

# 21 DAYS of PRAYER & FASTING

**Welcome!** Thanks for joining us for 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting! This devotion is centered around four main themes, as we invite the Holy Spirit to feed our souls and experience Him in a fresh, new way in these next few weeks.

1. Abiding in God
2. Trusting in God
3. Surrendering to God
4. Praising God



**W**elcome to our **21 days of Prayer and Fasting!** Whether this is your first experience with the spiritual discipline of fasting or you have practiced this activity before, we are excited to journey together. In fasting, we choose to say “no” to some good things in order to say “yes” to something even better, namely, Jesus.

The ultimate goal of all spiritual discipline is to fix our eyes more keenly on Jesus, becoming more and more like him, being transformed by His Spirit. And yet with fasting, it can be easy to focus on what we are giving up and let that become our primary emphasis instead. When we do that, “we” become the center of the discipline instead of Jesus, and the entire endeavor becomes somewhat negative. As we continue to pursue lasting, dynamic spiritual impact throughout these 21 days, allow any longing, desire, or hunger for what we have given up to act as a prompt to remind us to refocus on Jesus.

One of the verses we are keeping in front of us during this season is John 3:30. In this verse, John the Baptist makes this profound statement which is also our goal, prayer, and desire, **“He (Jesus) must increase, I must decrease.”** Fasting is not just “emptying” our self of good things; it is “filling” our lives, minds, hearts, and souls with the best things; God’s word, prayer, worship, service, quiet, celebration... Jesus. We can let Jesus be our example. He fasted, he prayed, he sacrificed, and focused on doing the will of God. The result for him was joy and experiencing the presence of God. Hebrews 11:2 states, *“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author, and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”* This booklet is filled with practical tools, helps and ideas, and a daily devotion written by different individuals from Cornwall Church. As we begin this disciplined, not legalistic, pilgrimage together, let *“the joy set before”* us, the joy of a closer connection with Christ, be our motivation and our end. Imagine what God will do in and through you and us as a body of believers as we accept his invitation to fast from things of this world and feast on things of His kingdom.

I am truly excited to enter into this pursuit with you and am praying for you daily.



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**DAILY ALARM:** Set a daily alarm for 3:30pm on your phone to remind you to reflect on John 3:30, *“He must increase, but I must decrease.”*

**JANUARY 10:** Discernment Day. Pray for what God will have you do during these 21 days. Make an intentional plan of your personal commitment and prayer goals. (see page 6)

**JANUARY 11:** First Day of 21 Days.

**JANUARY 12:** Refuge (*in-person and online*) at 6:30pm (PST). Join us for a time of extended worship, prayer, communion and a short message. Pause. Reflect. Respond.

**JANUARY 22:** We are halfway thru the 21 Days! Connect with us on Facebook at 9am, 12pm and 3pm for a video devotion from one of our pastors.

**JANUARY 31:** Last Day of 21 Days. Take time to reflect on what key lessons you learned during this time. What are some new disciplines or habits you want to keep? What was something new or fresh that you experienced with Jesus? Use the journaling space located in the back of this booklet. Additionally, we would love to hear about your experience. Email us at [stories@cornwallchurch.com](mailto:stories@cornwallchurch.com).

# TYPES OF FASTS

## **Complete Fast**

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option. Broth or soup may be included as options.

## **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 and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

## **Partial Fast**

This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food for a set amount of time, daily. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00am to 3:00pm, or from sunup to sundown.

## **Soul Fast**

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish 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 for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

### **Scripture References:**

Jeremiah 29:13	Daniel 10:2-3
Ezra 8:21	Daniel 10:12
Matthew 6:16-18	1 Corinthians 7:5
Matthew 9:14-15	

# FASTING IDEAS

Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into what kind of fast(s) you will be doing. If you are not ready to do a complete fast, consider doing a partial fast and/or a “soul” fast.

## Partial Fast Ideas

Meat	Alcohol	Sugar
Dairy	Caffeine	Desserts
Carbs	Soda	Snacks
Fast Food	Energy Drinks	Dressings

## “Soul” Fast Ideas

Sports	Apps	Disney +
Video Games	Shopping	Facebook
Music	Hobbies	Instagram
TV	Marital Relations	TikTok
Podcasts	Netflix	SnapChat
News	Amazon Prime	Among Us
Notifications	Hulu	Fortnite

Fasting is voluntary denial for spiritual purposes. Now that you have decided what you are saying “no” to, what are you saying “yes” to? How are you filling up your soul?

## “Fill Up” Ideas

Prayer	Silence	Devotions
Confession	Solitude	Hymns
Scripture	Nature	Listening
• Reading	Prayer Walk	Communion
• Reflection	Worship	Celebration
• Memorization	Serving	Praise
Journaling	Connecting	Thanksgiving

# SERMON RESOURCES

To watch past messages,  
go to <https://www.cornwallchurch.com/messages>

## **LESS IS MORE** (a series on fasting)

1/10/21 - A Fast Review

1/17/21 - Greater than >

1/24/21 - Fast Forward

## **NOT SO, FAST** (a series on fasting)

1/12/20 - Fasting 101

1/19/20 - Fast-Feast

1/26/20 - Together

## **PRAY FIRST** (a series on prayer)

2/10/18 - Immeasurably More

2/18/18 - Hearts Cry

2/25/18 - Jacob: Change Me

3/04/18 - Nehemiah: A Call to Action

3/11/18 - Hungering for More

3/18/18 - Faithful in Prayer

3/25/18 - The Pray-er

**We'd love to hear about your 21 Day experience.**  
Share your story at [stories@cornwallchurch.com](mailto:stories@cornwallchurch.com).

**Have a prayer request?**  
Email us at [prayers@cornwallchurch.com](mailto:prayers@cornwallchurch.com)

# MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT & PRAYER GOALS

Seek what God will have you do during these 21 days - *(what kind of fast, when and for how long)* and then commit to writing it down. Additional space is provided in the back of this booklet.

**I am fasting from:**

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**Who am I specifically praying for during these 21 days?**

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**What specific circumstances or issues am I praying for?**

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# 21 DAYS OF DEVOTIONS

## ABIDING IN GOD

Day 1 - Jan 11	Drawing Near to God
Day 2 - Jan 12	Come Here
Day 3 - Jan 13	Stay Under
Day 4 - Jan 14	Fill the Gap
Day 5 - Jan 15	Remain
Day 6 - Jan 16	Rooted

## TRUSTING IN GOD

Day 7 - Jan 17	Listen
Day 8 - Jan 18	What is Good?
Day 9 - Jan 19	Never Alone
Day 10 - Jan 20	Calm
Day 11 - Jan 21	C.OUR.AGE.

## SURRENDERING TO GOD

Day 12 - Jan 22	Who Are You?
Day 13 - Jan 23	Fast
Day 14 - Jan 24	“Lord, I Give You...”
Day 15 - Jan 25	In Light of Eternity
Day 16 - Jan 26	Inside Out

## PRAISING GOD

Day 17 - Jan 27	Practice His Presence
Day 18 - Jan 28	Praise Him!
Day 19 - Jan 29	Enough
Day 20 - Jan 30	Peace, I Give You
Day 21 - Jan 31	Eyes Up

# DAY 1 - JAN 11

## DRAWING NEAR TO GOD

*"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation,  
so that you may know him better."  
Ephesians 1:17*

Have you ever had an "AHA Moment"? That moment when something that has been a mystery becomes beautifully more evident? At that moment, you say, "Oh, wow"! Then a deep joy and delight frequently follow.

When we had been married for a little over a year, one day, my wife said, "I am pregnant," which was shocking for both of us. However, what was initially surprising and mysterious became beautifully clear after a few moments. We were going to have a child! Deep joy followed.

In Ephesians 1:17, and the passage that surrounds it, Paul is praying for God to give the church in Ephesus (and us) wisdom and a deeper understanding of who God the Father, Son, and Spirit are. He wants to be known by His children.

In prayer and fasting, we intentionally draw near to God, creating space for God to show up. When we do this, it answers Paul's prayer and fulfills God's desire to grow us in our wisdom and understanding so that we will know Him better. Will we understand the vastness of God in a moment? Of course not. Yet, when we draw near to God, we get to know Him better a little at a time. As we do, our understanding of Him becomes increasingly clear, beautifully clearer. Deep joy and elation frequently follow.

- Scott Moon, Skagit Campus Pastor

# DAY 2 - JAN 12

COME HERE

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,  
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,  
for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your  
souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."  
Matthew 11:28-30*

I was broken. She could see it.

*"Come here."*

She grabbed my arm, pulled me close, and hugged me. She didn't let go. I cried, she held, and the weight lifted.

That hug was many years ago, yet it is not difficult to recall how it made me feel.

Friends, our days are heavy.

Jesus promises us rest from our heavy. He promises rest from our burden.

But first, He says, *"Come here."*

Maybe you find yourself crying as you drive alone in your car.

Maybe you are overwhelmed as you walk into yet another meeting with an uncertain future. Maybe you are broken with the weight of today, knowing it will carry into tomorrow.

It is in these moments He whispers, *"Come here."* It is here He pulls you close. Feel the touch of Jesus. Feel the embrace of your Savior. Here we find rest for our wearied and tired souls.

As we focus on fasting and talking with Jesus these 21 Days, may you feel your heavy lift.

May you hear Him whisper, *"Come here."*

- Cheri Fiorucci, Bellingham Campus

# DAY 3 - JAN 13

## STAY UNDER

*“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. Be alert and of sober mind.*

*Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.”*

*1 Peter 5:6-11*

When I think about humbling myself under God's hand, I think about his protection and his desire for us to draw near and not venture off.

How do we stay under God’s hand?

Consistent obedience, intentionality, and most importantly, God’s strength & our love for Him. We must first recognize there is an internal battle going on between our flesh and spirit. Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 26, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Our spirit wants to draw near to God, but our human desires and distractions can triumph. It takes God’s strength and practicing denying self.

Fasting is one way we practice denying ourselves. It raises our spiritual antennas and helps us become more sober-minded, alert, paying attention to what hinders us and the enemy's schemes. By God's grace and strength, you can deny the enemy access and a foothold in your life. It can feel like you're suffering greatly. You may feel weak, tempted, and your mind won't stop thinking about what you want. After a little while, though, He will restore you, help your faith be made firm, strengthen your relationship with Him, and establish you.

Stay under His hand.

*- Melissa Richey, Go and Be Director*

# DAY 4 - JAN 14

## FILL THE GAP

*“If my people, who are called by my name, 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*

God does not force us to love, honor and obey Him. Instead, He wants us to choose to. So, when we realize that we have drifted from God or that our sin has caused a separation between us and the grace we seek, today's verse outlines how to fill the gap; God Himself reminds us that He is more than willing to forgive and heal if we stop trying to do things our way.

God's ways are always best, but not always easy. So if God is calling you to draw near to Him today, I invite you to bravely engage with the following invitations. Meditate on the supportive verses, and may God bless you with a new kind of nearness today.

1. Humbly confess your sinful thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors to God, thanking Him for calling you His own and never giving up on you. (*Micah 6:8; Isaiah 43:1; Romans 8:1-2; James 1:5, 4:8-10; 1 Peter 5:6*)
2. Pray and seek God's forgiveness, guidance, and wisdom. (*1 John 5:14; Psalm 141:2; Romans 12:2; Jeremiah 29:11-14*).
3. Stop doing the things that harm your relationship with God and others and do what brings you closer. (*1 John 1:9; Acts 3:19; Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 3:8; Galatians 5:22-23*).

*- Elaine Elkins, Bellingham Campus*

# DAY 5 - JAN 15

## REMAIN

*“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches.*

*If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.*

*If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

*As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.*

*Now remain in my love.”*

*John 15:4-9*

For many of us, we believe that if we want anything, our efforts and hard work are the means to getting what we want. And there is a place for working hard! But in John 15:4-9, Jesus' words were an invitation, command, and reminder of the source of fruit and how fruit is produced in our lives.

The word 'remain' or 'abide' in the vine is what produces fruit in the branch. And Jesus clearly says that He is the vine, we are the branches, fruit comes from Him, and apart from Him, we can do nothing!

As you fast today, the invitation is to fast from self-sufficiency and self-centeredness. Ask Jesus to take from you a self-dependence where you rely on your efforts to produce fruit, to a deeper dependence on Him.

Our 'work' is to be available to Him and His leading. When we yield to Him, trust Him more and make ourselves available to do his work, He will empower us through His Spirit to produce fruit. John 15:9 reminds us ultimately that this fruit is love. Allow Him to love you in deeper ways. Allow Him to love through you in deeper ways. May our fasting lead us to surrender to Him; so that we might find ourselves in Him and love as He loves.

- Randy Pries, Community Care Pastor

# DAY 6 - JAN 16

## ROOTED

*“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”*

*Ephesians 3:14-21*

As we continue to seek God and depend on Him during this season of fasting, I am encouraged by these verses.

As we fast today, we can empty ourselves of our cravings and desires and create more space for Christ to dwell in our hearts and minds.

When that hunger pang reminds you that you missed a meal, it is a reminder also to celebrate that Christ is dwelling in your heart through faith! When there is a decision to be made, we can see Christ more clearly with a little bit of the rubble of our hearts and minds moved out of the way. As we abide in Christ, He guides us through each decision, each hardship, each celebration. As we are rooted and established in His love, we learn to abide in Him.

- How are you making space to abide with Jesus today?
- What is He teaching you through this season of fasting?
- How can you encourage someone else to allow Christ to dwell in their heart through faith?

- Jenny Redmond, Bellingham Campus

# DAY 7 - JAN 17

## LISTEN

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.”  
Proverbs 3:5-6*

People like having control. We want to control what happens in our lives, and we want to control what happens each day. And that's normal, we want predictability, and we are hesitant to accept change because it's unknown, and change puts us in a place where we don't have control.

But we have no reason to fear change. Proverbs 3:5-6 says this, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take." When we trust God, we don't need to worry about change. He will guide us in the direction he wants us to go; we just have to listen.

People often say they want God to guide them, but they never listen to what he says. If we're going to listen to God's direction, we need to spend intentional time listening for him. Whether this is spending time alone, praying, fasting, or combining these, we need to listen to God if we want to hear what he has to say.

*- Mason Kaiser, Encounter student*



# DAY 8 - JAN 18

## WHAT IS GOOD?

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."*

*Romans 8:28*

Romans 8:28 is such a beautiful verse to soak in, yet we often misunderstand the meaning. After all, what does it mean for God to be working for your good? What does "good" mean here? When we think of "good," we may think of comfort, wealth, and prosperity.

Similarly, when Jesus proclaimed the Good News of the kingdom, his disciples anticipated a messianic warrior who would free them from their earthly oppression through military and political might. Yet, the good news that Jesus brought came in the form of him dying at the hands of the very people he came to save—suffering on behalf of all humanity. Then he was raised three days later and now offers salvation to all who will receive him. Salvation is not just a future promise but a present reality. This is **good** news that was brought about by suffering and many trials.

Sometimes God working for your good may not feel good in the moment. This is where faith and trust come in. So as you fast and pray through this verse, ask God to strengthen your trust in Him by shifting your perspective from your understanding of "good" to God's.

*- Dustin Reimer, High School Director*

# DAY 9 - JAN 19

## NEVER ALONE

*“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10*

I was a student, living alone, writing a paper late at night. I kept hearing noises outside, so I looked out the window. I saw two men behaving suspiciously – but they also saw me. So I went back to my paper. Then, suddenly feeling compelled, I left the room to get ready for bed. Minutes later, I heard an explosion. A large rock had shattered my front window, leaving a gaping hole, sending glass everywhere. Had I still been writing, I would have been right in its path.

Were they still out there? Alone and frightened, I called the police and my dad (several hours away). The police came, checked the premises, taped cardboard to my window, and left. But my dad stayed on the phone with me the entire night until the darkness (and my fears) faded.

In the same way, our loving Heavenly Father doesn't leave us to face our fears alone. In Isaiah 41:10, the prophet reminds us not to fear because God is with us and promises to strengthen us, help us, and uphold us.

When faced with fear, we have a choice: feast on worry or choose a worry-fast, placing our trust in Him.

*- Lisa Bugg, Skagit Campus*

# DAY 10 - JAN 20

## CALM

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7*

Have you ever had someone say, "Calm down, there's nothing to worry about." And yet, to you, there is. Perhaps it was a job interview, a tough conversation, or a social gathering. However, God, in His goodness and grace, has the power to transcend all our anxious thoughts and feelings ... if we let Him.

In Philippians 4, Paul reminds us that in every situation in our lives – big or small - we can boldly ask God to meet us in our anxiousness through prayer. Even more, Paul calls us to have an advanced thankfulness because God will cover our hearts and minds with a peace only He can provide.

Sometimes, life may feel like a roller coaster with ups and downs, twists and turns. But the same God who created all things, knows you by name and has you covered all the time with a peace that passes all possible understanding. As Christians, our anxious thoughts don't need to paralyze us if we remember to PAUSE (to pray) and PRAISE (for peace).

As you take time to pray and fast today, what situation do you need to present to God in order to experience His overwhelming, incomparable peace?

- Bryon Mengle, Online Campus Pastor

# DAY 11 - JAN 21

C.OUR.AGE

*"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9*

Marv, 73, and I, 72, sat tackling next week's calendar. Clean house and linens, like surgically clean, for bringing Marv home Wednesday, the same day he has hip surgery. Sign papers on building lot in Idaho. Schedule physical therapy. Call appliance repair. The fridge which belongs to the new owners of our home is dying. Hire a crew to move us into a trailer, then to Sandpoint. Pack. And, by far the biggest to me, but not to be written on the calendar: find MEGA courage to leave kids, grandkids, and friends. To follow Marv's heart (and new hip) as he leads us to this new piece of land that he believes God is calling us to so that we can serve in ways yet to be discovered.

Then there it is as I scroll to find someone to clean our house after the movers empty it: the invitation to write a short devotion on Joshua 1:9.

*"Haven't I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don't be timid; don't get discouraged. God, your God, is with you every step you take."* (MSG).

Subtle, God, very subtle. I can surrender to your faithful voice that's led me my entire life, that I can read again today but barely hear over the whine of the dying fridge.

P.S. Yes, God, I see...again... you're asking me to fast from control and feast on trusting you.

*- Rosie Harris, Bellingham Campus*

# DAY 12 - JAN 22

## WHO ARE YOU?

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done." Matthew 16:24-27*

When I was a new Christ-follower, an Army chaplain encouraged me to memorize scripture. Today's Bible verses are ones that I memorized early in my Christian walk. But there was a problem. I didn't fully understand what it meant to deny myself.

As a Soldier, self-denial was part of what I signed up for. Selfless service, putting my Soldiers' needs before my own. So I thought I understood self-denial. Yet have you ever considered that you can't deny yourself until you truly know who you are?

I know I'm a lot of things—Christ-follower, husband, father, grandfather, pastor, friend, etc. The issue is that, while all these things are good, they're not the right things I need to deny within myself.

In me is a man who wants to please others to a fault; to flatter instead of encourage; to take the road more traveled because, face it, lightly traveled roads mean there will be bumps and potholes. Those "dark" things are ones I need to deny.

I have to know myself to deny myself.

As you fast today, ask the Holy Spirit to show you those dark areas you need to deny so that you grow closer to Christ. Then, as you get in the habit of self-denial of the right things, you'll grow closer to the One Thing, Jesus.

- Kip McCormick, Associate Pastor

# DAY 13 - JAN 23

## FAST

*“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” Matthew 6:33-34*

In our everyday conversations, we typically use the word "fast" to refer to speed. We talk about fast athletes, fast technology, and perhaps may exclaim from the passenger seat, "You're driving too fast!" Being fast can be an advantage, but not always. Usually, the idea of quickly completing something means that we don't always put our "all" into it. Finishing something with haste rarely produces better results than when we slow down and devote the proper time and energy.

The fact that the word, when translated to English, became 'fast' is yet another example of God's sense of humor. He knows us. He knows that we live in a world that wants to move at full speed. He knows that for us to slow down, take a break from something, and focus on Him wouldn't be easy. We have to let go of many things that we normally hold onto and surrender, not only from what we are fasting from but to whom we are fasting for.

Our prayer for this season is that we may all find peace in the surrender, rest in the slowing down, and joy in the middle of saying no to something good so that we can say yes to something better.

*- Jason and Bethany Yuly, Next Gen volunteers*

## DAY 14 - JAN 24

“LORD, I GIVE YOU...”

*But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” James 4:6-10*

God is calling us to humble ourselves and purify our hearts. When we submit ourselves to His will, He draws near and lifts us up. A true fast involves a complete surrender of the body, soul, and spirit. God is our focus, not the act of fasting.

*Lord, I give you my body.* My body was created in the image of You. You knit me together. Teach me to make the right decisions to continually improve my health. Help me to exercise and eat proper foods in obedience to you because Your Word says, “I am the temple of God wherein your Spirit dwells.”

*Lord, I give you my soul.* Bring my mind into Your captivity and fill it with Your thoughts instead of my own. Give me Your wisdom and discernment. Your will, not mine. Show me what you have scheduled for me today and help me be sensitive to your presence, aware of your leading, and obedient to your still, small voice. Have control of my emotions. When I feel anxious, remind me that You are always with me.

*Lord, I give you my spirit.* Sit on the throne of my life today. I desire to be under your control. Take away any pride that keeps me from complete submission to Your will and Your plans.

What do you still need to surrender to God?

How will you do that today?

*Alta Ruth Calkins, Senior Saint*

# DAY 15 - JAN 25

IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

*"Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful." Hebrews 10:22-23*

*"Hi, my name is Julie, and I'm a recovering entertainment junkie."*

My entire life, I've been drawn to anything that has to do with movies and Hollywood. With age came more exposure to musicals, television series, and movie theatre visits that I relished. Increased exposure brought a greater fascination and a deeper and unconscious desire for more.

Jesus illuminated just how important I'd made entertainment when he nudged me to surrender it to Him during a time of prayer and fasting. I thought this was an odd request, but with a sincere heart and devotion to Him, I committed to replacing my television and movie watching with reading my Bible.

Within a few short days, it was evident I'd been exchanging the gift of God's presence, promises, and hope, for temporal pleasures that will never satisfy my divine need for Jesus. Of course, entertainment isn't evil, and I still enjoy it. But Jesus is my life. With Him, all the rest is added in.

*"Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things." Colossians 3:2*

Is Jesus prominent or preeminent in your life?

Is Jesus asking you to surrender something to Him?

Go for it! He is faithful!

*- Julie Pitsch, Director of Disciplemaking*



# DAY 16 - JAN 26

## INSIDE OUT

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:1-2*

Savor, linger, brood, taste, feel, feed your soul on these verses for a dozen minutes, then pray.

Lord, here You teach and show me that all aspects of my life and living are worthy to be offered as places and opportunities to know You and Your blessings. This knowledge and experience exceed my expectations of life with You. Yet here in this, Your word to me today, You say, all I am as a human is welcomed.

Lord, I know that there are areas and attitudes in my life that You receive with great joy; may I live in Your joy at those times and places. And Lord, I know there are those areas and attitudes in my life that You want me to give up to You for me to receive cleansing and deliverance to enter even more of your joy.

So, here I am, I give you both, all of me. I choose to work with You to change me from the inside to the outside. I choose to live this day in Your Joy.

Thank You, My Lord and My Savior.

*- Jack Wagner, Bellingham Campus*

# DAY 17 - JAN 27

## PRACTICE HIS PRESENCE

*"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Paul tells us to rejoice always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances.

But how can this verse be fulfilled? The words "always," "continually," and "all" seem impossible! Paul is telling us that we need to intentionally change our focus.

*Rejoice Always* - As we go through these 21 days of fasting, this is the perfect time to practice dwelling in His presence. Rejoice! What is it that you can find to rejoice about today? What brings your heart joy? Rejoice!!

*Pray Continually* - While continually praying seems impractical, it is a matter of changing our awareness. We can interrupt our thoughts and daily "life" with praise and thanksgiving. As you go through your day, intentionally find times to pray and have a running conversation with God instead of just a set time and place.

*Give thanks in all circumstances* - This can often be misunderstood. It doesn't mean that you give thanks **for** your circumstances but instead give thanks **in** your circumstances. Know that God is always with you, no matter what you are going through. He is good, and that doesn't change. Today, what is an area of your life in which you find difficulty praising Him? Praise Him for His faithfulness and loving kindness in your life.

Throughout today and your time of fasting, live out these words. Practice His presence.

- Linda Aafedt, Bellingham Campus

# DAY 18 - JAN 28

PRAISE HIM!

*"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:28-29*

The story of Jesus is COMPLETE and PERFECT! His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom that cannot be shaken or moved. We are sons and daughters of this Kingdom, which is fantastic news!

There are not enough words in any language that adequately gives our Savior enough praise for what He has done to take us out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

One of the most beautiful and encouraging things to behold is a believer overflowing with praise. But, unfortunately, it's not always easy to worship when life has us inundated with "stuff."

David, a man after God's own heart and in difficult circumstances, wrote, *"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth!"* (Psalm 34:1)

As Jesus, the Author, and Finisher of our faith, continues to write HIS story on our hearts, let us use this time of fasting to be transformed into worshippers and men and women after God's own heart. So that those things that can be shaken or moved will be, and like David, we can say, *"I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth."*

- Ken McLeod, Skagit Campus

# DAY 19 - JAN 29

## ENOUGH

*"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."*

*Philippians 4:12-13*

Our human desire for worldly things leaves us disappointed. We accumulate things to make us happy, yet we are never satisfied.

Paul learned the secret of being content in every situation, and we can too. When we find our identity in the Lord, we can do all things through Him. This does not mean we can achieve anything we want. It means we can endure anything through His sufficient provision and strength.

In January 2012, days after writing my annual goals and calendar-ing upcoming cycling events and trips, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Just like that, my plans were canceled. God had a different plan, which included prayer time and studying His word. He provided me with the strength to endure the surgeries, chemo, and distressing consequences on my body. I praise God for my healing and especially for strengthening my heart for Him. True contentment is found in Christ alone.

During this time of fasting and prayer, let's rest in our conviction that God's provision is sufficient for every circumstance. Lean into Him because, in Him, we have everything we need.

*- T.J. Bradley, Online Campus*

# DAY 20 - JAN 30

## PEACE I GIVE YOU

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” James 1:2-5*

When we first think of fasting, we often think of denying ourselves food. What if it is control? What if, in denying ourselves control, we allow God and His perfect peace to take over during a massive storm?

Last year Katie was diagnosed with very aggressive cancer. The short story is hundreds prayed and fasted, and she is now in remission. Through the chemo, radiation, surgeries, and uncertainty... embracing the hope that is in Jesus gave way to a feeling of peace we could not understand. No matter what happens, we win.

The blessing in all of this was God used her cancer to inspire and comfort others. He used it to solidify our marriage in ways we could never imagine. He didn't waste the pain. Denying ourselves control paved the way for His perfect peace to wash over us. Even though we walked through the valley, we did not fear because He walked with us. Whether you know it or not, He walks with you too.

So today, as you hear our story, reflect on your current struggles.

How can you deny yourself control to make way for His perfect peace?

- Chris and Katie Henry, Online Campus

# DAY 21 - JAN 31

## EYES UP

*"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

*2 Corinthians 4:16-18*

In this great piece of scripture, the Apostle Paul gives several contrasts; outward/inward, troubles/glory, seen/unseen, temporary/eternal. While there are difficulties, his message is that what we focus on can make all the difference. Perspective is an essential factor in life, especially when whatever you are facing requires sacrifice or perseverance.

Perspective in fasting is crucial to ensure that the motives are pure, not prideful, and keep this sacred discipline from becoming a legalistic ritual. In fasting, we may feel like we are "starving" or "wasting away," yet those same feelings can remind us to shift our perspective and refocus. So why are we doing this in the first place? Who is this for?

Today as you fast, don't focus on what you are giving up. Instead, keep your eyes fixed on the inward transformation that Jesus is longing to bring about in your life through this discipline. Fill your mind with the Truth of His Word. Give praise for the Presence of Jesus and the joy of keeping in step with His Spirit. What God wants to do in and through you is so significant and eternal, even glorious. Does fasting require sacrifice? Of course, it does, but the temporary cost pales in comparison to His work. May you sense the nearness of Jesus as you fast today.

*- Bob Marvel, Senior Pastor*















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