

APRIL 16TH - APRIL 23RD



8 DAYS

**OF FASTING
AND PRAYER**

PRAYER AT 5:30 AM AT NATIONS CHURCH

Understanding Biblical Fasting

What Fasting is “NOT”:

- Fasting is not a manipulation of God.
- It is not self- abuse or punishment.
- It is not a magic formula to be more like God.

What Fasting “IS”:

- A spiritual discipline that Jesus, the disciples and all of prophets partook of.
- An expression of spiritual worship to God.
- A way to “make room” in your life to seek God when you would normally partake in other activities, (Ex. eating, media etc.).
- A means of repentance, (turning from sin).
- A means to see the power and plans of the devil destroyed.

Some Different Types of Fasts:

Full Fast: Drink only liquids – especially water. On this type of fast you may also take in clear broth and 100 percent fruit or vegetable juices in order to maintain your strength. You establish the number of days for your fast in your prayer time. Be sure to consult your doctor.

Daniel Fast: The most frequently used example of a partial fast, found in Daniel, chapter 10, the Daniel Fast is a fast from meats, sweets, breads and any drink, except water, for a specific time period (Daniel 10:2-3). The easiest way to think of this fast is you should eat vegetables, fruits, and drink only water. Be sure to consult your doctor, especially if you have any medical condition.

Corporate Fast: A Corporate fast is a joint fast of believers for a specific purpose that can yield powerful results. Although this fast involves others, it is also very much a “private and personal experience.” Esther called all of her people to fast for protection against danger (Esther 4:16). Samuel declared a fast for national revival (1 Samuel 7).

Partial Fast: There are many options for partial fasts. Below are just a few for you to select from:

- Give up one item of food or drink such as caffeine, coffee, meat, soft drinks, sweets or give up one meal per day.
- Eat only healthy, organic raw food. No fried food or desserts.
- Fast for a specific number of days . . . one day, three days, so on.
- Choose to fast from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. or from sun-up to sundown. When doing this type of fast, consider your work and sleep schedule. The hours that you sleep should not be considered part of your fasting period, so the timeframe for this type of fast may vary.

****Note: Make sure to seek God on what type of fast is appropriate for you.** One type of fasting is not better than the other. It is the “spirit” of the fast, not the “rules” that are of premiere importance. Due to health conditions we recommend that you only do the type of fast that would **NOT** put your health at risk. We are not health professionals and therefore cannot give you advice on what type of fast would be safe and appropriate for you.

Fasting: Individual & Corporate Needs

Fasting For Your Family

Fasting gives you the opportunity to pray and intercede specifically for your family. It's important to fast and pray for your children's and grandchildren's future. God is looking for men and women with fervent prayer lives who will do spiritual battle on behalf of their families! Fasting will open your eyes to the needs of your family. The Lord will point out the needs of your family members from deep within your heart and soul, such as encouragement for your spouse or special prayer and attention for a child.

You can fast and pray specifically for a protective covering of safety around your family. Scripture tells how Esther's people were in danger. Her uncle Mordecai discovered a plot by Haman, one of the king's advisors, to destroy her family. Before she approached the king, Esther declared a three-day fast for God's protection (Esther 4:16). Haman wanted to hang Mordecai on the gallows he was building in his courtyard, but **God turned it around** and the evil conspirator was hanged instead on his own gallows!

Fasting For Financial Needs

If you face a financial struggle that seems insurmountable, you are not alone. Ezra faced a big problem with the silver and gold he was responsible for in Ezra 7 and 8. He had been given silver and gold from King Artaxerxes to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:14-17), but thieves threatened his financial security. Maybe you feel like thieves have stolen what belongs to you financially. When Ezra faced an uncertain financial journey, he declared a fast (Ezra 8:21) and God answered his prayer! If you will fast, pray and obey God's commandments, He said you will be blessed (Deut. 28:2). The widow in 1 Kings 17:10-16 also faced an uncertain future. Although the woman had very little, she gave up her own food to help Elijah, the man of God. The book of Isaiah says we are called, ". . . *to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out . . .*" (Isaiah 58:6-7). You can add a new dimension to your fasting if you set aside the money you would normally use for food to give to our "Feed One" program or some other ministry that is helping the needy. In the story of the widow, God multiplied the meal in her barrel to last for three and a half years!

Fasting For Deliverance

In Mark, chapter 9, Christ's disciples were frustrated because they could not cast out an evil spirit. Jesus said, "*This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting*" (Mark 9:29). If you are afflicted with addictions or sin, you can go on a fast that frees you from besetting sins as referred to in Hebrews 12:1. Besetting sins are those that ensnare us and hinder us from achieving God's purpose for our lives. Through fasting we can break free from the addictions and habits that are not pleasing to God. "*Is this not the fast that I have chosen; To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?*" (Isaiah 58:6). Christ said the key to deliverance from sin is fasting and prayer. Maybe you struggle with the emotional bondage of depression or anxiety. Elijah also battled negative emotional feelings. When Jezebel sent word that she wanted to kill Elijah, he became distraught (1 Kings 19:4). He was depressed and even suicidal. That's when an angel came to Elijah and instructed him to journey back into the presence of God. The Bible says that Elijah fasted for 40 days and 40 nights as he returned to Horeb, the mountain of God. God delivered Elijah from feelings of suicide and fear. He gave Him hope, courage and direction.

Fasting For Guidance

Are you faced with a major life decision and don't know what to do? Maybe you have a job opportunity . . . a broken relationship . . . or an unfulfilled dream. Fasting can help you clear away the clutter of life and discern God's voice. Saul was going the wrong direction in life. He was hunting down followers of Christ and persecuting them when the light of God's truth knocked him off his path (Acts 9:3-6). Saul headed to Damascus and "*was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank*" (Acts 9:9). He didn't know what to do, but he fasted for God's divine direction. Then God sent the disciple Ananias to him with guidance (Acts 9:17). Through this process Saul became Paul, one of God's chosen apostles. Through his fast, Paul received the direction he needed and so can you. When you don't know what to do or when you face a daunting decision, that's when you need to fast and pray fervently for God's direction.

Fasting For Health and Healing

The Bible gives us a perfect example of how denying ourselves physically can bring good health. It is the story of Daniel and his peers in Daniel 1. The "Daniel Fast" is a fast from meats, sweets, breads and any drink but water for 21 days (Daniel 1:12; 10:2-3). This fast is a partial and a prolonged fast that yields health and healing. Daniel and three others refused to eat the king's meat and they "*appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies*" (Daniel 1:15). Daniel and his men were healthier! If you have a physical problem, fast for healing. According to Isaiah 58 when you fast, ". . . your health will spring forth speedily."

Fasting For Our Nation

When Samuel took over as priest and judge over the nation, he declared a fast for national revival. Samuel told the people to fast and seek God to return His presence to the nation (1 Samuel 7:3). Our society today critically needs believers who will fast and pray for revival. "*If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land*" (2 Chronicles 7:14). We can return God's presence and glory to our personal lives and our nations . . . will you do your part? Fast, pray and seek Him now.

Fasting For the Lost

John the Baptist and his disciples fasted often, according to Matthew 9. He was on the Nazarite diet, which fasted alcohol all the time. He ate little more than locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:1-4). Because of John the Baptist's constant fasting, I believe he had a greater testimony and influence on the lives of people in his generation than any other man (Matthew 11:1, John 1:6-7). If you and I want to win the lost in our communities, in our nation and around the world, we must do spiritual warfare through fasting and prayer. When you deny yourself and focus on God's will through prayer, He will begin to open doors of evangelism in your life.

In addition to each daily prayer focus...

Please remember to pray and believe for the following corporate topics:

- Corporate outpouring of the Holy Spirit with signs and wonders
- Every person of NCLA fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20
- An explosion of evangelism, discipleship and true community @ NCLA
- A hunger for prayer, the Word, fasting & all other spiritual disciplines
- Overall spiritual, numeric and financial multiplication and blessing
- Restoration from all that has been robbed from our lives by the enemy

Day 1 / Monday 04-16-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – For First Fruits

Read and Meditate on:

Proverbs 3:9-10: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”

Pray and believe today that the Lord would supply all of your needs according to His riches and glory. Ask God what you can offer to him today as a “first fruits” offering and a sacrifice to bless Him and His Kingdom.

Day 2 / Tuesday 04-17-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – For Freedom

Read and Meditate on:

John 8:32 “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:36 “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

If you are struggling with something, ask God to set you free today! Cry out to Him in faith and He will hear and answer. Be filled with and believe the truth of God’s Word regarding your struggle, and allow the Word of God to bring freedom to your life. Do not believe the lies of the enemy, but stand upon God’s truth.

Day 3 / Wednesday 04-18-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – For Strength & Vitality

Read and Meditate on:

Galatians 6:9: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Isaiah 29:30-41 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

God is giving you new strength today! Ask for it and receive it in faith! Be filled with His Holy Spirit today and let the joy of the Lord be your strength!

Day 4 / Thursday 04-19-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – To Abide & Pray

Read and Meditate on:

John 15:5,7 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."

1 John 5:14: "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

God is waiting for you to come to Him! He loves you and desires to be in relationship with you and walk with you throughout your days. Seek Him and walk close to Him today, and see the breakthroughs you are believing for manifest in your life!

Day 5 / Friday 04-20-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – To Work The Harvest

Read and Meditate on:

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Matt 9:37 "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest."

There are people all around you that need Jesus! Don't just keep Him for yourself! You have freely received, now freely give! Ask God to show you who and how to share His love with the people you come in contact with today.

Day 6 / Saturday 04-21-2018

NOW IS THE TIME – To Silence Human Wisdom & False Religion

Read and Meditate on:

2 Cor 10:5: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Prov. 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight

Seek the will of God for your life! Don't just act on a "good idea", but act on a "God idea! Ask the Lord to reveal His will for your life, and even if you do not understand, or it is a test of your faith, know that God knows all things, and that you can trust His plan for your life.

Day 7 / Sunday 04-22-2018

Now Is The Time – For Commission

Read and Meditate on:

Mark 16:15: And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.

Ask God who you can share the Good News of Jesus with today. Ask Him for boldness and do it!

Day 8 / Monday 04-23-2018

Now Is The Time - To Come Alive

Read and Meditate on:

*Ephesians 2:1-5 "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our **flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ** even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. Let's worship the Lord in spirit and in truth today. Pray that our lives be a song of worship unto Him"*

Thank God for what He has done in your life today! You are not who you used to be! Do not believe that God has not done a work in your life! He has! Be filled with the life of Jesus today, and let the dead parts of our life come alive today!