



7-DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

What To Know & Daily Devotionals

Church of the Redeemer

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Dear Friend, We're so glad you're participating in this time of prayer, fasting and personal devotion. After an unprecedented and challenging year, we have the opportunity to reset our spiritual compass and allow God to refresh every area of our lives.

This fast is designed to be flexible, so you can participate at any level. Whether you have some experience in fasting for several days or weeks, or if this is your first time, you can start where you are and experience what God has in store for you in a powerful way.

The guide provides practical tools to help you navigate your personal journey. As you read over the information, please consider how it applies to you and your circumstances and convictions.

We pray that you will experience the presence and power of God in an extraordinary way as you commit yourself to Him over this time. May the Lord continue to bless you and enlarge you as you seek Him first!

Matthew 9:15b (NKJV) But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.



Important Note: Fasting requires reasonable precautions.

If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast, especially if you are taking any medication, have a chronic condition, or are pregnant or nursing a baby.

FASTING

As you prepare to fast, it's important to choose a fasting plan that works for you. Keep in mind that there's nothing more inherently spiritual about one type of fast. These are simply guidelines and suggestions on different things you can do.

Do not let what you eat or don't eat become the focus of your fast. Keep the main thing the main thing, which is drawing closer to God. Remember, this is a time to disconnect enough from your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God.

Here are a few tips on this.



START
WHERE
YOU ARE

KNOW YOURSELF

DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU.

We are all at different places in our walk with God. Likewise our jobs, daily schedules, and health conditions are all different and place various levels of demands on our energy.

Whether you've fasted before or this is your first time, start where you are. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it. It's very important to **know your own body, know your options and, most importantly, seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.**

Remember, the goal of fasting is not just to go without food. The goal is to draw closer to God.



CHOOSE YOUR TYPE OF FAST

While preparing for your fast, it's important to choose ahead of time what type of fast, or what combination, you will pursue. Not only will this help you make the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but as you commit to a specific fast ahead of time and know how you're going to do it, you will position yourself to finish strong.

On the following pages we've listed some options and variations of fasts you can choose from. Please consider how each option may or may not apply to your personal circumstances and convictions. The Bible describes various kinds and lengths of fasts. You can fast one type of food or all food, or some combination of foods. In this type of fast you omit a specific item (or items) from your meal plans. For example, you may choose to eliminate all red meat, processed or fast food, or sweets. Most people can incorporate this type of fast relatively easily. It can also prove to be a great solution for people with specific dietary needs or medical conditions that may cause certain limitations.

Food fasts can also focus on consuming a specific type of food or beverage.

Examples are juice or water fasts. They focus on simply consuming vegetable and fruit juices or water instead of solid food. Many people include whey protein in their liquid plan as well. This is one of

the most popular and effective fasts. Even if you choose not to make your entire fast liquids-only, substituting one or two meals for liquids is a great alternative.

In addition to the food fast, many people choose non-food fasts to intensify their focus on God. Non-food fasts can also be good for those who are on very strict diets due to medical conditions and are unable to fast any kind of food or liquid. Non-food fasts can include refraining from luxury or pleasure items—things that take our time from or distract us from time with God. An example of a non-food fast is a media/entertainment fast, including television, social media, and the like.

The decision as to what kind of fast you choose is yours. You may choose to fast one day a week, one meal a day or in whatever way you feel led. This is your personal decision and should be prayerfully considered as it applies to your circumstances. Simply ask the Lord for guidance, and if health issues are a concern (for instance, you are pregnant or a nursing mother), consult your doctor.

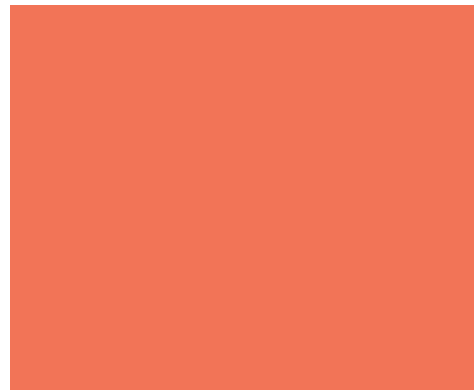
BEGIN & BREAK THE FAST WELL

PREPARING YOUR BODY

Depending on the type of fast you choose, it's very important to prepare your body ahead of time before beginning the fast. Take a week or so to transition into your fast, otherwise you could get sick. For example, if you would like to go on a fruits and vegetables or juice fast, start eliminating meat, white grains and refined sugars from your diet the week before. Also start to cut back quite a bit on dairy products and some of your caffeine intake.

The same principle applies to breaking your fast. When your fast is over, add foods back in very gradually. Please don't break your fast with a greasy cheeseburger! Because your body is so cleansed and detoxified, you will most likely get sick if you do that.

There are also several supplements you can take that will help support the detox process during your fast. Your health-food store can give you recommendations.







DAY 01 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR HIS PROVISION

Exodus 34:28 (NIV) Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.

Fasting is trusting. Just ask Moses. God's call to him included an amazing time of trusting the Lord alone for his very survival.

People can survive only about three days without water and three weeks without food. Moses trusted God to provide beyond what was humanly possible. He believed that "what is impossible with man is possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

Of course, the point wasn't seeing how long Moses could go without basic provisions. It was about God working through Moses to accomplish His purpose—the declaration of Ten Commandments that changed the world.

While you may not be fasting "forty days and forty nights" and hauling tablets of commandments for God, there's still a call for you to trust Him right where you are.

Don't think so much about "giving up" something in your fasting as "giving over" everything to Him. Learn to lean more on the Lord. Be still and know that He is God (Psalm 46:10) and see how He will provide and guide you into His purpose for your life.



DAY 02 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR HIS PEACE

Isaiah 26:3 (NCV) You, Lord, give true peace to those who depend on you, because they trust you.

Strife and stress are deadly. They wage a war of worry in our minds and wear down our bodies. They breed chaos instead of calm in our relationships. They can even affect our walk with the Lord.

Thankfully there is an antidote to strife. *Shalom* is a wonderful Hebrew word often translated “peace,” but it also communicates a sense of wholeness and well-being. The prophet Isaiah tells us that God gives *shalom* and clarifies who can receive this amazing gift—“*those who depend on you, because they trust you.*”

True peace will not prevail in our lives unless we trust the Lord for His *shalom*. Let’s be honest: we can’t just make peace happen and banish strife through our

own willpower. Instead, we must depend on the One who made peace for us through the sacrifice of His Son on the cross (Colossians 1:20) and makes us whole and well as we walk closely with Him.

Trade in your strife for *shalom* by trusting Him. Do it today.



DAY 03 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR HIS STRENGTH

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NCV) But he said to me, “My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you.” So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ’s power can live in me. For this reason I am happy when I have weaknesses, insults, hard times, sufferings, and all kinds of troubles for Christ. Because when I am weak, then I am truly strong.

How strong are you? We often measure and define someone’s strength by how much weight they can lift, pull or push. Or how confident they are in themselves. Or perhaps how much of life’s difficulties they can endure with a stiff upper lip.

But God’s view of strength is different. He looks into our hearts to see what our spiritual fortitude looks like. He knows that in our humanity, we are weak in many ways on the inside and need His strength.

That’s where grace comes in! God’s grace builds up our trust and confidence in Him. He has forgiven us of every sin by grace and He will help us at every point of weakness. Through grace we learn that the goal is not to stand “on our own

two feet,” but to stand in faith and trust in Jesus, who gives us strength we can’t find in ourselves (Philippians 4:13). Strength to be what God calls us to be and to do what He calls us to do.

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to “be strong in the Lord and his mighty power” (Ephesians 6:10). Trust Him to make you strong. Trust that His grace is more than enough—that even in your weakness, His power is made perfect in you.



DAY 04 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR HIS WISDOM

Proverbs 9:10 (ERV) Wisdom begins with fear and respect for the Lord. Knowledge of the Holy One leads to understanding.

We all need wisdom to navigate life's journey. The question is, where will we get it?

There are, of course, many voices that claim to be wise vying for our attention. Social media will gladly provide you with the latest trend of advice. Well-meaning friends have their opinions. Our own experience wants to weigh in as well.

God's Word tells us that it's wise to fear and respect the Lord. In fact, this is the foundation for all wisdom. When we revere the Holy One and His truth, we open our hearts and minds to rich insight from Him on how to live well and right in a world gone wrong. We understand what really matters for eternity and what is merely temporary.

Trust His wisdom. Respect God's truth as the basis for the decisions and direction of your life. Honor Him in this way and see how He will work in and through your life!



DAY 05 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR OUR FAMILIES

Joshua 24:15 (CEV) But if you don't want to worship the Lord, then choose here and now! Will you worship the same idols your ancestors did? ... I won't. My family and I are going to worship and obey the Lord!

God cares about your family. He created the family, loves families and wants them to flourish.

But the reality is that all families are imperfect. There are points of pain, heartache, bitterness and regret that tear at the fabric of family relationships. This can be discouraging and disheartening at times.

That's why we need to entrust our families to God, and choose to worship and obey Him. He can work in the hearts and lives of each family member, beginning with us, as we ask Him to intervene and commit ourselves to walking in His ways.

Joshua took a strong stand for his family in the midst of a culture of idolatry. Let his battle cry spur you on to swim upstream against the current of our culture, standing firmly for the Lord on behalf of your family. While others may choose to compromise in family life, let your declaration be "I won't. My family and I are going to worship and obey the Lord!"



DAY 06 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR OUR NATION

Proverbs 14:34 (HCSB) Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

In his famous book, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon makes an amazing observation: “The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful.”

What a confusing scene! No wonder the mighty Roman empire declined and fell. In contrast, the Bible tells us clearly what lifts up a nation—worship of the one true and living God that leads to righteousness among the people.

This is the hope for our nation, and it begins with us as His church. “If my people,” God promises, “will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Humble. Pray. Seek. Turn. This is how we obey and trust God to forgive our sin and heal our land.



DAY 07 | TRUSTING GOD...

FOR OUR FUTURE

Jeremiah 29:11 (NCV) “I say this because I know what I am planning for you,” says the Lord. “I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.”

What does the future hold? We'd all love to know ... or would we?

This verse of Scripture clarifies a better way. It invites us to trust the Lord and His promises for our future, rather than hoping for some kind of sneak preview of what's in store for your life.

Notice the emphasis on God's personal involvement in your future: “I say this ... I know what I am planning for you. ... I have good plans for you. I will give you hope and a good future.”

Think about it: Almighty God is planning your future. Obviously He knows exactly

what you need, when you need it, and He is ready to bring His resources to bear on these needs. As the Apostle Paul declared, “My God will use his wonderful riches in Christ Jesus to give you everything you need” (Philippians 4:19).

But the key is to trust Him in Christ. Trust His Word. Trust His purpose. Trust His love. Trust that He cares for you beyond anything you can imagine (Ephesians 3:20) and will guide you into His best in the days ahead.



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