



What Is Fasting

A fast is a dedicated time to voluntarily abstain from eating food in order to devote attention to what God is doing in and around you. It is a discipline that seeks to make the physical a servant of the spiritual. Most importantly, fasts are a means for Christians to intentionally devote more time and focus for prayer, usually seeking wisdom and/or renewal from God.

Why Are We Fasting

The elders of City Church are calling our church to fast and pray during each semester of 2023. Rather than asking “what are we fasting from” let’s seek God’s answer to “What/Who are we fasting for?” Our hope is that the Holy Spirit will do three things in our church body:

- **RENEW OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**
- **RECONCILE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ONE ANOTHER**
- **REACH OTHERS WITH THE GOSPEL**

When And How

We will participate together as a church body in fasting and prayer. During each of these weeks we suggest:

- **Fast one day a week, for at least one meal during that day (for example: lunch)**
- **Use your meal time instead to meditate on scripture and pray using the guide below**
- **Choose to fast on the same day as others in your community group. You may also plan to break fast together during your group meeting and talk about what the Lord is showing you during dinner.**

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

- **Begin by praying a simple prayer like, “Come, Holy Spirit”**
- **Allow for silence to meditate on specific words/phrases, and commands you read**
- **Use the scriptures to guide the structure and flow of your prayer**

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE [cont.]

- Listen for the Spirit's prompting, reminders, and calls for action
- Redirect bodily reminders for food throughout the day into prompts for short prayers
- Journal what the Lord is showing you and perhaps what you're thinking and feeling
- Seek to obey the Lord immediately as he points out next steps
- Express your gratitude
- Be ready to share what you're learning and experiencing with others
- Don't be in a hurry to power through each set of scriptures for each week. We've intentionally built in the 4th week and the repetition of 3 fasting periods this year to give us the margin we may need for God to work in and through us.

2023 FASTING DATES

3.12 - 4.7 | 6.4 - 6.30 | 9.10 - 10.6

WEEK ONE

RENEW

PS 51 | ROM 4:4-5 | MATT 5:21-26 | MATT 11:28-30 | JN 15:1-6 | EPH 4:17-32

- If everyone in our church followed your lead- (the way you engage God, serve others, your spirit & attitude, willingness to share Jesus and make disciples, and honesty about your own sin)- would our church be better off?
- Is Jesus your source of rest? Is his life and mission the pattern for your life?
- Are you confident of God's love, forgiveness, and approval without attempting to earn them from him?
- Is there sin in your life that you're hiding or areas of your life not submitted to Christ's lordship?
- Express your desire to God for a renewed sense of his activity in and through your life.

WEEK TWO

RECONCILE

JN 17:6-26 | MATT 18:21-35 | ROM 15:1-6 | PHIL 2:1-16 | HEB 10:19-25 | 1 JN 4:7-21 | COL 3:12-17

- Do your words, actions, and weekly rhythms bring the people of our church closer to Jesus and to one another?
- Do your weekly habits prioritize physically being present at the worship gathering and in smaller forms of community in our church?
- Are you open with others in a way that invites genuine relationship?
- Is there any person against whom you are harboring bitterness, animosity, or unforgiveness?
- How is God calling you to be an agent of unity in our church?

WEEK THREE

REACH

MATT 28:18-20 | LK 5:27-32; 6:27-36 | ACTS 8:26-35 | EPH 2:8-10 | JMS 1:19-27 | ACTS 17:16-34 | 1 PT 3:13-17

- What is holding you back from making disciples and sharing the gospel with others?
- What habits/ rhythms keep you from loving our city, neighbors, co-workers, friends, and/or perceived enemies?
- Whom has God placed in your life (outside of your home) that needs to hear the gospel?
- Pray for others that need to submit their life to following Christ and that God would reveal their need for him.
- Ask the Spirit to create readiness to share the hope you've found in Christ with others.

WEEK FOUR

REPEAT

- How has God been at work in you? How do you sense God's leading moving forward?
- Look back at scriptures and questions you may have missed or rushed past from weeks 1-3.