

February 4

Day 1

Scripture Readings

- [Psalms 84:1-12](#)
- [Matthew 6:33](#)

Devotional Reading

As we start this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer, I want to encourage you to join me in thinking about the next 21 days as more than just going without food, or a spiritual battle, or a discipline to get what you need from God. All of those things will certainly be aspects that we will encounter, but there is more. This is a spiritual journey, think of it as a spiritual pilgrimage. A pilgrimage may lead you to a new place physically but primarily leads you to a new place spiritually.

In Psalm 84 the Psalmist is writing about those people who had their heart set on making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Listen to how he writes about those who are making the journey, “Blessed are those who dwell in your house.” “Blessed are those whose strength is in you.” The person making the journey is blessed, they have joy, they receive strength, in fact, they go from “strength to strength.”

You’re not making this journey alone, the God who loves you more than you can imagine is calling you to a new place, a new season, a new experience of His glory. This 21-day journey is going to be life-changing, you’ve taken the first step, I can’t wait to see what God is going to do.

February 5

Day 2

Scripture Reading:

- [Psalms 16:11](#)
- [Hebrews 12:16](#)

Devotional Reading:

As you start fasting, it is important to understand that you have entered into a spiritual battle. Part of the spiritual battle is fought as the body adjusts to the rigors of fasting. For most people, there is more than just a little detoxing happening in our bodies. But the battle is more than physiological; as we fast, a spiritual battle is being waged. Things are happening in the spiritual realm that we neither perceive nor understand outside of God revealing them to us.

Fasting is more than just missing a meal. Powerful seasons of fasting are experienced when we purpose to spend additional time in God's presence during the fast. As well, every hunger pang, every feeling of fatigue, and every caffeine headache will be a reminder to call on God in that moment and to cry out for those things you are seeking Him to do in your life. David Mathis writes, "[Fasting] is a desperate measure, for desperate times, among those who know themselves desperate for God."

But don't just focus on the battle or the pain – Scripture promises there is fullness of joy in God's presence and there are pleasures at His right hand. Delight yourself in pursuing Him, and you'll know the joy of seeing Him work in your life.

February 6

Day 3

Scripture Reading:

- [Psalms 37:4](#)
- [Psalms 27:1](#)

Devotional Reading:

One of James River Church's campuses sits on a piece of property that had been owned by the same family since the Civil War. We had looked for land around the city and knew this ground was uniquely suited to meet the needs of our growing church family. We weren't the only ones who had noticed the property's potential – major retail chains were also interested, but the family wasn't interested in selling.

What do you do when you've exhausted all your options when you believe you know God's will but you can't see how in the world it will come to pass? You fast. We called the church to a three day fast. We knew we needed God's help for our need to be met. Within ten days of the church praying, the miracle came as the family who owned the property offered to sell the property to the church but no one else. When God's people fast and pray the supernatural happens!

What are you needing God to do through this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer? What are you praying for? Take time to write these needs down. Look at them daily as you pray. Whenever hunger grips your stomach or the cravings for coffee come, read your list and be reminded that your fasting is for a purpose. Through your fast, God will answer!

February 7

Day 4

Scripture Reading:

- [Mark 9:14-29](#)
- [2 Corinthians 10:3-4](#)
- [Psalms 144:2](#)

Devotional Reading

In Mark Chapter 9, a father brought his son to Jesus' disciples. The boy was demonized and an epileptic, and even though God had healed people through the disciples before, nothing happened when they prayed for the boy to be healed. When the disciples brought the boy to Jesus, the boy was healed. Later the disciples asked Jesus this question, "Why couldn't we do it?" Jesus answered in verse 29, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting."

There are some things that God will do in our lives but only in response to our spending additional time in His presence combined with fasting. Fasting breaks strongholds, liberates people, and moves us into a realm of realizing God's power in our lives. The more time you're spending with God, the more you're going to see the hand of God on your life in an extraordinary way.

Maybe there's an obstacle that you have been facing for a long time. Perhaps you have prayed and prayed, and you don't understand why you are not making any headway in the situation. You might be thinking, "Will God ever give me victory?" Jesus' response to the disciples is His response to you – some things only come by prayer AND fasting.

February 8

Day 5

Scripture Reading:

- [Nehemiah 1:3-4](#)
- [Nehemiah 1:11](#)
- [Nehemiah 2:7-8](#)

Devotional Reading:

The story of Nehemiah is a vibrant example of the favor that comes with denying ourselves for the purpose of drawing near to God. Nehemiah worked for a powerful pagan king - one that did not worship the God of Israel. When Nehemiah heard how the city walls in his hometown of Jerusalem had been burned and left in ruins; he knew that he had to do something about it. The problem was that the king Nehemiah served had issued a decree that Jerusalem not be rebuilt. How would the king ever be convinced to not only change his mind, but pay for the wall of Jerusalem to be restored? Nehemiah's solution was to fast and pray.

He asked God for favor in his situation and denied his stomach for the purpose of showing that his desire and need for God's help was greater than his desire and need for food.

Nehemiah's fast paved the way for God to give him favor with a pagan ruler that changed the course of history. You may be facing a situation that is testing your courage and your strength – believe God is going to use this fast to bring His favor into your life.

February 9

Day 6

Scripture Reading:

- [Exodus 34:28](#)
- [Matthew 4:2](#)
- [Acts 13:2](#)

Devotional Reading:

Things are always changing around us. We go from season to season in life – Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall – and just as the seasons change so does every other aspect of life. But even though we must accept that change is constant, it doesn't mean it is easy.

Change always brings both excitement and uncertainty as we try to navigate the new opportunity or challenge in front of us. This is why fasting is so important during seasons of transition and change. As we look through Scripture, we often see that new seasons of God's favor and work were preceded by fasting.

1. Moses fasted before he received the Law (Exodus 34:28).
2. Jesus fasted before the start of His earthly ministry (Matthew 4:2).
3. Paul fasted before the start of his missionary ministry (Acts 13:2).

Wherever you are at during your season of change, fasting will bring clarity, confidence, and commitment to stick it out. Fasting brings a fresh anointing of power for the new seasons of life.

February 10

Day 7

- **Scripture Reading:**

- [Isaiah 58:8-9](#)
- [1 Chronicles 16:10-11](#)
- [Psalms 27:8](#)
- [1 Samuel 3:10](#)

Devotional Reading:

Have you felt distant from God? Maybe as you read this you feel as if you are in a spiritual desert. You are calling out to God, but it seems as if your cry is falling on deaf ears. You might even be thinking, “Why isn’t God responding?”

The better question is, “What is blocking the voice of God in my life that I am not hearing what He is saying?”

The constant distractions that surround our lives can so easily block our ability to hear God’s voice. Everything from the TV, to smartphones, to social media can distract our attention and keep us from clearly hearing from the Lord. Seasons of fasting help to quiet our hearts so we can hear from God.

There is a unique spiritual sensitivity that comes through prayer and fasting. If you are struggling to discern God’s voice, one of the best things you can do is fast!

Scripture is clear: God is speaking.

February 11

Day 8

Scripture Reading:

- [2 Chronicles 20:2-3](#)
- [2 Chronicles 20:15-17](#)
- [2 Chronicles 20:21-22](#)
- [2 Chronicles 20:25](#)
- [Psalms 34:9](#)

Devotional Reading:

All of us will have battles in our lives. The question is, how will we respond in the face of these battles? In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat was confronted with a “vast army” who had the power to devastate his kingdom. He knew that he and the people needed to fast.

In response to the people fasting, the Lord encouraged Jehoshaphat by saying, “Do not be afraid or discouraged by this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s” (2 Chronicles 20:15). Whatever you are facing, we serve a God who wants to fight our battles! When you depend on your Heavenly Father, He is faithful to go before you.

Verse 21 tells us that “Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out to the head of the army saying, ‘Give thanks to the Lord, for his Love endures forever’.”

Before any sword was raised, praise was lifted up for the victory that the Lord was going to bring. Praise preceded the battle. The chapter goes on to say that “As they began to sing and praise” the Lord began to defeat their enemy. Jehoshaphat’s position of praise released God’s power over the battle that he was facing!

As we fast one of the most important things we can do is to spend time thanking and praising God. Don’t just pray about the problem but praise God knowing that He is a God who solves problems. Whatever battle you are facing, the Lord is faithful to fight for you as you look to Him and praise His name.

February 12

Day 9

Scripture Reading:

- [Genesis 25:19-34](#)
- [Hebrews 12:16](#)

Devotional Reading:

What are you hungry for? Probably not a fun question eight days into the fast, but it's an important question for you to answer. Fasting is all about appetite. It's not about making a list of all foods you are craving but deciding what you are most hungry for.

The writer of Hebrews says, "Watch out for the Esau syndrome: trading away God's lifelong gift in order to satisfy a short-term appetite" (Hebrews 12:16, MSG).

The story of Esau is one of the saddest stories the Bible. In Genesis 25, we read that one-day Esau came home, famished from hunting, only to see that his brother, Jacob, had made a stew. Esau demanded that Jacob feed him. Jacob responded by offering a trade – Jacob would give Esau his stew, if Esau gave Jacob his birthright (note: a birthright was the right to inheritance and the spiritual leadership of the family). Here's the crazy part, Esau gave Jacob what he asked. It seems so strange that Esau would sacrifice something so valuable for a bowl of soup, but he's not the only one who has surrendered God's blessing because of a craving for something less.

There are some blessings from God that we will never receive unless we dethrone what the Bible commentator, Matthew Henry, called, "King Stomach."

So, what are you hungry for? What is more important to you than what your stomach is craving? Fasting is all about appetite.

February 13

Day 10

Scripture Reading:

- [Psalms 25:13-14](#)
- [Revelation 3:7](#)
- [Psalms 73:23-26](#)

Devotional Reading:

A key part of doing a fast is giving considerable time to waiting on God. Psalm 25 in the Message says, “God-friendship is for God-worshipers; They are the ones he confides in.” When you spend time in God’s presence, He will reveal things that you couldn’t know otherwise.

And isn’t that what we want as we are fasting? Fasting is not just about getting what we want from God – it’s about knowing what God wants to do in our lives – it’s about hearing from Him.

There are things that God wants to do in your life through this fast. For some, He will give you the confidence you need to take that next business venture or restore a relationship. For others, He will speak to your heart differently.

He may tell you not to take that step towards what you feel is a sure thing. He may ask you to wait a bit longer or tell you not to do it all together. Part of spiritual maturity is being able to discern what God is saying, and act on it, whether it’s what we were hoping for or not.

As you are fasting today, ask God to speak to you about His will for this season of your life, and when He does, listen.

February 14

Day 11

Scripture Reading:

- [Isaiah 43:19](#)
- [2 Corinthians 12:9](#)
- [Matthew 5:3](#)
- [Psalms 34:5](#)

Devotional Reading:

God loves doing new things in our lives, yet too often we view our future singularly through the prism of our past. It is true that wise people learn from mistakes, but there is a fine line between learning from our failures and allowing our past disappointments to shape how we see God's promises.

Maybe you have been praying for God to move in your situation. You may believe God's promises are possible, but just not possible for you. If that's where you're at, here's some really good news - God's promises are for you!

God wants to do something new in your life. He wants to bring growth, beauty, and vitality to the wilderness you have been living in. Listen to the words of Isaiah 43:19, "Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

This 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer will lead to new things being done in you, through you, and around you as the Lord honors your fast. Watch expectantly, anticipate His goodness, you may not see it yet but it's impossible to fast without seeing God work in response to our seeking His face.

February 15

Day 12

Scripture Reading:

- [Psalms 27:1-8](#)
- [Psalms 86:11](#)
- [Proverbs 23:26](#)

Devotional Reading:

Our desires often dictate the course of our lives. What we want motivates us. Our desires determine what we do, what we go after, and even how we think. What is it that you desire?

The Psalmist David writes, "One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple." As a king, there were many things David knew he needed and certainly there were many things vying for his attention. But as he spent time in the presence of the Lord he realized that really one thing was more important than everything else -- being in God's presence.

It's been said that "when God is all you have, you find that God is all you need." While that is true, it could also be said that "when God is all you want, you find that God is all you need." In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things will be given to you."

As you fast, make seeking the Lord the number one priority in your life -- seeking the Giver more than the gift. Better than getting what we need is growing closer in our walk with Him.

February 16

Day 13

Scripture Reading:

- [Daniel 10:1-14](#)
- [Psalms 34:7](#)
- [Matthew 7:7](#)
- [Psalms 9:10](#)

Devotional Reading:

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel...it concerned a great war. At that time, I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month...” (Daniel 10:1-4a NIV)

Daniel fasted three weeks, twenty-one days and, humanly speaking, it appeared nothing had happened! Daniel didn't see or hear anything for twenty-four days, but Heaven heard, and his answer was on its way from the very first day.

“Then he continued, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them’.” (Daniel 10:12 NIV)

When you fast and pray, Heaven takes note. It may not seem like anything is happening, but the truth is that from the moment your fast began, God has been working. Don't quit praying. Don't stop seeking. Continue in this 21-day journey with the expectation that you will see God do extraordinary things in your life.

February 17

Day 14

Scripture Reading:

- [Psalms 62:11](#)
- [Psalms 28:7](#)
- [Philippians 4:13](#)
- [Isaiah 40:29](#)

Devotional Reading:

There is nothing like fasting to remind you of your weakness, but there is also nothing like fasting to remind you where real strength is found. The Psalmist points us to the true source of strength when he declares in Psalm 62:11,

“God said this once and for all; how many times have I heard it repeated? ‘Strength comes straight from God’.”

At times, all of us can live under the illusion that we have what it takes to handle whatever comes our way, but seasons of fasting reminds us that only through dependence on God can we truly overcome. In John 15:5, Jesus said, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” And the Apostle Paul reminds us, that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

God has all the strength you need, and as you seek Him, you will see His strength flow into your life in a new and dynamic way. So, as you continue this fast be encouraged that though you may feel weak, He is making you stronger.

February 18

Day 15

Scripture Reading:

- [Ezra 8:21-23](#)
- [Psalms 119:68](#)
- [Luke 1:37](#)

Devotional Reading:

In Ezra 8, God's people were on a journey back to Jerusalem. They were bringing with them items of gold and silver to be used in the worship of God at the temple. Because the roads were terrorized by bandits, Ezra feared for the safety of his people and was concerned they might be robbed. But rather than approaching the king to help with this matter, Ezra believed the Lord would come through so he called the people to fast and pray. Sure enough, God responded to their earnest prayers and protected them!

When we fast and pray, it opens the door for God to do what would otherwise not happen in our lives. We can have confidence just like Ezra that God will meet our needs as we call out to Him. God loves to show himself strong in the midst of our neediness.

Take your need before God knowing that He will hear your prayer. Then watch as God works miraculously and does the impossible!

February 19

Day 16

Scripture Reading:

- [Romans 12:1-2](#)
- [Isaiah 40:31](#)
- [Psalms 51:10-12](#)
- [Lamentations 3:22-23](#)

Devotional Reading:

Given a choice, most people want fresh: fresh produce, fresh coffee, fresh air, fresh ideas, fresh perspective, fresh faith--it's just better. But, freshness in your spiritual life doesn't happen automatically or by accident; it has to be cultivated. Counterfeit pathways to internal freshness we desire are advertised all around us, yet the real thing only comes one way.

Romans 12:2 says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

The truth of this verse is simple but profound. Our minds must be renewed, and this renewal has a singular source. The prophet Isaiah wrote, "They who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength." The freshness all of us long for, and the strength we need to pervade every area of our lives begins with being in the presence of God. Ask God to fill you with fresh faith, fresh passion, fresh enthusiasm, and fresh perspective, and then watch that freshness spill out into everything you do. Charles Spurgeon said it well when he wrote, "We should pray to God that we may do everything freshly."

During this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer, take time to wait on God and watch as He brings freshness into your life!

February 20

Day 17

Scripture Reading:

- [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)
- [Proverbs 3:6](#)
- [Proverbs 16:9](#)

Devotional Reading:

The average adult makes 35,000 decisions a day. From the moment your alarm sounds, your decision-making process begins. With so many decisions to make, it can be hard to know where to spend your time, but the Apostle Paul provides valuable insight into fulfilling God's will in our lives. He tells us never to stop praying.

When we choose to pray continually, we realign our thinking and our priorities in a way that directly effects our decision making. God cares how you spend your time and your energy. The Psalmist writes in Psalm 37:23 that God delights in every detail of our lives – He wants to be involved in everything! So, whether you're headed into a meeting or shuttling your kids to their next activity – pray for the Lord's presence to precede your every moment.

In the 35,000 decisions you'll make today, make it a priority to pray and invite God's direction into every part of your day. Use this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer to not only get what you need from God, but to draw closer to God. Because when we are close to God, we have everything we need!

February 21

Day 18

Scripture Reading:

- [Ephesians 5:15-17](#)
- [Ecclesiastes 3:1-8](#)
- [Isaiah 43:19](#)

Devotional Reading:

Nothing lasts forever. Christians understand that there are eternal realities, but they also recognize that our time on earth is fleeting. As one man said, “The minutes go slowly but the years go quickly.” This is why the Apostle Paul writes about the necessity of “making the most of every opportunity.” (Ephesians 5:16a NIV).

The definition of opportunity is “a favorable time or occasion” or “a situation or condition favorable for attainment of a goal.” There is a window when the time is right. There is a favorable moment.

Every day brings with it a unique season of opportunity! What we need is both the perspective and the wisdom to make the most of those opportunities that God sends our way. Honestly, many of life’s opportunities come disguised as problems and trials. That is why fasting is so helpful.

Through fasting our vision is shaped, our perspective is changed, and our faith is strengthened! During this fast you are literally standing on the verge of opportunities that are bursting with God-sized potential, but will require faith-filled action. This time of fasting and prayer is a moment to make the most of. Fasting will change you, and the results of this fast will be life changing. So during this 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer embrace what God has for you, lean in, and listen.

Every opportunity has a shelf life. Will you seize it before it expires?

February 22

Day 19

Scripture Reading:

- [Matthew 17:20](#)
- [Jeremiah 32:27](#)
- [Mark 10:27](#)

Devotional Reading:

What obstacle do you need the Lord's power to work through today? What situation or challenge have you lacked the faith to ask for in prayer? Jesus says the smallest amount of faith will produce big results. And those results will have a direct impact on increasing your faith to pray with greater confidence and boldness for the impossible to become possible.

In Matthew Chapter 17, Jesus is responding to His disciples regarding their inability to cast out a demon from a boy. Jesus identifies their lack of faith as the primary reason the boy was not healed when they prayed for him. We know the disciples were not void of faith, but their faith was not functioning properly. Jesus tells His disciples that mountain-moving faith is possible even when the tiniest, smallest amount of faith is present.

Jewish literature often connected moving a mountain with seemingly impossible events similar to this type of healing. God desires His followers to function with great faith despite the challenge or battle faced, because our faith will bring the confidence to pray bold prayers.

February 23

Day 20

Scripture Reading:

- [Exodus 14:5-14](#)
- [Psalms 18:39](#)
- [Psalms 33:21](#)
- [Ephesians 3:20](#)

Devotional Reading:

The sound of thunder could be heard from miles away, yet there were no clouds in the sky. The hooves from Pharaoh's horses were closing in on the Israelites. Pharaoh and six hundred of his best chariots, along with every available soldier, were making their way toward the traveling multitude of emancipated slaves.

Their freedom, the hope they felt, was all but lost. The Israelites called to Moses, "Why did you bring us out into the desert to die?" They were not equipped to take on such a vast army.

Then Moses answered them, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today."

That is exactly what God did.

What do you need deliverance from? Maybe, like the Israelites, you feel like you're trapped. For the Israelites, it was the Red Sea and the Egyptian army. For you, it may be financial strain, sickness, or sin. If that is where you are at, you don't need to be afraid. God will fight for you! You put your trust in Him; you call out to Him, you stand firm in your time of fasting, and watch what He will do!

February 24

Day 21

Scripture Reading:

- [Acts 16:20](#)
- [Psalms 145:9](#)
- [1 Chronicles 16:34](#)
- [James 1:17](#)
- [Psalms 100:5](#)

Devotional Reading:

Don't get weirded out, but you need to know that people are watching you. They have seen you eating fruits, vegetables, beans, and nuts and they are paying attention to what happens in your life as result of this 21-day journey.

People always have their eye on Jesus' followers. In Acts 16, the Bible tells us that around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and [the other prisoners were listening](#) (Acts 16:20).

The word "listening" here, is to listen intently, to lean in. They weren't just listening, but they were leaning in to hear the worship being lifted up to heaven. You may feel like you are the only person going through a trial but you are not alone. There are people all around you that are listening to how you respond.

Your words of faith and praise will not only lift your heart but they will touch the hearts of the people who hear them. The prisoners had probably never heard anything like what they heard that night from Paul and Silas --joyful voices lifted to heaven. They were having church in a prison. The atmosphere was completely changed. A place accustomed to profanity was now turned upside down by the presence of Paul and Silas.

The bottom line is people are watching us. As you finish this fast, move forward with hope-filled expectation that God has heard you and that God is working in you, through you, and around you in response to this time of calling on Him! People will take notice.