

30 DAYS

PRAYER & FASTING

Prayer Guide 2025

eternitydownham.co.uk/30days




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Psalm 63:1

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I
thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a
dry and parched land where there is no water





Welcome

As a Church we love to pray! Last year we hosted two 12-hour prayer days where we saw God move and spiritual growth in our Church. We used these days to set aside time to draw near to God.

When we pray and fast, it changes us and deepens our connection with God. Also, as we do this together, our hearts are joined with one another and there is power in our united prayer.

As we enter our 30 days of prayer and fasting, please consider how you can engage personally.

We will be starting our 30 days of Prayer and Fasting on Saturday 22nd March with a 12-hour prayer day. Then we will move into weekly Prayer and Bible study meetings that will run through to Sunday 20th April (Easter Sunday).

Please read on to find out more about the Prayer Meetings planned for this time, along with information on Fasting and Prayer.

God Bless,

Aaron

About

30 Days of Prayer and Fasting

30 Days of Prayer and Fasting at Eternity is, above all, an invitation to you personally to set aside some time to seek God in a focused way, creating space and introducing some disciplines into your routine to draw near to Him.

Besides drawing near, there may also be specific things you want to pray into during this period as you pray into a breakthrough.

Prayer Meetings

We will be meeting to pray and study God's word together at the following times during the 30 Days:

Saturday 22nd March

12 Hours of Prayer 6am - 6 pm

Sunday Mornings

Prayer Meeting 10 - 10:20 am

Monday Mornings

Coffee & Prayer 10:30 am - Noon

Tuesday Evenings

Bible Study - 7pm

Wednesday Evenings

Online Prayer - 7:30 pm - 8 pm

WhatsApp Group

We have set up a Prayer WhatsApp group to help us encourage each other during the 30 days. To join either Scan the QR code below, or speak to Aaron



Online Prayer Meeting

Zoom Meeting Info

Meeting ID: 826 4729 1593

Passcode: 506431

How to Approach 30 Days of Prayer

To get the best out of 30 Days of Prayer, we recommend the following:

1. Prepare Well

Good preparation will help you to maximise this period of prayer. We encourage you to consider and plan in advance for 30 Days of Prayer

Your times alone with God

What space can you create in your diary? Can you schedule these times in advance? How might you use these times? Consider where you might pray and study the Bible. Do you have a favourite place in your home? If your phone is a distraction, where will you put it while you pray, so you can focus?

What and when to fast

Prayer and fasting is powerful, biblical spiritual discipline which can deeply impact you as you set aside these weeks to seek God. For this reason we are recommending that everyone undertakes some sort of fasting as a part of their participation in the 30 Days of Prayer. Planning this in advance will really help including what kind of fast to undertake, and what entertainment or other distractions to eliminate

See the section on fasting for more details and ideas.

What to read / study / listen to

We believe what you fast 'to' (i.e. fill your time with) will be more important than what you fast 'from'! Are there portions of the Bible that you are going to read/study during this time? Do you have some other books/resources to inspire you and take you deeper? If you aren't sure, why not ask others what has impacted them or helped them to draw close to God? Don't forget we have the lending library full of resources. Could you create a worship playlist for the 30 days?

Getting a journal?

Journaling may not be part of your usual pattern, but is there a way you can capture what you sense God is saying during this time? It may be worth investing in a journal or notebook to record your thoughts, prayers and Bible study notes.

Deciding areas for prayer focus

Are there specific areas you are going to consistently pray into during this time? Why not make a prayer plan in advance?

2. Expect to Enjoy God

Simply increasing your intensity will probably not be fruitful. Remember when Jesus gave a pattern for prayer, He began with 'Our Father...' We come first as sons and daughters into His love and acceptance. Position yourself to enjoy God's Presence during this time. Make space for worship, to be still, to 'wait on the Lord' and to listen. Prepare to be impacted by His peace. Prayer is communication with God and communication is two-way. Quietening your heart will help you hear God's voice.

3. Be Ready to Adjust

It is a great idea to make an initial plan of how to use the 30 Days, but you may find that something isn't working for you, or something is working particularly well as you get going. Don't be a slave to your initial plan. Be ready to adjust as you go to make the time fruitful for you. It's God's plan at the end of the day it'll go how He wants it to.



Fasting

What is Fasting?

Simply put, fasting is a spiritual discipline which is taught in the Bible, whereby food is reduced or eliminated during a period of prayer.

The New Testament clearly teaches fasting to be a 'normal' part of Christian's life. Jesus taught His disciples about fasting (Matthew 6:16-18) and He undertook a very significant fast Himself before he began His ministry (Luke 4:1-15). The disciples heard God speak to them 'while worshipping and fasting' (Acts 13:2). They commissioned Paul and Barnabas after fasting and praying (Acts 13:3) and appointed elders 'with prayer and fasting' (Acts 14:23)

Fasting can be hugely beneficial during a time of seeking God. The discipline of reducing or eliminating food can help to bring the appetites of our body and soul under submission. In Psalm 35:13, David says, 'I humbled myself with fasting'. In 1 Corinthians 9:27, Paul says 'I discipline my body' - no doubt helped by the fact that he was 'often fasting' (2 Corinthians 11:27 ESV).

Fasting can also heighten our spiritual sensitivity and it is not uncommon to sense the Presence of God more strongly than normal during a time of prayer and fasting. Fasting can also create both extra time and additional focus for our prayer and worship.

Besides this, the Bible shows us that fasting can be fruitful in other ways too:

- In the book of Esther, a corporate time of fasting brought forth an amazing breakthrough (Esther 4:16-5:3).
- In Ezra, God's people were protected as they fasted and prayed (Ezra 8:22-23).
- And Jehoshaphat called the people of Judah to a fast when they were being attacked on all sides and as they declared their dependence upon God through prayer, the Lord brought about a famous victory (2 Chronicles 20:2-25).

We will not impress God by our fasting, although the discipline of fasting can definitely help us to be more prayerful and draw near to God, and it is not uncommon to experience some kind of breakthrough following a fast

Types of Fasting

There are various forms of fasting, and although there are other forms, we would differentiate between four main types.

The Full Fast

This is the elimination of all food for a period of time. Some might only drink water, others might drink fruit juices at standard mealtimes (which can be surprisingly sustaining) or some other liquids such as squash - hot or cold. This might be for a day or a number of days. This is the normal type of fast found in the Bible.

The Partial Fast

This is where food is eaten, but not at certain times - for example: forgoing breakfast and lunch, but eating in the evening.

The Selective (or 'Daniel') Fast

This is where particular foods are not eaten during a period of fasting. In Daniel 10, Daniel fasted from 'choice foods, meat and wine' for a period of 21 days and then he received a breakthrough. It would be common for people undertaking a 'Daniel fast' to eliminate snacks, sweet foods, treats, meats and alcohol.

The Soul Fast

This is where certain elements of distractions and/or entertainment are eliminated either entirely, or during certain periods of time. It could mean coming off all or various forms of social media and/or TV/Netflix altogether or during certain hours, in order to pray. It could mean limiting 'screen time' each day. This type of fasting is encouraged for everyone, either alongside a food fast of some type, or in place of a food fast for those who are unable to fast from food, or for whom it is unwise.

What Fast to Undertake?

During the 30 Days of Prayer and Fasting, we are encouraging everyone at Eternity Church to consider fasting in some way, for at least some of the time, as part of a special season of devotion to God.

It is important to remember that fasting is to help you to pray and to press into God

It is neither compulsory, nor a competition!

We recommend you ask God what He wants you to do.

If God speaks to you clearly, then have faith to step out.

If you have never fasted at all before, we would recommend building your stamina. For instance, a 'normal fast' for one or two days per week, or a partial fast might be a good way to begin.

If you are taking medication, if you are pregnant if you are still growing, if you have an eating disorder, we would recommend you plan a soul fast and seek medical advice if you want to do more. If for any reason, emotional or physical, you normally struggle to take on board the necessary number of calories for healthy living, then we would recommend that you don't undertake a food fast. Similarly,

if you have unhealthy or controlling habits around your eating (often indicated by the fact you would not want people to know about them) we would encourage you not to fast from food.

It is not what your fast from, but what you fast to that is most important

What we mean by this is that creating time for prayer and worship, and to be studying God's Word is more important than what food you are eliminating. Fasting without prayer is starvation. Fasting with prayer is great gain!

Practical Tips

Here are a few tips if you are new to fasting:

1. Plan well

Decide at least a few days in advance exactly what you will do - when you will start your fast (determining the last time you will eat before you begin your fast), when you will break your fast, and exactly what you will fast from. Thinking it through and being very clear will really help you to stay on track and apply yourself mentally.

2. Don't forget that God is with you!

This might seem strange to say, but it is surprisingly easy to drop into a mentality of thinking you are doing this for God. It is good to approach fasting knowing that you are doing this with God. He wants to walk it with you. He wants to assure you with his Presence when you feel hungry. Talk to Him about how you feel. Let Him be your comfort and your reward.

3. Consider your responsibilities

If you are married, discuss your plans with your spouse. Consider your work commitments. If you have children or other dependents, consider what they will need and how you will factor that in. Be wise and realistic and don't abandon your responsibilities!

4. Water and caffeine

If you are undertaking a full (food) fast, remember to drink more water than usual (to compensate for the fluid intake that normally comes through food). Also, if you are a regular coffee or tea drinker, it is common to experience headaches (especially in the first couple of days) if coming off caffeine during a full (food) fast. If you come off caffeine 2-3 days before you begin your food fast, it can help significantly.

5. Rest

If you are undertaking a 'full fast' for more than 2 days, be ready to make sure you have time to rest well. As you take in less 'fuel' than normal, you may feel a little tired and some extra rest or sleep time will help.

6. Don't be surprised by:

- The cold

Again, if food fasting, you may feel a couple of degrees colder than normal, so wear an additional layer!

- Heightened emotions

With the absence of food, you may feel a little irritable at times! Position yourself joyfully and be determined to be gracious with those around you - especially the ones closest to home.

- Bad breath

Regular brushing of teeth, the use of mouth wash and/or chewing gum should help.

7- Re-entry

Firstly, you are likely to have made some significant spiritual progress. Don't be in a hurry to return to old habits! Hold the ground you have taken. Consider what needs to change ongoing now.

Secondly, if you have undertaken an extended period of fasting from food, be gentle on re-entry. Some soup and bread in small portions might be a wise start and avoid rich foods until your body has returned to normal.

Finally

It is so important for us to recognise that fasting doesn't change God or His willingness to hear us. However, it does change us and it can be a gateway for breakthrough.

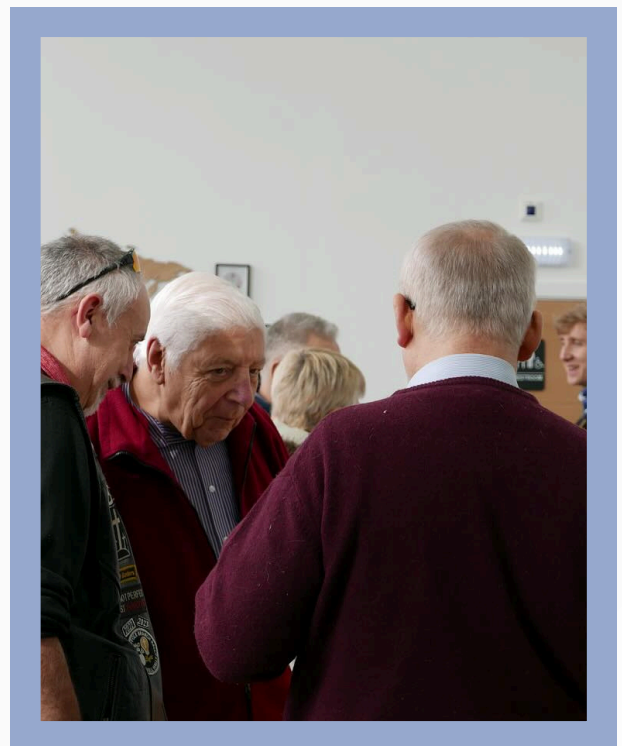
May you grow in God, know His Presence powerfully, and experience breakthrough as you seek Him through prayer and fasting!

To hear a message on Fasting visit our Youtube channel by scanning the QR Code below, or search Fasting - 16th June 2024



Share your breakthroughs

It's great to celebrate your breakthroughs with you, so if you are happy to please share them with us, you can either fill in a form online at eternitydownham.co.uk/30days or fill in the form at the info table at Church and pop it into the black box.





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