

How to use the prayer guide:

This prayer guide will walk you through six passages of scripture reading through the Psalms, weekly prayer prompts that correlate with the passage of scripture, as well as a weekly focus on fasting.

Ideally, this guide would be used each day as we prepare for Easter and the upcoming celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. We believe that we experience more joy by establishing daily rhythms that help us become more fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Our aim is simply to help our church family create meaningful time to devote to the spiritual disciplines of reading, prayer, fasting, solitude, and rest this Easter season.

Weekly fasting guide:





Why should I fast?

Biblical fasting can be challenging. It may sound simple, but it can be more difficult than you might think. The aim of our fasting is to help us draw near to God in closer ways, while disciplining ourselves to suppress our fleshly wants and desires.

Often times when a person practices fasting, they do without something for specified amount of time and for a specific purpose. A person may go without food for a meal, a day, or even several days in order to refocus that time by drawing near to God in prayer and greater dependence on the Holy Spirit. However, we don't just have to fast from food, but can consider fasting from several things in our lives that preoccupy our time, attention, and potentially distract us from loving God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Corporately, we are fasting together for forty days to seek the Lord's desires for our lives, our families, and our faith community. During this time, you are encouraged to draw near to God in intercession for your loved ones, your friends, our church, our pastors, the communities in which we live, our nation, the world, and our own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

As you prepare to fast, here are a handful of things to consider:

1. Set small goals.

Our ambition may be to abstain from all foods and beverages for a lengthy amount of time, but perhaps we should just start with a meal a day, or even just two meals a week. The aim is develop a new spiritual muscles in this area of your life.

2. Plan wisely.

The aim in fasting is not to merely do without, but to refocus our time and desires. If you fast from food, use that meal time for prayer, solitude, and meditation. The same can be true for other things as well. If we choose to do without social media or games, our goal should be to spend more time drawing near to Christ.

3. Consider including others.

Fasting is not to be done so others can see our deeds or to make a name for ourselves. Instead, fasting is an opportunity to draw near to God. Often times, doing a fast with others helps provide accountability and reinforcement in areas we might otherwise give up easily or be tempted to not follow through.

4 Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

When our belly growls or we find ourselves mindlessly scrolling social media or shopping on Amazon, we should resist the temptation to daydream. Instead, we should reflect on Christ, our perfect savior. Our aim should be to move from the temporal fleshly desires that easily sway us, to an eternal conviction rooted in the author and perfection of our faith. The goal is not to go without, but to hat more of the right things in our life. More than food, entertainment, or mindless daydreaming, we the riches and mercy of God, as well as His purposes for our life, will, and way.



> 40 Things to Purge

- 1. Negativy
- 2. Gossip
- 3. Impatience
- 4. Selfishness
- 5. Complaining
- 6. Fear & Worry
- 7. Bitterness
- 8. Busyness
- 9. Disunity
- 10. Pride
- 11. Jealousy
- 12. Ungratefulness
- 13. Hatefulness
- 14. Anger
- 15. Manipulation
- 16. Judgmental
- 17. Double-mindedness
- 18. Malice
- 19. Unrepentant
- 20. Impurity

- 21. Unforgiveness
- **22. Lust**
- 23. Backbiting
- 24. Revenge
- 25. Unapologetic
- 26. Coveting
- 27. Prayerlessness
- 28. Self seeking
- 29. Unwholesome Speech
- 30. Dishonesty
- 31. Discouragement
- 32. Blame-shifting
- 33. Shame
- 34. Gluttony
- 35. Argumentative
- 36. Slothfulness
- 37. Drunkeness
- 38. Unmerciful
- 39. Manipulation
- 40. Wickedness

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of bodyand spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.



eeWhile they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. 99

ACTS 13:2-3

Psalm 1 | The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked

1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers: 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. 4 The wicked are not so. but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; 6 for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Ask God to give you a daily dependence upon Him, His Spirit and His Word as your firm foundation.
- Ask God to increase your love for Him; and fervor for His will and way in your life. Before, you seek the Lord for His wisdom; simply seek His heart and the character of God in His Word.
- Pray that God will give you His wisdom and understanding in this season of your life, so that your path is made straight.

FASTING CHALLENGE:

• Aim to significantly reduce your time on devices today. Consider replacing that time with more time in God's Word or a devoted time of prayer that is longer than fifteen minutes.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Matthew 7:24-27: Proverbs 13:20: Psalm 119:1-2



MEETING GOD

GREAT GOD, In public and private, in sanctuary and home, may my life be steeped in prayer, filled with the spirit of grace and supplication, each prayer perfumed with the incense of atoning blood. Help me, defend me, until from praying ground I pass to the realm of unceasing praise. Urged by my need, invited by thy promises, called by thy Spirit, I enter thy presence, worshipping thee with godly fear, awed by thy majesty, greatness, glory, but encouraged by thy love. I am all poverty as well as all guilt, having nothing of my own with which to repay thee, But I bring Jesus to thee in the arms of faith, pleading his righteousness to offset my iniquities, rejoicing that he will weigh down the scales for me, and satisfy thy justice. I bless thee that great sin draws out great grace, that, although the least sin deserves infinite punishment because done against an infinite God, yet there is mercy for me, for where guilt is most terrible, there thy mercy in Christ is most free and deep. Bless me by revealing to me more of his saving merits, by causing thy goodness to pass before me, by speaking peace to my contrite heart; Strengthen me to give thee no rest until Christ shall reign supreme within me, in every thought, word, and deed, in a faith that purifies the heart, overcomes the world, works by love,

THE VALLEY OF VISION

fastens me to thee, and ever clings to the cross.

Psalm 19 | The Law of the Lord Is Perfect

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- 2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.
- 3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard.
- 4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun.
- 5 which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.
- 6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.
- 7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
- the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
- 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
- the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
- 9 the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
- the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.
- 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;
- sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.
- 11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.
- 12 Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
- 13 Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.
- 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,
- O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Thank God daily for revealing Himself through His creation.
- Ask God to use His Word to reveal any sin in your life that is preventing you from a deeper relationship with Him.
- Ask God to keep you free from temptation and ways of living in your fleshly desires; and help you to confess the ways that you've departed from His truth.
- Seek the Lord and ask Him to put His law on your heart and lips.
- Plead with God to reveal Himself to nations and people who have never heard the name of Jesus.

FASTING CHALLENGE:

- Consider going without caffeine (coffee; sodas; energy drinks) and forms of sugar that our bodies often become dependent upon throughout the day. You may decide to do this one day this week, every day this week, or until the conclusion of our prayer and fasting.
- Replace your cravings and dependence upon these things with the word of God, prayer, and meditation on the Lord, Himself.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:1-11; Psalm 119:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13



LOVE REST IN GOD

MY DEAR LORD I depend wholly upon thee, wean me from all other dependences. Thou art my all, thou dost overrule all and delight in me. Thou art the foundation of goodness, how can I distrust thee? How be anxious about what happens to me? In the light of thy preciousness the world and all its enjoyments are infinitely poor: I value the favour of men no more than pebbles. Amid the blessings I receive from thee may I never lose the heart of a stranger. May I love thee, my benefactor, in all my benefits, not forgetting that my greatest danger arises from my advantages. Produce in me self-despair that will make Jesus precious to me, delightful in all his offices, pleasurable in all his ways, and may I love his commands as well as his promises. Help me to discern between true and false love, the one consisting of supreme love to thee, the other not, the former uniting thy glory and man's happiness that they may become one common interest, the latter disjointing and separating them both, seeking the latter with neglect of the former. Teach me that genuine love is different in kind from "that wrought by rational arguments or the motive of self-interest, that such love is a pleasing passion affording joy to the mind where it is.

Grant me grace to distinguish between the genuine and the false, and to rest in thee who art all love.

Psalm 39 | What Is the Measure of My Days?

1 I said, "I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue;

I will guard my mouth with a muzzle, so long as the wicked are in my presence."

2 I was mute and silent; I held my peace to no avail,

and my distress grew worse.

3 My heart became hot within me. As I mused, the fire burned;

then I spoke with my tongue:

4 "O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;

let me know how fleeting I am!

5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you.

Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Selah

6 Surely a man goes about as a shadow! Surely for nothing they are in turmoil;

man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

7 "And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions. Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

9 I am mute; I do not open my mouth, for it is you who have done it.

10 Remove your stroke from me; I am spent by the hostility of your hand.

11 When you discipline a man with rebukes for sin, you consume like a moth what is dear to him; surely all mankind is a mere breath! Selah

12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears!

For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.

13 Look away from me, that I may smile again, before I depart and am no more!"

WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Confess ways that you have gotten ahead of the Lord and sought to plan your own path forward.
- Ask God to make you aware of ways that you are frantically chasing wealth, success, and prosperity without Him in mind.
- Seek God and ask Him to make you aware of the fleeting nature of our lives.
- Plead with God to help make your life count. If life is like a mere breath, use each day this week in prayer to ask God to use your time, talent, and treasures for His namesake.



FASTING CHALLENGE:

- We often crave stuff. As a result, we often spend excessively on things we don't need. Will you consider fasting from purchasing anything other than necessities this week?
- Replace your desire to shop with a greater pursuit of Jesus. Consider using the money you save to bless a family in need, use for missions, or give to the local church.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:19-34; James 4:13-17; Hebrews 13:5-6



CONTENTMENT

HEAVENLY FATHER, If I should suffer need, and go unclothed, and be in poverty, make my heart prize thy love, know it, be constrained by it, though I be denied all blessings. It is thy mercy to afflict and try me with wants, for by these trials I see my sins, and desire severance from them. Let me willingly accept misery, sorrows, temptations, if I can thereby feel sin as the greatest evil, and be delivered from it with gratitude to thee, acknowledging this as the highest testimony of thy love. When thy Son, Jesus, came into my soul instead of sin, he became more dear to me than sin had formerly been; his kindly rule replaced sin's tyranny. Teach me to believe that if ever I would have any sin subdued I must not only labour to overcome it, but must invite Christ to abide in the place of it, and he must become to me more than vile lust had been; that his sweetness, power, life may be there. Thus I must seek a grace from him contrary to sin, but must not claim it apart from himself. When I am afraid of evils to come "comfort me by showing me that in myself I am a dying, condemned wretch, but in Christ I am reconciled and live; that in my self I find insufficiency and no rest, but in Christ there is satisfaction and peace; that in myself I am feeble and unable to do good, but in Christ I have ability to do all things. Though now I have his graces in part, I shall shortly have them perfectly in that state where thou wilt show thyself fully reconciled, and alone sufficient, efficient, loving me completely, with sin abolished. O Lord, hasten that day.

Psalm 51 | Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!
- 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
- so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.
- 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- 6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
- 11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
- 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation,
- and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
- 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
- you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
- 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- 18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem;
- 19 then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
- then bulls will be offered on your altar.

WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Confess ways that you've given into temptation.
- Ask God to use His Word to reveal areas your heart has become hardened, embittered, fearful, resentful, disconnected, or prideful.
- Seek the Lord and ask Him to create a clean heart within you.
- Confess to God ways that you've gone through the motions and offered empty sacrifice; rather than a broken and contrite heart.
- Praise God earnestly for His salvation and the joy He brings to you.



FASTING CHALLENGE:

- We tend to grumble and complain at times. This week, you are challenged to avoid and fast from unwholesome talk, discord, disunity, cursing, and complaining.
- Replace your desire to any of the things above, by praising God through worship music and scripture memory.
- Instead of complaining, develop the habit of praising!

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: 1 John 1:7-9; Colossians 3:1-10; Hebrews 12:1-11



CONTINUAL REPENTANCE

O GOD OF GRACE, Thou hast imputed my sin to my substitute, and hast imputed his righteousness to my soul, clothing me with a bridegroom's robe, decking me with jewels of holiness. But in my Christian walk I am still in rags; my best prayers are stained with sin; my penitential tears are so much impurity; my confessions of wrong are so many aggravations of sin; my receiving the Spirit is tinctured with selfishness. I need to repent of my repentance; I need my tears to be washed; I have no robe to bring to cover my sins, no loom to weave my own righteousness; I am always standing clothed in filthy garments, and by grace am always receiving change of raiment, for thou dost always justify the ungodly; I am always going into the far country, and always returning home as a prodigal, always saying, Father, forgive me, and thou art always bringing forth the best robe. Every morning let me wear it, every evening return in it, go out to the day's work in it, be married in it, be wound in death in it, stand before the great white throne in it, enter heaven in it. shining as the sun. Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, the exceeding wonder of grace.

Psalm 23 | The Lord Is My Shepherd

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

3 He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness or his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Thank God for His provision in your life. Make a list of ways you are grateful for God's good and perfect gifts in your life.
- Seek God and His wisdom as He leads you toward green pastures, still waters, and paths of righteousness for His namesake.
- Confess your doubts, fears, and worries in the dark seasons of your life. Ask God to guide you with His rod and staff.
- Pray for God's comfort and guidance. He is your shepherd and He cares for us deeply.
- Take a day this week and rest in the provision of God.



FASTING CHALLENGE:

- Jesus is not only our good shepherd, but our daily bread. Consider replacing a meal or a certain number of hours without food to rely on Christ and His Spirit to provide you sustenance and strength.
- Jesus is our daily bread. When you fast from food, ask God to give you a great hunger and thirst for His righteousness in your life.
- Note: medically it may not be wise for you to fast from food for an extended period of time.
 Be wise and trust God in this area; but do not live in shame or guilt. We don't fast to be more
 worthy or to find great approval to God. We fast to draw nearer to God and to depend upon
 Him in more significant ways. If you can't fast from food, seek God about another way you
 might should fast this week.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Daniel 1:1-21; Matthew 6:16-18; John 6:32-40; John 10:1-18



DIVINE MERCIES

THOU ETERNAL GOD, Thine is surpassing greatness, unspeakable goodness, super-abundant grace; I can as soon count the sands of ocean's 'lip' as number thy favours towards me; I know but a part, but that part exceeds all praise. I thank thee for personal mercies, a measure of health, preservation of body, comforts of house and home, sufficiency of food and clothing, continuance of mental powers, my family, their mutual help and support, the delights of domestic harmony and peace, the seats now filled that might have been vacant, my country, church, Bible, faith. But, O, how I mourn my sin, ingratitude, vileness, the days that add to my guilt, the scenes that witness my offending tongue; All things in heaven, earth, around, within, without, condemn me the sun which sees my misdeeds, the darkness which is light to thee, the cruel accuser who justly charges me, the good angels who have been provoked to leave me, thy countenance which scans my secret sins, thy righteous law, thy holy Word, my sin-soiled conscience, my private and public life, my neighbours, myself- all write dark things against me. I deny them not, frame no excuse, but confess, 'Father, I have sinned'; Yet still I live, and fly repenting to thy oustretched arms; thou wilt not cast me off, for Jesus brings me near, thou wilt not condemn me, for he died in my stead, thou wilt not mark my mountains of sin, for he levelled all, and his beauty covers my deformities. O my God, I bid farewell to sin by clinging to his cross, hiding in his wounds, and sheltering in his side.



Psalm 22 | Why Have You Forsaken Me?

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
- 2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.
- 3 Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- 4 In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.
- 5 To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- 6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
- 8 "He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"
- 9 Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
- 10 On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
- 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.
- 12 Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
- 13 they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.
- 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax;
- it is melted within my breast;
- 15 my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
- you lay me in the dust of death.
- 16 For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me;
- they have pierced my hands and feet—
- 17 I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me;
- 18 they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.
- 19 But you, O Lord, do not be far off! O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
- 20 Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog!



Psalm 22 | Why Have You Forsaken Me?

- 21 Save me from the mouth of the lion! You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!
- 22 I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
- 23 You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
- 24 For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.
- 25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will perform before those who fear him.
- 26 The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord! May your hearts live forever!
- 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.
- 28 For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.
- 29 All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who could not keep himself alive.
- 30 Posterity shall serve him; it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
- 31 they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.



WEEKLY PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Praise God for the Messiah, who was stricken and punished by God, though He was innocent in every way.
- Seek Christ during passion week. Pray for your heart to be filled with gratitude because of Jesus, the lamb of God who was slain on our behalf.
- Confess ways that you've been distracted. Pray earnestly that God will help you see Christ and His majesty this Easter season.
- Pray for God to make Himself known to a friend, family member, neighbor, or co-worker this Easter.
- Pray for courage to interact with others about Jesus. Ask God to open the door for you to invite someone with you to church this weekend.

FASTING CHALLENGE:

- This week, would you consider giving up an extra hour of rest each morning or another hour of activities or "to do's" to spend more time with God this week?
- Will you give an hour of extra time at the conclusion of the week for corporate prayer at our building?
- Note: We are concluding our 40 days of prayer and fasting with 40 consecutive hours of prayer around the clock. Please consider signing up to help us fill each time slot. You may take an hour or two hours to help us finish strong.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 53:1-12: Matthew 26:1-75



THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

BLESSED LORD JESUS, Before thy cross I kneel and see the heinousness of my sin, my iniquity that caused thee to be 'made a curse', the evil that excites the severity of divine wrath. Show me the enormity of my guilt by the crown of thorns, the pierced hands and feet, the bruised body, the dying cries. Thy blood is the blood of incarnate God, its worth infinite, its value beyond all thought. Infinite must be the evil and guilt that demands such a price. Sin is my malady, my monster, my foe, my viper, born in my birth, alive in my life, strong in my character, dominating my faculties, following me as a shadow, intermingling with my every thought, my chain that holds me captive in the empire of my soul. Sinner that I am, why should the sun give me light, the air supply breath, the earth bear my tread, its fruits nourish me, its creatures subserve my ends? Yet thy compassions yearn over me, thy heart hastens to my rescue, thy love endured my curse, thy mercy bore my deserved stripes. Let me walk humbly in the lowest depths of humiliation, bathed in thy blood, tender of conscience, triumphing gloriously as an heir of salvation.

