

21 DAYS OF FASTING & PRAYER: November 3-24, 2024

An Intro to 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

Life is hard. Would you agree with this statement? Even with moments of joy and gratitude, we all struggle. We struggle with dashed dreams and relational disappointment. We struggle with injustice and unkindness. We struggle in our families, in our schools, with our coworkers and even in our church.

Paul conveyed similar struggles when he wrote to the Corinthian believers:

"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death" (2 Corinthians 1:8).

Paul had more than missionary struggles. He knew how hard life could be on multiple levels. Just like we do. But Paul gives us a lens of faith by which to interpret our struggles:

*"But this happened **that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers"*** (2 Corinthians 1: 9).

We need that same lens of faith – to propel us toward depending on God and to keep hope alive even as we struggle.

As our church family engages in a three week season of prayer, we are essentially declaring our dependence on God. What follows is a daily guide of how to pray for our church family. There are lots of details, but three overarching requests are 1) for the strengthening of our staff and leaders; 2) for the provision of a worship/youth leader; and 3) for God to provide the financial resources CCG needs. Also consider what personal struggles are "beyond your ability to endure" that you want to bring before God daily during this season of prayer.

This is a guide, not a prescription or requirement. Each day will provide a prompt for rejoicing, repenting, requesting and reaffirming your faith. The requests are for CCG, but weave your personal requests into your prayers as well. Some of us can do 5 minutes of prayer; others have more time resources. Regardless of the time invested, we are posturing ourselves to say, "God we need you."

The Option of Fasting. . .

In the Bible prayer is often combined with fasting. Biblical fasting is to abstain from food, but Brandon Cook in his book *Learning to Live and Love Like Jesus* writes that fasting is “a voluntary, temporary reduction in comfort, so that we can redirect our energy to God. It is detaching from over-dependence on any good thing. . . so that we can. . . [hunger more] for the very presence of God Himself” (pp 290-1). Here are some ideas if you would like to combine fasting with prayer:

Food:

- Abstain from eating from a meal in order to devote that time to prayer.
- Abstain from food for one day a week and pray intentionally at times throughout the day.
- Abstain from certain types of food for the entire 3 weeks. One format for this is a [Daniel's Fast](#) that eliminates bread, dairy, meat and sugar drinks. Please click on the link to learn more about this.

Technology:

- Abstain from technology for a portion of every day (phone, TV, computer) in order to devote time to prayer.
- Abstain from technology for one day a week and pray intentionally at times throughout that day.

This is an optional part of CCG's season of prayer and intended to be a private decision that heightens dependency on God.