

# 21 DAYS of PRAYER & FASTING - Fasting

**Denying ourselves is a theme that we see consistently throughout Scripture.** We live in a culture that is constantly looking to have not only its needs, but desires satisfied. In contrast, Jesus said, *"If anyone wants to come after me, he must take up his cross daily, and follow me"* (Matthew 16:24). It's an incredibly healthy spiritual practice to set aside specific, strategic time, to deny ourselves of things that gratify our flesh. One of the ways we do that is by fasting.

Maybe you've never fasted, and it seems difficult, but it's as simple as ***"miss a meal and pray!"*** Maybe you've never thought that it's important, but we see fasting in the Old and New Testaments, and Jesus Himself fasted! It must be of great benefit, and if it was important for Him, should it not also be important for us?

**As a church, we're setting a goal to cumulatively fast 1,200 meals over the 21 Days of Prayer.** Imagine for a second if we hit our goal... even if we prayed for at least 15 minutes, that would be at least 300 hours of prayer that happened during those missed meals!

So, **here's what we're asking you to do:** Over the next 21 days, would you set aside specific, strategic time to fast and pray? Remember, though, that the number one goal of fasting isn't just to skip a meal. It's to draw near to God, so fasting and prayer are linked together. Instead of eating, we pray! The important thing is that for whatever duration we choose to fast – whether it's for one meal, a day, three days, or more - our focus is on God.

Recognize that as you set aside time to seek God specifically through this avenue of prayer and fasting, there will be opposition. Don't be discouraged! It's important to remember that fasting isn't easy, and it's not meant to be. Being that we tend to be creatures of comfort, we will avoid things that bring any level of discomfort. Fasting allows us to weaken our flesh in order to bring strength and alertness to our spirit as we draw near to God through prayer. Stretch yourself and allow Him to do what He wants to do in you this season!

Let's do it together and let's see what God will do in our hearts and in our church as we do this together!

Please visit our website for resources as well as to indicate how many days you will fast. This will help us track our progress toward 1,200 meals.

*\*Please consider whether you are able to physically participate in a fast of food. If this is not possible, perhaps consider a fast of a different kind.*