



24 hours of prayer & fasting for 7 days for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit

SUN, JAN 27 @ 12 NOON - SUN, FEB 3 @ 12 NOON

It's time to fast and pray, not simply as a church, but as multiple collaborative churches. From noon on Sunday, January 27th through noon on Sunday, February 3rd, the Community Bible Church in Highlands NC., with fast and pray with:

- ❖ The Bridge Church at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC.
- ❖ Downfield Mains Church in Dundee, Scotland
- ❖ First Baptist Church of Love in Glenville, NC
- ❖ Eglise' Connexion Vie Church in France
- ❖ Home churches throughout 15 cities in Iran
- ❖ 13 Churches throughout Ukraine
- ❖ Churches throughout the nation of Nepal

We will synergistically fast and pray. Parishioners from each congregation will sign up for 30 prayer slots to insure earnest 24 hour-a-day intercession for one another, for healings and for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on these three very strategic and fruitful congregations. www.cbchighlands.com

A seven-day devotional will be shared by these three churches as we seek the Lord with one mind and one heart. There is great overcoming power and great rewards available to those who diligently seek the Lord.

And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." (Mark 9:28-29)

A Call to Fast

The Scripture states that there are appointed times for all things here on earth. *There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: ...a time to embrace and a time to refrain.* (Eccl. 3:1,5). Biblical fasting is no exception. There is a time to fast and a time to celebrate. God enjoys all the ways and means by which we seek him (Matt. 6:33).

Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the portico and the altar. Let them say, "Spare your people, LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" Joel 2:15-17

As pastors, we are calling our churches to a fast. The purpose of this fast is to seek the Lord and begin our year of ministry together by consecrating the firstfruits of 2019 to Him. The true success of a fast is the journey not the destination. Together, we will capitalize on the spiritual and physical benefits of a corporate fast. We can humble ourselves before God and create a greater focus on him by allotting more time to do so. We can pray for his will in our lives and do so with an even greater sense of togetherness and purpose.

What is biblical fasting?

Fasting, simply put, is sacrificing the flesh for the spirit... physical food for spiritual food, physical nourishment for spiritual nourishment. There too are other ways of fasting and the principles are the same. (distraction fast, fasting a behavior etc.)

Preparing for a Fast

First, consider a physical cleanse prior to a fast. (research online for various cleanses)

Second, pray for wisdom on how you should fast. God honors your sacrifice. If it is a sacrifice to you, it is a sacrifice to God. Fasting is between you and God, not you and man, so do not compare your sacrifice to others. Seek God's leading and He will be honored and you will be blessed.

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. Luke 9:23

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

Third, fasting is always tied to prayer. Fasting alone, without intimate time spent with Him in prayer, reading, and studying the Bible is just a diet. It is so important to fill your “newly realized” time with Him during your fast. Sometimes, we can get so focused on the fasting... what we can and can't eat... that we lose sight of what we are fasting toward Him. The best way to keep Him near is to stay near to Him by praying and reading the Bible. You will find added strength and comfort through scriptures and your prayer time with Him.

*‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”
Matt. 4:4*

Fourth, keep in mind there is great significance in giving the “first fruits” of your year to Him and you are doing this in concert with your church body and other churches as well. There is something about giving your “firsts”, and doing it in unity with other believers that is powerful.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity! Ps. 133:1*

Before a Fast

I encourage you to review the following scriptures and think about what is an appropriate fast for you and/or your family. Let's be cautious of extremes, sensitive to our individual differences in fasting, and our need of the Lord throughout the process. Always, consult your doctor should there be concerns regarding health issues and medications.

Let's prepare ourselves for the week ahead by looking at what the Word of God has to say about fasting and the important purpose it has in our lives.

1. Jesus fasted and we are followers of Jesus, therefore we too fast. (Matt. 4:1-2)
2. We are instructed to fast in a low-key “anonymous” manner as we focus on Christ. (Matt. 6:16-18)
3. Our bodies and minds will experience a purging of toxins as we allow it to rest. Fasting is about physical and spiritual cleansing. (Neh. 1:4-11) Consider a physical cleanse a week prior to the fast.

4. Fasting affords us more personal time to settle down and meditate on truth. (Joshua 1:8-9)
5. Over the next seven days we will experientially learn about the importance of self-control and placing our flesh in submission to our spirit. (Gal. 5:22, Romans 8:7, 1 Cor. 9:27)
6. Fasting is counter-cultural and meant to be very holy. Before we begin a fast we are wise to consecrate our time in prayer. (Joel 1:14, 2:15, Romans 12:2)
7. Fasting in part is a means of “returning to the Lord” after a time of being away, rebellious or distant. (Joel 2:12)

Different Types of Fasts

Full Fast: Drink plenty of liquids (you establish the number of days).

The Daniel Fast: Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread. Drink water and juice. Eat fruits and vegetables.

- ❖ Guidelines for a “Daniel Fast”
- ❖ Whole Grains : Barley, brown rice, oats
- ❖ Beans/Legumes : Red beans, black beans, dried beans, long beans, french beans, pinto beans, split peas, black eyed peas, lentils.
- ❖ Vegetables : Any
- ❖ Fruits : Any
- ❖ Nuts & Seeds
- ❖ Liquid : Distilled water, spring water, 100% natural fruit or vegetable juice (dilute one part juice to four parts water)
- ❖ Food to Avoid in Daniel Fast recipes :
 - Caffeine, Carbonated soft drinks, Milk, Cheese, Meat, White rice
 - Fried food, Refined sugar, Sugar substitutes, Food containing preservatives or additives, White flour and food made by it
 - Butter, margarine and high fat products, alcohol

Partial Fast A partial fast could be from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown or whatever you decide is best for you. This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or a giving up of at least one item of food.

Distraction Fast Prayerfully consider fasting from television, busyness, and enjoy a week of peace and quiet in/with the Lord.

Scripture References for Fasting

I encourage you to review the following scriptures and think about what is an appropriate fast for you and/or your family. Let's be cautious of extremes, sensitive to our individual differences in fasting, and our need of the Lord throughout the process. Always, consult your doctor should there be concerns regarding health issues and medications.

Fasting is a matter of the heart and a personal matter.

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matt. 6:16-18)

We fast to heighten our sensitivity towards the Lord. We do not fast to draw attention to ourselves.

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:9-14)

Fasting provides us a focus on spiritual bread rather than earthly bread. We are what we eat. When we consume the word of God we become more like what we eat, Christ, the Bread of Life.

I am the bread of life. (John 6:38)

Fasting is often birthed out of our burdens or as a means to acquire a passion for God and people.

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. (Neh. 1:4)

Fasting is often a healthy time of prayer, and deep conviction.

So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes...While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill. (Daniel 9:3, 20)

Rend Your Heart

*"Even now," declares the LORD,
"return to me with all your heart,
with fasting and weeping and mourning." (Joel 2:12)*

Fasting is a way of life, a result of a rich walk with the Lord.

Anna in the temple courts ...and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. (Luke 2:37)

Fasting is a good friend of authentic worship.

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (Acts 13:2)

Corporate fasting provides preparation for the future.

I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, "The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him." So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer. (Ezra 8:21-23)

The true success of a fast is the journey not the destination. We as a church can capitalize on the spiritual and physical benefits of a corporate fast. We can humble ourselves before God and create a greater focus on him by allotting more time to do so.

We can pray for his will in our lives and do so with an even greater sense of togetherness and purpose.

Our seven day fast will begin at noon on **Sunday, January 27th, and end at noon on Sunday, February 3rd**. In the last hours of our fast we will be an extraordinary morning of worship and intercession.

In Prayer, Pastor Gary