

theAlley

prayer and fasting guide



Hello Friends...

As we begin the new and exciting adventure of planting a church it is essential that we spend significant time seeking God's will and direction. This is, after all, His church, and we desire to be in the center of His will for us.

Therefore, I am inviting you into a time of fasting.

We're not asking anyone to give up food completely for this time. Rather, as a joint effort in seeking God's direction I am inviting you to fast and pray every Sunday until our next DOCK on May 20th.

Then we will break our final fast with a shared communion meal that afternoon.

You may choose to fast from one meal on each Sunday,

or you may choose to fast from food (not liquids) for the entire day (sunset Saturday - sunset Sunday).

Whatever the mode of your fast...

May your hunger pains be a sign of humility in God's sight. May your spiritual appetite be awakened.

May you be reminded to lift His name up in praise and

may it be a time where you pray, repent and seek

God's guidance both within your life and for the Alley church.

In the following pages you will find some resources compiled by our prayer team on what the Bible has to say about fasting. You will also find a weekly study and prayer guide.

If you'd like more specific items to pray for consider subscribing to the prayer news by submitting your e-mail on www.thealley.org. Upon typing in your address you will have the option of subscribing to the monthly e-news and/or the weekly prayer update.

May God be honored and heard as we seek Him.

Peace-

Ben

Fasting in the Bible

In times of war or threat of war (Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 7:6)
When loved ones were sick (2 Samuel 12:16-23).
For their enemies (Psalm 35:11-13)
When loved ones died (1 Samuel 31:13; 1 Chronicles 10:12).
When seeking God's pardon (Deut. 9:15-18; 1 Kings 21:17-29; Jonah 3:4-10)
When facing danger (Ezra 8:21; Esther 4:3, 4:16)
Jesus taught about fasting in his sermon on the mount (Matthew 6:1-18)
Jesus questioned (Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33)
Jesus assumed that his disciples would fast (Matthew 9:14-15)
The church at Antioch fasted (Acts 13:1-3; Acts 14:21-23)
Paul often fasted (2 Corinthians 11:23-27)
Married couples may find need for fasting (1 Corinthians 7:5)

Motivation

Not to be seen of men (Matthew 6:16-18).
Not as some regular ritual (Matthew 9:14-17).
Not done without true repentance (Isaiah 58:3-9)

Length of Time

One day [Sunrise to Sunset] (Judges 20:26; 2 Samuel 1:12; 3:35)
Three days (Esther 4:16)
Seven days (1 Samuel 31:13; 1 Chronicles 10:12).
Forty days (Exodus 34:28; Deut. 9:9; Matthew 4:2)

Partial or Absolute

Sometimes a fast was partial, restricted diet, not total abstention (Daniel 10:2-3)
Sometimes a fast was absolute, included water (Jonah 3; Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9)

Weekly Study and Prayer Guide

Sunday—April 22nd

Read - Luke 14:1-14

Lift up in Prayer //

- That we would serve God with humility.
- That our hearts would be bent for the broken.
- That our vision and mission would come from God's leading.
- That we would see those in need around us and not hesitate to serve in Jesus' name.

Sunday—April 29th

Read - Luke 14:15-24

Lift up in Prayer//

- That we would not make excuses when presented the gospel.
- That we would be active in the streets and alleys of our lives.
- That we corporately and individually would not be afraid to go where God leads.
- That Jesus would always be first in our lives.

Sunday—May 6th

Read - Luke 14:25-35

Lift up in Prayer//

- That we would be "counting the cost" and preparing in an effective and God honoring way.
- That our first love as a church and individuals would be God.
- That God would reveal to us the crosses He desires us to carry and give us the courage to follow.
- That God forgive us for our mistakes and pride and give us ears to hear His voice.

Sunday—May 13th

Read - Luke 15:1-31

Lift up in Prayer//

That our heart would beat for the “lost”

That we would build community with “sinners” and that God would continually lead us to repentance.

That God would use us to reach the “lost”

That God would place on us a vision and a passion that is clear and effective in accomplishing His mission.

That we would be willing to leave the 99 and chase the 1.

That He would lead.

Sunday—May 20th

Read - Luke 16:1-15

Lift up in Prayer//

That we would be more concerned with the things of God than of men.

That our vision and direction would be counted worthy in His sight.

That He would open our eyes to the opportunities and direction that He wants us to go.

That He would bring the right combination of spiritual gifts and leadership together to accomplish His ministry among us effectively.

Fasting is a way... to take a break from the lesser things

that have hijacked our hearts: things like TV, the internet, consuming relationships, books, fashion, shopping, sports and the most basic - food.

When we fast, we deny our physical appetites in hopes that spiritual ones might be awakened. We rescue our hearts from being fixated on the passing pleasures of this life and we rivet our hearts on the eternal God who alone can satisfy our souls.

JR Yassar

