



## DAY OF FASTING & PRAYER GUIDE

It's one thing to know about God— it's a different thing to be known by God. Prayer and fasting are powerful ways to prepare to receive His presence, and all that He has planned for your life, as well as grow deeper in your walk with Him as you proclaim, More of you and less of me. Ask yourself, What am I allowing to come between me and God's presence? Imagine the blessings He has for you when you prepare your heart and surrender it all to Him. At Stone Creek Church we are asking God to show us his presence, and to reveal his specific will for our church in various areas including facilities, programming, discipleship, evangelism, covenant partnership, and outreach. We recognize that our dependence for our church and for us personally must not be on our own abilities or strength but on the power of God. Fasting is the Biblical way of showing God that we truly are dependent on him and desperate for his presence.

### WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is to voluntarily abstaining from eating/drinking for a set period of time. "Eating" and "drinking" can represent anything that is holding you back. What do you "consume" in terms of social food, intellectual food, spiritual food, and emotional food? Are these things distracting you from your relationship with God? Are you relying on things that have nothing to do with God to get you through your day? You may not even realize you have an addiction. For example, if you "have to have" coffee every day, and you are not willing to give it up, you are addicted. Maybe your fast needs to just be about coffee. Ask God and He will show you. If you have medical issues, consider fasting TV or media. The point is that there is something God wants you to separate yourself from for this time so that you can see Him more clearly. Don't cheat yourself by removing yourself from the fast entirely.

### FASTING GOAL: A PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE LIVING GOD

"He must increase and [we] must decrease." - John 3:30. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." - 1 Peter 1:16. You may experience many benefits from fasting (cleansing your body, breaking addictions, etc.), but the goal of fasting is to experience God. Right now your life may be all about you, what you want, and when you want it. Imagine if you separate yourself from your perceived needs (such as food)...you may see that life is all about Him. Other examples of biblical fasting:

Special revelation - Exodus 34:27-28

In times of war - Judges 20:26

Courage and wisdom - Esther 4:3,16

In times of grief - Nehemiah 1:4, 2 Samuel 1:12, Samuel 31:13, 1 Chronicles 10:12

Spiritual recuperation - 1 Kings 19:1-9

Mourning - Daniel 10:1-3

Repentance - Jonah 3:5, Daniel 6:18

Ministry preparation - Matthew 4:2

Spiritual power - Mark 9:29

Ministry commissioning - Acts 14:23

Set aside self for holiness - 1 Corinthians 7:5

Spiritual discipline - 1 Corinthians 11:24-28 (Paul "fasted often")

## TYPES OF FASTS

### *Complete Fast*

- Drinking only liquids, typically water and/or light juices.
- Broth or soup may be included as options.

### *Selective Fast*

- Removing certain elements from your diet.
- The Daniel Fast - abstaining from meat, sweets, or bread; drink water and juice, and eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

### *Partial Fast (a.k.a. The Jewish Fast)*

- Abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon.
- Fast during specific times of the day, e.g. 6AM-3PM, or from sunup to sundown.

### *Soul Fast*

- Common for: anyone new to fasting food; those with health issues that prevent them from fasting food; those wanting to refocus specific areas of life that are out of balance.
- Suggestions: abstain from engaging in social media, shopping, watching television, etc.

## TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT

As you continue to fast, you will realize that you don't experience hunger pains as often as you thought you would. Without a preoccupation with food, you will be surprised at your ability to be sustained for a number of days without eating food and how you will take advantage of your time to seek Jesus more diligently. There is no magic in simply missing meals in the name of spirituality. The important thing to remember is to hear God speak and obey what you hear.

## PRAYER LIFE DURING THE FAST

There is a question you will need to answer. When you are fasting, will you seek Him, give Him a listening ear and the quality time He deserves? He will constantly separate you from dependence on the world. Consequently, your time alone with Him may become more frequent than you originally planned, and needless to say, your prayer life will greatly improve. How appropriate that Jesus and Moses spent extensive time in the desert alone with God. It is ironic that the Hebrew name for desert is *madbar*, meaning "to speak." You will hear His voice throughout the day in a powerful way. Wisdom will cry out to you in the streets. As the stars in heaven declare the glory of God, so every corner will reveal to your willing soul the mysteries of His Kingdom that have been withheld from the rulers of this age (Proverbs 8:1-3, Psalm 19, and 1 Corinthians 2:7). You will hear Him when you are driving, talking on the phone, or counseling a friend. Expect to hear Him loud and clear.

## **SPECIFIC PRAYERS FOR OUR DAY OF FASTING AT Stone Creek Church**

- 1) God, help us to use our resources wisely for the kingdom.
- 2) God, be with our staff, including our Office Manager Laura Childers, our Children's Director Lisa Sloane, our Worship Leader Judah Gregory, our Pastor Shevi Sloane and our Elders (David Pierce and Don Johnson), along with our Deacons (Bobby Bryant, Gary Gray, and Al Smith) as they lead us as a congregation.
- 3) God, be with the finance board and the trustees board as they make hard decisions for our church. Thank you for their commitment and work for your kingdom.
- 3) Lord, what in us needs to change to be an effective church at discipleship and evangelism?
- 4) Lord, we have many in our body who are struggling with physical ailments. Would you bring healing and make us a physically healthy church.
- 5) Lord, would you help us to covenant with you and each other to truly seek to accomplish your vision for us as a church. To be involved in small groups, d-groups, growth electives, giving, serving, and going.
- 6) Lord, help us to overcome our fears and discomfort in beginning relationships with people for the sake of discipleship, evangelism, and Gospel conversations.
- 7) Lord, help us to EACH ONE REACH ONE. Show each of us who our one is and help us to be able to do all that is necessary to reach them with the Gospel and invite them to Stone Creek Church.
- 8) Lord, help us to BLESS EVERY HOME as we pray for, care for, and share the gospel with our neighbors.
- 9) Lord, help us to engage in worship as a lifestyle rather than a once a week religious observance.
- 10) Lord, help us to be fully depending upon you in our daily reading of the Bible, our prayer time, and worship times.
- 11) Lord, help us to memorize scripture and hide your word in our hearts as we seek to be more than casual christians, but men and women of the word.
- 12) Lord, help us to do the hard things that other casual christians don't do.
- 13) Lord show us what the next steps are for us as it relates to foreign missions partners and local agency partnerships.
- 14) Lord, send us out as missionaries here in Danville and Pittsylvania County.
- 15) Lord, show us what areas you are working so that we can join you there.
- 16) Lord, send us new Covenant Partners to join us in our mission to see the world reached.