

## **CORPORATE PRAYER AND FASTING 2026**

One of the most powerful things you can do to impact your year is to make a decision to draw near to God. At The Lord's Church we begin each year with 21 days of prayer and fasting. We know that is the best way to start the year....seeking God through prayer and fasting. Every year, we have so many testimonies come out of our corporate fast. We get excited when it is time to do this every year!

Our Corporate Fast for 2026 starts Monday, January 12th and goes through Sunday, February 1st. This is something we do together as a church community. Corporate fasts are very biblical. There are many times throughout the Bible where the Lord called for a corporate fast for the people.

**First**, let's look at what Jesus had to say about fasting.....

**Matthew 6:16-18** *Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>17</sup> But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

Jesus said "when" you fast. He didn't say, "if" you fast.

Fasting is a command, not an option. If you are a disciple of the Lord, It is to be a part of our spiritual journey.

**So, First, you must determine that fasting is a command of the Lord.** Not to cause us to suffer, but to help us draw near to Him.

**The Second thing we learn from this scripture is that fasting is very personal.** In fact, Jesus says keep it personal between you and your Father God. You don't fast for anyone else. You fast for the Lord. Fasting is very personal. It is between you and God. So, don't fast to appear to be righteous, or to boast and let others know you are fasting so they can think how holy you are.

Don't talk about how you are suffering or look like you are to get others praise. In fact, Jesus says do the opposite. Don't let anyone know you are fasting.

**Third: Fasting is not just going without food.** It is not a diet or with the motivation of getting yourself healthier. This is about getting into that secret place with God. So, when you are suppose to eat, pray. Enter in to that hiding place with God.

**Lastly, Fasting is a spiritual discipline that you grow in.** Just like you grow in your ability to pray. When you begin a habit of Daily Encounters with God, you may start by pray for 15 minutes, but as you grow in the habit of prayer your prayers become longer, you are able to focus and you learn to be led by the Holy Spirit. So it is with fasting. As we fast, and maybe this is your first time, you may fast one meal a day. But as you practice this spiritual habit your grow in it so that maybe you can go 3 days with out food or do a liquid fast, etc.

### **FIVE BENEFITS OF FASTING:**

#### **1. FASTING DRAMATICALLY ACCELERATES SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Fasting is one of the fastest ways to spiritually grow. Fasting can change your life, your ministry and your spiritual journey with God!

Your growth in your spiritual journey is up to you. If you want to grow fast, or you want to grow slow, it is up to you. If you want to grow in your relationship with the Lord, then you must decide to do the hard thing or the challenging thing that becomes easy with the help of the Holy Spirit. If you want to accelerate your relationship with God you must be willing to do what other people don't want to do.

**IF YOU WANT SOMETHING THAT'S GREATER THAN ANYTHING  
YOU'VE EVER HAD BEFORE,  
IF YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD TO  
ANOTHER LEVEL - THEN FAST.**

#### **2. WHEN YOU FAST YOU ENCOUNTER GOD**

Jesus said in *Matthew 6: 17-18* .....*When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

**OUR MAIN MOTIVATION FOR FASTING SHOULD BE TO ENCOUNTER GOD.**

**TO SEEK HIM IN THAT SECRET PLACE THAT ONLY YOU  
AND HE KNOW ABOUT.**

**EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO FASTED IN THE BIBLE AND ENCOUNTERED  
GOD:**

**MOSES:**

Moses fasted for 40 days and he encountered God and received the Ten Commandments. (*Deuteronomy 9*)

**ELIJAH:**

Elijah fasted 40 days and after he fasted, God showed him His glory as he hid in the cleft of the mountain. (*1 Kings 19*)

**ESTHER:**

Esther fasted three days, and she had all of Israel fast with her. After she did that, she found favor with the king. (*Esther 4*)

**JESUS:**

Jesus fasted 40 days, and after he fasted 40 days, he overcame the temptation of Satan himself. (*Matthew 4*)

**EARLY CHURCH:**

**Leaders of the Church:**

As the disciples were worshipping and fasting the Holy Spirit spoke to them to set apart Paul and Barnabas for evangelistic work. (*Acts 13*)

**PAUL AND BARNABAS:**

In prayer and fasting the Holy Spirit spoke to them about who to put in leadership in churches they had risen up and after they fasted and prayed they laid hand upon leaders within the churches they established and commissioned them into the ministry. (*Acts 14:23*)

### **3. WHEN YOU FAST YOU HEAR GOD BETTER**

**First: We must understand that our flesh and our spirit are at war with each other.**

*Galatians 5:16-17 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

**Second: To win the battle between our flesh and the Spirit we must fast.**

Fasting is denying your flesh and feeding your Spirit.

*Galatians 5:24 -25 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

#### **EXAMPLE: Elijah**

We have an example in *1 Kings 19*, where Elijah, the prophet, is battling Jezebel, not just the spirit, but the woman, herself. And after he encountered Jezebel, he is suffering under the influence of her demonic influence, and he asked the Lord to take his life. So he struggling in his relationship with God. He's struggling where he is at spiritually.

But the Bible says that he fasted and after he fasted for 40 days and nights, he saw God's glory and the Lord encouraged him and he went in the strength of the Lord. This is what happened. He spiritually grew, and he went from running from Jezebel to running towards Jezebel, because when you fast, you grow stronger.

#### **FASTING IS A SEASON WHERE WE LEARN TO DENY OUR FLESH.**

**AND WHEN YOU LEARN HOW TO DENY YOUR FLESH IT MAKES YOU  
MORE SENSITIVE TO HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD.**

**SO, WHEN YOU FAST YOUR SPIRIT BEGINS TO COME ALIVE AND GROW  
AND BECOME MORE SENSITIVE.**

#### **4. FASTING GROWS SELF-DISCIPLINE**

*1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (esv) Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. 25 Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. 27 But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified*

**Self-control naturally leads to perseverance. There is a reward in self-control and self-discipline.**

**Self-control is one of the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit of God in *Galatians 5:22-23*.**

**“Self-control” is: the ability to control oneself. It involves moderation, constraint, and the ability to say “no” to the desires of our flesh.**

**One of the proofs of God working in our lives is the ability to control our own thoughts, words, and actions. It’s not that we are naturally weak-willed, but our fallen nature is under the influence of sin. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we are incapable of knowing and choosing how best to meet our needs. We are incapable of exercising self-control without the help of the Holy Spirit.**

**When we are saved by Christ’s sacrifice, we are free. That liberty includes freedom from sin. Now, as the Spirit gives us self-control, we can refuse sin. But self-control or self-discipline is a fruit and fruit is grown. How fast that fruit is grown is up to you. Fasting helps the fruit of the Spirit grow in our lives.**

***Paul said this.....Romans 7:21-25 (esv) So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.***

**YOU CANNOT LEARN SELF-DISCIPLINE UNTIL YOU PRACTICE DENYING YOUR FLESH.**

**FASTING IS A SEASON OF LEARNING TO DENY YOUR FLESH SO THAT YOU CAN GROW THE FRUIT OF SELF-DISCIPLINE AND INCREASE YOUR ENDURANCE.**

## **DIRECTIONS OF HOW TO FAST:**

### **1. FASTING IS TO GIVE UP SOMETHING YOU FIND GRATIFICATION IN:**

Fasting is not just a season of repentance. Your repentance should be settled before you fast. Although, if you are struggling with temptation and you need to be stronger then fasting will grow you stronger. But fasting is not just a season to stop your sin or give up your sin. Fasting is a spiritual discipline for disciples. Fasting is a practice to grow closer to God, stronger in God, and more sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

But to fast is to give up a good thing. Something that is not necessarily sinful or bad, but something that causes your flesh to be uncomfortable and less gratified.

For example: We can fast food. Food is a good thing. We need food. We can fast entertainment. Entertainment is a good thing. We need times of entertainment. We can fast desserts, hobbies, social media, ETC.. All things that are good, but also things that our flesh gratifies in.

*Paul said... 1 Corinthians 6:12 (esv) All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be dominated by anything.*

*He also said ....1 Corinthians 10:23 “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up*

## **DIFFERENT KINDS OF FASTS:**

We see many different kinds of fasts all throughout the Bible and I would say this, all of them are beneficial for your spiritual growth.

### **1) Water Fast**

This is when you drink only water and have no solid food.

### **2) Partial Fast**

This fast can be done several ways. This is when you eat only one meal a day. Or when you cut out a specific item(s) out of your diet that you enjoy and eat or drink frequently. For example, cutting out desserts, or sodas or sugar.

### **3) Daniel Fast**

**This is a vegan fast. This fast abstains from meat, dairy, sweeteners, leavened bread, and processed foods, while eating fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, whole grains, and drinking water/natural juices.**

### **3) Full Fast.**

**This fast is when you eat nothing and drink nothing like Queen Esther did for 3 days. Of course this fast can only be done over a short period of time.**

### **4) Liquid Fast.**

**This fast is only liquids, like juices, water, smoothies,**

### **5) Married Couples Fast**

***1 Corinthians 7:5* Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.**

**This is when you abstain from intimacy with your spouse, you do it in unity and it's a season of disciplining your flesh and spiritually growing.**

### **6) Corporate fast**

**This is when all of the church fasts together or all of your family fasts together. We see this all throughout the bible where God's people did corporate fasts and would call the entire assembly together.**

### **7) Anything Fast**

**Social media, TV, Netflix, spending money on yourself, hobbies etc... You can fast anything to discipline your flesh and strengthen your spirit.**