

Prayer and Fasting January 2026

I am excited to offer this Prayer and Fasting Resource to you for our January month of prayer. I personally have felt challenged to practice an extended time of fasting in January, and I invite you to come and join me at a level you feel comfortable. Your choice to engage in prayer and fasting will be transformative.

If fasting is something that you have not done in the past, then please, follow the guidelines below and begin slowly. I would encourage you to fast lunch for two or three days a week for two or three weeks – use lunchtime for prayer. After three weeks try a 24 hour fast – repeat this for two or three weeks. Then try a 3 day fast (warning – the first 3 days are the most difficult days of a fast). Don't be defeated by not reaching your fasting goal. Give thanks to God, and try again.

I encourage you to write down what is drawing you toward fasting and set some personal prayer goals for your time. Journaling your time during your fast will give you great insight into how this time is shaping you.

There are some things that I would like to ask you to pray for during the month of January 2026:

- Please ask God to grow GCF's Gospel impact in Halton Hills, so that we would see many family members and friends give their lives to Jesus.
- Please pray for our next Alpha session March 9, 2025. Ask Jesus to lead you to invite someone to Alpha.

Pastor Terry

Fasting

Adopted from: **7 Basic Steps to Fasting and Prayer** by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, and **The Way – Prayer and Fasting** by Ray Duerksen.

Some CONSIDERATIONS:

CONSIDER: Your Objective

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically.

Through fasting and prayer, we humble ourselves before God so the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our churches, and heal our land according to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Make this a priority in your fasting.

CONSIDER: Biblical Encouragement and Examples

1. Fasting to strengthen us for the spiritual battle we are in.
 - a. We have a responsibility to action – to partner with God. This is not a static position – a “wait and see” approach to following Jesus.
 - b. There are evil forces working against the advancement of God's Kingdom.
 - c. James 4:7
 - d. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4
 - e. Consider fasting as a weapon against spiritual forces.
 - f. Ezra 8:21-23
2. Fasting trains us to resist temptation
 - a. Do you have any frustration in failing – falling again in a familiar sin?
 - b. You may experience victory or freedom, but also need to WALK in it.

- c. One way we overcome our selfish ways is to yield to the work of the Spirit in us – to train ourselves to be under the control of the Spirit.
 - d. Galatians 5:16-26
- 3. Fasting expresses urgency in your prayers
 - a. In a symbolic way fasting communicates to God that we are prepared to lay down things that are important to us in order to receive whatever breakthrough we are fasting for.
 - b. Esther 4:15-17
 - c. Joel 2:12-15
- 4. Fasting creates a hunger for Jesus – the Bread of Life.
 - a. Money, power, sex, food, pleasure, movies, TV, music, sports, desire for status/position, job – these can become all consuming – they can become idols.
 - b. Psalm 139:23-24
 - c. John 6:35
 - d. Matthew 11:28-30
- 5. Fasting expresses a desire for Jesus' return
 - a. Anna the prophetess – Luke 2:36-38 – earnestly waiting for the Messiah to come
 - b. Luke 18:8
 - c. Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 22:20
- 6. Fasting to be set apart and empowered for God's work
 - a. Acts 13:2-3

CONSIDER: Your Commitment

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15) For Him it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it. Before you fast, decide the following:

- How long you will fast - one meal, one day, a week, several weeks, forty days (Beginners should start slowly, building over a period of time to longer fasts.)
- The type of fast God wants you to undertake:
 - Food fast – water only, or water and juices; what kinds of juices you will drink and how often.
 - Spending fast – purchasing only what is necessary.
 - Hobby fast
 - Gaming / device fast
 - Media fast
- What physical or social activities you will restrict
- How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word
- Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

CONSIDER: Preparing Yourself Spiritually

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare yourself:

- Ask God to help you make a comprehensive list of your sins.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4).
- Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in Ephesians 5:18 and His promise in 1 John 5:14,15.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; refuse to obey your worldly nature (Romans 12:1,2).
- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8. 11-13).
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart (Hebrews 11:6).
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16,17).

CONSIDER: Preparing Yourself Physically

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some people should never fast without professional supervision. Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.

- Do not rush into your fast.
- Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods.
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.
- Begin reducing your caffeinated drinks a number days ahead of the fast by drinking less each day – you'll be surprised how well you do without caffeine 2 or 3 days into your fast.

While You Fast

Your time of fasting and prayer has come. You are abstaining from all solid foods and have begun to seek the Lord. Here are some helpful suggestions to consider:

- Avoid drugs, even natural herbal drugs and homeopathic remedies. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision.
- Limit your activity.
- Exercise only moderately. Walk one to three kms each day if convenient and comfortable.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pains, dizziness, or the "blahs." Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness. The first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will likely experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your liquid intake

CONSIDER: Putting Yourself on a Schedule

For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with Jesus. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Morning

- Begin your day in praise and worship.
 - Read and meditate on God's Word.

- Invite the Holy Spirit to work in you to will and to so His good pleasure according to Philippians 2:13.
- Invite God to use you. Ask Him to show you how to influence your world, your family, your church, your community, your country, and beyond.
- Pray for His vision for your life and empowerment to do His will.
- Noon
 - Return to prayer and God's Word.
 - Take a short prayer walk.
 - Spend time in intercessory prayer for your community's and nation's leaders, for the world's unreached millions, for your family or special needs.
- Evening
 - Get alone for an unhurried time of "seeking His face."
 - If others are fasting with you, meet together for prayer.
 - Avoid any technology, social media sources or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus.

When possible, begin and end each day on your knees with your spouse for a brief time of praise and thanksgiving to God. Longer periods of time with our Lord in prayer and study of His Word are often better spent alone.

A dietary routine is vital as well. Dr. Julio C. Ruibal - a nutritionist, pastor, and specialist in fasting and prayer - suggests a daily schedule and list of juices you may find useful and satisfying. Modify this schedule and the drinks you take to suit your circumstances and tastes.

5 a.m. - 8 a.m.

- Fruit juices, preferably freshly squeezed or blended and diluted in 50 percent distilled water if the fruit is acidic. Apple, pear, grapefruit, papaya, watermelon, or other fruit juices are generally preferred. If you cannot do your own juicing, buy juices without sugar or additives.

10:30 a.m. - noon

- Fresh vegetable juice made from lettuce, celery, and carrots in three equal parts.

2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.

- Herb tea with a drop of honey. Avoid black tea or any tea with caffeine.

6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

- Broth made from boiling potatoes, celery, and carrots with no salt. After boiling about half an hour, pour the water into a container and drink it.

Tips on Juice Fasting

- Drinking fruit juice will decrease your hunger pains and give you some natural sugar energy. The taste and lift will motivate and strengthen you to continue.
- The best juices are made from fresh watermelon, lemons, grapes, apples, cabbage, beets, carrots, celery, or leafy green vegetables. In cold weather, you may enjoy a warm vegetable broth.
- Mix acidic juices (orange and tomato) with water for your stomach's sake.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks. And avoid chewing gum or mints, even if your breath is bad. They stimulate digestive action in your stomach.

Breaking Your Fast

When your designated time for fasting is finished, you will begin to eat again. But how you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being.

CONSIDER: Ending Your Fast Gradually

Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.

Here are some suggestions to help you end your fast properly:

- Break an extended water fast with fruit such as watermelon.
- While continuing to drink fruit or vegetable juices, add the following:
 - First day: Add a raw salad.
 - Second day: Add baked or boiled potato or sweet potato, no butter or seasoning.
 - Third day: Add steamed vegetables. Thereafter: Begin to reintroduce your normal diet.
- Gradually return to regular eating with several small snacks during the first few days. Start with a little soup and fresh fruit such as watermelon and cantaloupe. Advance to a few tablespoons of solid foods such as raw fruits and vegetables or a raw salad and baked potato.

A Final Word: Expect Results

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, and seek God's face; if you consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (John 14:21). The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. A 24-hour fast each week has been greatly rewarding to many Christians.

It takes time to build your spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time out, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honour you for your faithfulness.

I encourage you to join me in fasting and prayer again and again until we truly experience revival in our homes, our churches, our beloved nation, and throughout the world.

Appendix

How to Experience and Maintain Personal Revival

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unconfessed sin in your life.
2. Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you. Make restitution where God leads.
3. Examine your motives in every word and deed. Ask the Lord to search and cleanse your heart daily.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your walk against complacency and mediocrity.
5. Praise and give thanks to God continually in all ways on all days, regardless of your circumstances.
6. Refuse to obey your sinful nature (Galatians 5:16,17).
7. Surrender your life to Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Develop utter dependence on Him with total submission and humility.
8. Study the attributes of God.
9. Hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matthew 5:6).
10. Love God with all of your heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).

11. Appropriate the continual fullness and control of the Holy Spirit by faith on the basis of God's command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1John 5:14,15).
12. Read, study, meditate on, and memorize God's holy, inspired, inerrant Word daily (Colossians 3:16).
13. Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
14. Fast and pray one 24-hour period each week.
15. Seek to share Christ daily as a way of life.
16. Determine to live a holy, godly life of obedience and faith.

Six Vital Questions About Prayer

Q: What Is Prayer?

- Simply put, prayer is communicating with God. Real prayer is expressing our devotion to our heavenly Father, inviting Him to talk to us as we talk to Him.

Q: Who Can Pray?

- Anyone can pray, but only those who walk in faith and obedience to Christ can expect to receive answers to their prayers.
- Contact with God begins when we receive Jesus into our lives as Savior and Lord (John 14:6). Praying with a clean heart is also vital to successful prayer. We cannot expect God to answer our prayers if there is any unconfessed sin in our life or if we are harbouring an unforgiving spirit (Psalm 66:18; Mark 11:25). For God to answer our prayers, we must have a believing heart and ask according to His will (Matthew 9:29; 21:22; 1 John 5:14,15).

Q: Why Are We to Pray?

- God's Word commands us to pray (Luke 18:1; Acts 6:4; Mark 14:38; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Timothy 2:1,2).
- We pray to have fellowship with God, receive spiritual nurture and strength to live a victorious life, and maintain boldness for a vital witness for Christ.
- Prayer releases God's great power to change the course of nature, people, and nations.

Q: To Whom Do We Pray?

- We pray to the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When we pray to the Father, our prayers are accepted by Jesus Christ and interpreted to God the Father by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26, 27,34).

Q: When Should We Pray?

- God's Word commands us to "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). We can be in prayer throughout the day, expressing and demonstrating our devotion to God as we go about our daily tasks.
- It is not always necessary to be on our knees, or even in a quiet room to pray. God wants us to be in touch with Him constantly wherever we are. We can pray in the car, while washing the dishes, or while walking down the street.

- Q: What Should We Include in Our Prayers?

Although prayer cannot be reduced to a formula, certain basic elements should be included in our communication with God: **Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (ACTS)**.

A-Adoration

- To adore God is to worship and praise Him, to honor and exalt Him in our heart and mind and with our lips.

C-Confession

- When our discipline of prayer begins with adoration, the Holy Spirit has opportunity to reveal any sin in our life that needs to be confessed.

T-Thanksgiving

- An attitude of thanksgiving to God, for who He is and for the benefits we enjoy because we belong to Him, enables us to recognize that He controls all things - not just the blessings, but the problems and adversities as well. As we approach God with a thankful heart, He becomes strong on our behalf.

S-Supplication

- Supplication includes petition for our own needs and intercession for others. Pray that your inner person may be renewed, always sensitive to and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Pray for others - your spouse, your children, your parents, neighbors, and friends; our nation and those in authority over us. Pray for the salvation of souls, for a daily opportunity to introduce others to Christ and to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.