project and not your personal project. Sometimes we try to talk God into blessing the project we do for Him. While doing projects for God is good, there is something better. It's when God assigns you a project. It's His project. When you pray, make sure you and God are on the same side. The emphasis is not on your begging God to come help you win this battle. No, that's the wrong emphasis. It's not even getting God on your side; it's you getting on God's side. Pray with confidence because God will complete His project, in His way, at His time.

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I lay this prayer project at Your feet. This is what You have laid upon my heart. I will fast and pray until the end of my vow.
- Lord, I have been praying urgently about the prayer goal. Now I come praying desperately for an answer.
- Lord, give me faith to believe You for this prayer goal. "I believe, help Thou my unbelief."
- Lord, I need Your help now! Amen.

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## **Day Twenty** **Spiritual Warfare**

*“And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed” (Exodus 17:11).*

There is a place in Scripture where we can learn the principles of spiritual warfare. Moses stood on a high hill to see a battle line unfold before him. God’s people were being attacked by Amalek—an evil nation that fought against Israel for 1,000 years. This was not a battle between two nomadic desert tribes, nor was it sword against sword or brute strength against brute strength. It was God against Satan: the kingdom of light against the kingdom of darkness. As long as Moses held up his arms in intercession to God, the soldiers of God won the battle. But the battle continued throughout the day. When Moses dropped his arms in fatigue, Amalek prevailed. “And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed” (Exod. 17:11).

Of course, upheld arms are not a magical way to get a victory. They are like extended hands today as a symbol of our uplifted hearts to God. When God’s people face a spiritual battle, they can claim victory by lifting hands and heart to God.

While you are praying and fasting you may encounter (1) a temptation to quit, or (2) have difficulty keeping your mind on God when you should be praying, or (3) you’ll think of a past satisfying sin, or (4) a spirit of discouragement will overcome you, or (5) a besetting sin may return, or (6) other un-Christlike attitudes will manifest themselves.

Most of your spiritual warfare will not be with extremely evil things such as casting out a demon or dealing with supernatural manifestations of demonic power

Although you feel a personal victory because you’ve kept your fast for almost 21 days. Watch out! Evil Amalek may be preparing an attack to stop you from reaching a successful end to the fast. There are some things you can do as you engage in spiritual warfare.

## Practical Helps in Spiritual Warfare

*Get strength from your friends.* The battle in Exodus 17 was not won by one individual. It took Joshua, the general, and soldiers to fight. It took Moses, the intercessor, and Aaron, his brother, and Hur, his brother-in-law, to support Moses' arms. In the same way, remember that there are others who are interceding with you. Call on them to pray for your special need. Share with them your burden.

*Pray out loud so you can focus on the target.* When you are actively putting words together, your mind will not wander.

*Change your prayer posture.* Just as Moses got tired (because he was old), so your muscles will not hold up indefinitely. Move from kneeling to standing to walking to lying prostrate before the Lord. Keeping the body active may keep the mind focused.

*Know your weakest area.* The enemy knows your weaknesses and will attempt to attack you there. So don't let him get you there. Write down what is your weakest area, be aware of it, pray about it and be mindful of it.

*Pray against your enemy.* Some call this "rebuking Satan, or rebuking the enemy." When you pray against the enemy, do so with caution; for our enemy has great supernatural power. But on the other hand, be encouraged; Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18).

*Be ready for a counterattack against any success you have in prayer.* Paul reminds us, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

*Claim the victory that is already yours.* God has promised, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

### -My Time to Pray-

- Lord, I want to be strong in Your strength; help my weakness and keep me vigilant.
- Lord, the Bible says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," so, I yield my weakness to Your strength.
- Lord, thank You for every victory I've had in the past; I learn from them and go forward "from victory to victory." Amen.

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**Day 21**  
**Stay in the Moment**

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20 (ESV)*

The Bible tells the amazing story of Jonathan, son of King Saul, who went into a skirmish with enemy soldiers where he was outnumbered. Jonathan and his armor bearer, “slipped out of the Israelite camp without anyone knowing it. Jonathan didn’t even tell his father he was leaving” (1 Sam. 14:3, *CEV*).

Jonathan approached the enemy with the hopes that God would give him victory, saying, “It may be that the Lord will work for us” (1 Sam. 14:6, *NKJV*). Jonathan was aware that there were just two of them against the whole squad of enemy soldiers.

But Jonathan had optimistic faith in God, not in his ability to fight. “The Lord can help a few soldiers win a battle just as easily as he can help a whole army. Maybe the Lord will help us win this battle” (1 Sam. 14:6, *CEV*).

Jonathan began with a positive strategy. “Perhaps the Lord will work for us.” Why is it that so many people begin praying with a negative strategy? “Perhaps God won’t work on my behalf.” Why is it that we are afraid to put God on the spot?

What do we know from this story? Jonathan’s eyes were not on his ability, nor on the number of people fighting with him. He even knew that the odds were against a victory, but he also knew that God could do a miracle, “For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few” (1 Sam. 14:6, *NKJV*).

So it’s not your ability to pray, nor is it your ability to fast. Look to God’s ability to do the unusual, even the supernatural.

Can you see Jonathan climbing up the cliffs to meet the garrison waiting for him? He fought one enemy soldier after another, coming to the end of his day exhausted yet victorious. In the same way, we must fight one spiritual battle at a time, not giving up but continuing to fight until we come to the end of the day victorious. Also, Jonathan had risked everything, had given all of his energy, and yet that was the only way to get victory.

And where was Jonathan’s father—Saul—when he was fighting the enemy? “Saul was sitting in the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree . . . the people who were with him were about six hundred men” (1 Sam. 14:2, *NKJV*). Remember, Saul was a backslidden king and on one occasion he rejected God’s leadership and on a second occasion he disobeyed God’s commandment. But Jonathan couldn’t be concerned about his father; he could only be concerned about the enemy.

Perhaps you think a victory is too big, and that the enemy is too large. So look at Jonathan’s case. The enemy soldiers had the higher ground, and they had Jonathan outnumbered. The odds were against Jonathan, yet with God on his side (or rather, Jonathan on God’s side), he led God’s people to victory.

One more thing, let’s talk about inner fear. Maybe you’ve never fasted this long before. Maybe you’ve never made a big faith-statement. Maybe you don’t think you have the education, or spirituality, maybe you don’t think you have anything to move a mountain. But one person—like Jonathan—can lead others to win a victory for God. So what was the result? “So the Lord saved Israel that day” (1 Sam. 14:23, *NKJV*).

Don’t quit your fast when you’re almost to the end. Remember, quitters never win, and winners never quit. There are no great stories about people who quit, nor are biographies written about them. The greatest thing in your life will be crossing the finishing line with the inner confidence that you have done all that you can do to win the victory – Elmer Towns©

**-My Time to Pray-**

- Lord, I am almost to the goal; keep me focused on the finish line until I get there.
- Lord, I am still praying for the faith goals I set at the beginning of my fast. I am trusting you for the answer.
- Lord, I desire to trust you for the strength to live every day by faith in your work in me.

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# Enriching Kids' Conversations with God

Addendum Devotional for Parents and Grandparents  
Each day's musings correspond with  
the adult theme for the same numbered day.



*Miss Kelly*



## Enriching Kids' Conversations with God Day 1: Solo Praying



It's a seeming contradiction, but let your children know you have solo-prayer! Let them see you praying. Ask them to be patient for 5 minutes while you pray alone.

Encourage them to do the same. The adult child of a friend of mine was questioning everything about God and about Christians he knew. What finally turned the tide for him was walking into his family home and coming upon his dad on his knees alone crying and begging God to bring Bob back. His dad's prayer closet was thrown open to him unplanned.



## Enriching Kids' Conversations with God Day 2: Praying with Others

When praying as a family, pray subjects aloud and leave quiet time for children to "fill in the blanks" silently. "Father, right now we want to pray for our friends (leave time of silence, allowing children to lift up their friends to the Lord). We thank You for them . . ."





**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 3: Daily Commitment**



The same five things apply, though in smaller amounts, to children as they fast with God: time, temple, talent, testimony and treasure. With children it can be effective and fun to set a timer; if you have a count-up timer, even better! Time your prayer

or worship time. Compare this to the time you spend doing other things normally. During our 21 days, you could talk about their bodies and their care. Children can be encouraged to share their talents for the Lord: do you have a budding cook? Make dinner to take to someone who is ill or who has a new baby. Ask your (grand) child about his or her experience with the Lord. You can play the “Do you remember when God did...” game. Finally, make the opportunity during these 21 days for children to work for money to give. Go through their things and give away gently used items to others who have a need for them. Involve your (grand) children in the process.



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 4: Praying by Faith not Feelings**



The words “... receive the kingdom of God like a child...” come to mind! Children are generally so wonderfully believing! This day is a great one for studying any of the number of healings that were connected to the faith of the one being healed (or the family/friends of the one needing healing). The Book of Luke is full of them! This is a super read aloud for bedtime or during family worship.



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 5: Benefits of a Lengthy Fast**

As families, you must do what you feel is best as far as your children fasting. After studying the topic, I personally feel strongly that children younger than adolescence should only participate in intermittent fasts, no more than one meal and not breakfast on a school day. In general, I don't advocate children giving up food or activities that are needed for their daily health and ability to function at school (i. e. meals, physical play). Certainly children can fast from particular food items for 21 days—bread, for example. This then becomes a great tool for talking about Jesus being our Bread of Life!



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 6: Saying No**

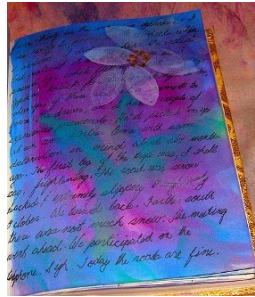
It is important to give children some choice in giving up good things in order to get closer to God. If we parents simply declare, "We as a family are giving up sweets for 21 days!" we haven't given our children the opportunity to sacrifice. They might be obedient, but it's not their gift to God. Talk with children about things that are dear to them and how giving up on that privilege (watching TV, playing computer games) or going without that treat can give us time to focus on God and His desire for us.





**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 7: Persistence in Your Fast**

This is an exciting opportunity to create a lifelong habit for your (grand) children! Consider starting a family prayer journal—it can



be some kind of fancy journal from the bookstore or a spiral bound school notebook. Enter each family member's name and some specific things about which to pray. Add items in the future, such as praying for future grandchildren or great grandchildren to believe in Jesus. You can visit this journal every day or every week. When prayers are answered, date them and add details. Explain that some of the entries might take the rest of your lives to be answered!



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 8: Experiencing Intimacy with God**

As a parent, how do we instill intimacy with God in our children? We allow our children to be close to US! The four keys to intimacy listed in the devotional are key to our (grand)parent-child relationships, too. Accessible parents, especially fathers, help children to find God accessible. This is a lifelong journey.

May I encourage you? It is never too late to be this kind of parent.





## Enriching Kids' Conversations with God

### Day 9: Begin with Giving Thanks

I love writing thank you notes. (I know right?) It makes me much happier to think about the person who did or made or bought something nice than it does the nice thing itself. We are pretty stuff-oriented around here. One part of beginning with giving thanks is recognizing that EVERYTHING is from God! On [mamatoga.com](http://mamatoga.com), Jenny Witte writes this great idea: "Hit the "rewind" button. Explain the steps that made it possible for your child to have certain simple things, like a glass of milk. A farmer had to raise the cow, get up early to milk it (going with the "simple" explanation here), then someone had to package the milk (another job), it had to be brought to the store, YOU had to go to the store to get it and pay for it, and then you poured it. It helps to get them thinking about what goes into everyday things and the importance of playing a part, rather than the milk just "appearing" before them. When they start to realize how much work and effort go into things, they appreciate them more." Take this to its natural conclusion—God make the cow, the farmer, the intelligent person who designed the milk jug, etc. Then we can thank God for digestive systems and eyes that see the glass of milk . . . The thankful possibilities are endless!





**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 10: Fasting to Increase My Hunger for God**

Here is where we remind each other that we aren't fasting to manipulate God; we can't make Him do anything by our "awesome obedience." We are fasting so that we will be hungry for Him. As the children miss things they have decided to go without, it is a super picture of how we should miss God all of the time when we aren't actively connecting with Him.



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 11: Fasting is Asking**

Just as we have to guard against coming to God with a shopping list, so we have to help our (grand) children. That said, children tend to be better at relying on God than on themselves for their hearts' desires. This is a good day to remind (grand) children that fasting is not a magical manipulation which makes God give what



we ask. As we get closer to Him through the time we spend fasting and praying, we are better able to ask for that we know He so wants to give us. If your (grand) child hasn't yet asked Christ into his/her heart, this is the perfect time to talk about it.

**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 12: Fasting to Worship God**

This can be a fun day! Once again, turn to your children for ideas about ways they would like to worship God at home. You might say, what can we do since we aren't playing Minecraft? What is a way we can actively think about God? Do you have an artist? Get out the messy paints and let them paint a picture of a Bible story. Do you have a dancer? Put on praise music and let him dance for the joy of the Lord! Read aloud together a story that brings you closer to God. Let your children get creative with ways to worship!



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 13: Fasting to Locate Sin**

Just as we don't fast to earn salvation, we can't earn salvation by being perfect, because we can't be perfect! This is a great lesson for children and for us. We want to get to the place where we are living the life Christ wants just because we love Him and we are so



grateful for what He has done for us. Where appropriate, confess to God in front of your children (maybe for that road rage they witnessed?). They will learn from your model.

**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 15: The Prayer of Crucifixion**

This is so hard for us as adults, so hard for children, too! Think about this: when you feel the most secure in Christ, the most sure that He loves you, isn't it easier to be selfless? The same is true for children. It is easier (not easy!) to fight against our natural desire for self-supremacy when we are securely rooted in His love. Bathe your children in Christ's love. Fill them with Scriptures about how He loves them. (Remind yourself while you're at it!) Giving up self will become easier.



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 14: Don't Violate Your Fast**

For (grand) parents this day brings two ways to help the children in your lives. First, help them to succeed! Set reasonable goals and involve them in the decisions. Be ready with foods they CAN eat. Don't violate the fast for them! If you are going without bread for 21 days, don't stop for fast food "this one time because we are in a terrific hurry." Unplug the TV. Whatever it takes to help them succeed. If children inadvertently violate the fast and they tell you, help them apologize to God and explain that they can then move on. If they purposefully violate the fast, pray a lot, then go back to Day 13 about the reason for the fast in the first place!



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 16: Praying and Weeping**

Do your (grand) children see you moved to tears over others' plights? I hope you will let them. It is so important to cultivate compassion for others. When you encounter a child in need in a magazine or on our prayer list, stop with your children and pray for him/her. Talk to your own (grand) children about how that other child might feel. Certainly if you are doing any whole-meal fasts with your (grand) children during these 21 days, they will be physically hungry. Talk about other children in the world who are always hungry.



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 17: Introspective Prayer**

Deep Introspection is beyond the ability of most little children. You can guide them as they do sin, though, to a time of asking God for forgiveness. your discipline plan allow for restoration. ing forgiveness from will be more restora- as well. This is another of those times when we as (grand) parents are prayerfully modeling a Heavenly Father.



Be sure in you always Then your ask-God prayers tive for them



**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 18: Resting in Prayer**

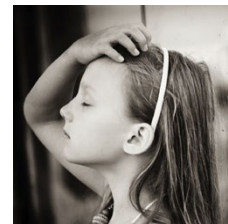
I am horrible at this! There is a beautiful truth to the fact that (grand) children slow us down, though. My encouragement to myself and to all of our REST! Come to a precious children. Turn down the lights. Laugh. Rub their tiny (or size 10) feet. God is so good to give us rest. Are we accepting that gift?



Grace family is to dead stop with those Pray. Read. Listen. Turn off media. Snug-

**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 19: Urgent Prayer**

If you haven't ever needed to pray urgently, you will. No life goes untouched from emergency or illness or desperation. Make God your first impulse in these situations. Sometimes things are so desperate that you must rely on the Holy Spirit to interpret your crying out to God, because you cannot even articulate words. When my girls were very little we had a tornado. We were all four in the basement on blankets on the floor. Trying to distract them, I said, "Shall we sing?" Caleigh, aged 4, replied, "No, Momma, let's pray."





**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 20: Spiritual Warfare**



The adult devotional for today talks about changing prayer posture. This is a fun exercise for use with children! Suggest kneeling prayer (So few of us do this any more.) or standing prayer with hands raised, or prayer lying down. Remind children that there is no magical posture that will make God listen; there are, however, postures that help US

**Enriching Kids' Conversations with God**  
**Day 21: Stay in the Moment**

Share with your (grand) children if this fast is difficult for you. Share without complaining or grumbling though. Share with a positive attitude. Those of us who attended the Life Action Summit at Grace might remember the teaching about waiting on the Lord. This isn't a bored, hopeless, endless wait. This is sitting on the edge of one's seat, eyes-wide, anxious to see what amazing thing the Lord will do! This is what we can convey to our (grand) children!

