

Pray First

WHY 21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING? - *21 days creates a habit*

- **We become what we repeatedly do**
- We don't form habits, habits form us.
- Our habits should not be like the habits of those in the world.

This is why we are doing the 21 days of prayer and fasting. To get closer to God.

James 4:8 - *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you*

FASTING - abstaining from something, usually food or drinks, in order to draw closer to God.

Complete Fast - In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water, juices, or coffee/tea.

Selective Fast - This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the "Daniel Fast", during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet.

Partial Fast - This fast is sometimes called the "Jewish Fast" - It's just where you don't eat from sunup to sun down.

Soul Fast - This fast helps you to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television or listening to certain music for the duration of the fast.

DON'T FAST TO:

- Lose weight To be accepted and loved by God To show how holy you are

Matthew 6:16-18 - *16 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Fasting is not just abstaining FROM something...it's giving yourself TO something.
Prayer, hearing God, study of His word.

If you only view it as abstaining FROM something you will despise it. When you see it as giving yourself TO God...you embrace it.

Matthew 17:16-21 NASB

*16 I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." 17 And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." 18 And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" 20 And He *said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. 21 But this kind does not go out **except by prayer and fasting.**"*

Unbelieving is far from God. Perverse is close to the world.

Prayer brings you close to God. Fasting takes you far from the world.

PRAYER

Prayer is the foundation of our relationship with God. - It's a conversation with God. We can pray anytime...in fact we should.

Often our response to life is to worry, to get anxious, to complain, to go to our friends, to google it - Prayer isn't our first response, it's often a last response. Prayer becomes your first response when you've developed a relationship with God through prayer.

These 3 things will help you in cultivating a lifestyle of prayer.

HAVE A CERTAIN TIME

HAVE A CERTAIN PLACE

HAVE A CERTAIN PLAN

Luke 11:1 - *Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.*

Matthew 6:5-9 - *"And **when you pray**, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But **when you pray, go into your room** and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 7 "And **when you pray**, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 **Pray then like this:** "*

Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave an outline. **We call it "The Model Prayer."**

Matthew 6:9-13 - *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen*

21 Day Devotional - *The purpose of this is to teach you to pray. We are taking the 21 days and focusing on elements of this model prayer creating a lifestyle of prayer.*

PRAYER CHANGES ME AND THEN I CHANGE THINGS.

*God change my spouse. God soften their heart. God help my finances. God help my kids be good. **When I pray, God changes my heart, my perspective, my attitude. God changes me.***

John 15:4-5 - *4 **Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.** 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, **he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.***

Our best efforts apart from him do nothing. Our best effort apart from being connected to the source...are just hard work with no results