



21-Day

2024 NEW YEAR CORPORATE FAST

Antioch Christian Church's 2024 New Year Fast

Monday, January 8, 2024 through Sunday, January 28, 2024

2024 New Year Prayer and Fasting

Starting the year off in prayer and fasting is key to a successful year. This year can be the best year EVER if it is your best year spiritually. Join us this January for 21 days of church-wide prayer and fasting. This is a great time to quiet the distractions of the world and get closer in your relationship with God.

During the month of January, we are coming together as individual families and as a church family to hear from God concerning 2024. Last year the Lord told us to BE STRONG. That Word guided us through unexpected situations and various trials that came up throughout the year. We are expectantly open to hear what He will speak to us this year.

During this time of prayer and fasting, we believe we will clearly hear from the Lord concerning our role in carrying out His mission in the earth. Our spirits will be revived, our souls will be edified, and we will receive clear divine revelation to maximize this season. We will be prepared for whatever God wants to do in us and through us as individuals and a church Body.

This time of consecration will provide an opportunity for your family to learn more about what it means to pray and to be led by the Spirit. We are providing daily devotionals that will help us focus on our requirement from the Lord to fast, pray and ultimately be people who look like Jesus.

We look forward to taking this journey together.

In His Service,
Senior Pastor Norris and Executive Pastor Tonya McGill

Keys to Fasting and Prayer

Gratitude – Psalms 100:4, “Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!”

Remembrance – Psalm 143:5, “I remember the days of old. I ponder all your great works and think about what you have done.”

Request – Philippians 4:6, “..in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Expectation – Isaiah 58:9, “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.”

Purpose:

The purpose of fasting is to strengthen you spiritually, mentally and physically. The goal is to help cleanse your temple of the destructive and negative forces that interfere with your relationship with God. Through fasting, your ability to hear, see and accomplish God’s plan will become clearer.

Intent:

The intent is to increase your ability to deny the flesh when needed. An ability to deny the flesh is an ability to get closer to God and His plan for you. This journal has a daily mediation page for each day of the fast which includes a prayer focus, scripture reading, reflections and an opportunity for you to record what you received while studying. Each day set aside specific time to spend time in prayer and meditation.

Why Prayer and Fasting?

1. Prayer and fasting are two power tools that can help us overcome unbelief.
 - a. Unbelief hinders us from casting down strongholds and casting out demons.
 - b. Faith is strengthened in prayer.
 - c. Prayer life is intensified by fasting.
 - d. Fasting and Prayer are beneficial for breakthrough.
2. When we fast and pray, we demonstrate our faith in God and our dependency upon God.
3. Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life.
4. Fasting without prayer is a diet and does not manifest any supernatural benefits. We must not only fast, but we must also pray!
5. Why Pray? ***Jeremiah 33:3 NIV, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."***
 - a. Through prayer, we develop an intimate relationship with the Father.
 - b. Prayer is two-way communication with God. Prayer is not complete until you hear from God.
 - c. Prayer opens the door for God to fill us with spiritual wisdom, knowledge and understanding.
 - d. Through prayer, we find direction for our lives.
 - e. Through prayer, we can repent and be restored to a right relationship with God.
 - f. Prayer gives God the authority to intervene on our behalf in the natural realm.
6. To pray effectively, prayer must:
 - a. Be done in belief.
 - b. Be done in sincerity.
 - c. Be done always.
 - d. Be done in humility.
 - e. Exalt or Glorify the Lord.

7. Why Fast?

- a. Strengthen yourself spiritually, mentally and physically.
- b. Cleanse your temple of destructive and negative forces that interfere with your relationship with God.
- c. Increase your ability to deny the flesh when needed.
- d. Fasting gives you God's focus for your life.
- e. Fasting cuts out the world so we can tune into God.
- f. Fasting teaches us patience and endurance.

8. Examples of power of fasting and prayer – **Isaiah 58:6-9; Ezra 8:21-23; Esther 4:13-16; Acts 13:2-3; Acts 14:21-23**

What Are We Fasting?

Some people are unable to fast from eating for many reasons, but that does not have to stop you from the important and beneficial habit of fasting.

When choosing something to fast, it's important that you choose something meaningful to you that you will replace with intimate time with the Lord. Many people falsely fast by choosing something that wouldn't ordinarily be missed. But choosing what to fast is an important decision that shapes your experience and connection with Jesus. **You should miss its presence in your life, and the lack of it should remind you of your purpose for fasting and connection to God.**

Here are some ideas to get your mind going on what you could fast besides food:

1. **Spending Fast** – don't buy anything you do not need. Instead put the money you would have spent in a jar/account then at the end of the fast donate it to your church, a ministry or a person in need.
2. **Soda/Sweets Fast** – give up sodas and sweets. Only focus on eating/drinking things that are essential for nourishment – **NO PLEASANT THING.**
3. **TV/Social Media Fast** – spend time you'd normally be entertaining yourself with TV and/or Social media and instead read a book that encourages your relationship with the Lord or additional prayer and meditation time in the Word.
4. **Extra-curricular activities** – instead of spending time doing fun things with others; spend time alone as Jesus often did to grow in your relationship with Him.
5. **Partial fast** – this fast involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00am to 3:00pm or from sunup to sundown.

How Will We Fast?

We are encouraging each individual/family to conduct their time of daily devotional reading, engage in discussion, prayer and fasting.

Each Wednesday at noon throughout the fast, we will gather via conference call to corporately pray.

Wednesday Noon Day Prayer Dates: 1/10, 1/17 and 1/24

Conference Call Dial-In Number: (607) 374-1027 Access Code: 7560010

Join us in person on Friday, January 26, 2024, at 7pm, for a Night of Prayer, Praise and Deliverance as we prepare to conclude our fast.

Day 1 – January 8, 2024: Fasting without the Word is Just a Diet

Matthew 4:4, “Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Welcome to Day 1 of our 21 days of prayer and fasting. It is important during this time of seeking the Lord that you spend time reading the Word of God and establishing a daily devotional. When we spend time in the Word of God, we spend time with God. He and His Word are One and His Word is living and active. As we read the Word, we learn more about Him and His ways.

Each day we will have a devotional along with a scripture for reading. Set aside time to read and meditate upon the devotionals and of course read your Bible. It is good to do this first thing in the morning before you begin your day so that you will be able to focus on God first. As you do that, He will help you organize the rest of your day. We also suggest you read before you go to bed at night so that you will have the Word in your mind before you go to sleep.

When reading your daily devotionals, pray about how you can apply what you’ve read to your life. The Word of God is for us to live not just read. If there are things you need to change, change them. If there is an attitude you need to correct, correct it. Do not just read and/or hear the Word but become a doer of it.

It is said that anything you do for 21 days becomes a habit. A habit is a pattern of behavior that becomes woven into our brain. We encourage you to create a new habit of reading the Word and spending time with the Lord by committing to each day for these next 21 days. As you set aside time to draw closer to the Lord, He will come closer to you. ***James 4:7-8 ESV, “[7] Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8] Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”***

Questions for you to consider:

1. How often do you “eat” God’s Word? Are you spiritually malnourished?
2. How do you respond when the enemy tries to come against your mind with lies repeatedly?
3. Do you know you have authority based on the Word of God to command him to leave by believing and confessing God’s Word?

Activating the Word:

Take a moment to find scriptures to help you defeat any lies the enemy has whispered to you. Identify scriptures from the Word of God to believe and then confess so you can be set free. Journal whatever the Lord speaks to your heart.

Day 2– January 9, 2024: What fruit are you known by?

Matthew 7:20, “Therefore by their fruits you will know them”

Our mission statement at Antioch is to **Build People to Reflect Jesus**. Our aim is to preach and teach the Word of God so that disciples will be made. A disciple is not just one who believes in Jesus but one who acts like Him. ***Acts 11:26, “and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So, for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”***

To look like Jesus, we must follow in His way. ***Luke 9:23, “And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”***

When we examine the text, Jesus declares that if we will come after Him, it will require self-denial. The Greek Word for ***come*** in this verse is ***erchomai***, it is a verb and means to appear from one place to another publicly. Following Jesus is not a task that can be accomplished in private or in secret. This definition also denotes moving from one place to another. No one follows and remains in the same place. To follow Jesus, we must be willing to lay aside our agenda and do exactly what He wants us to do. Our eyes must stay focused on Him.

Let’s examine the word ***follow***, it derives from the Greek word ***akoloutheo*** which means to follow one who precedes, to join him as his attendant, to accompany him. We must be careful to follow Him and not go before Him. When we go ahead of Him, we make critical mistakes. We must not go first then ask God to come along and bless what we are doing. This is out of order and will never work in the Kingdom of God. We must always follow Him.

Once you begin to truly follow Jesus, prepare yourself mentally for the journey. We must be prepared to go through whatever is necessary to follow Jesus. We must remember to rejoice “in through”, not wait until while we are “out of through”. There may be pain, heartache, discomfort, persecution, tests, trials and/or tribulation; however, we must continue to follow.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Are there areas in your life that you are leading rather than following the Lord?
2. If you were someone else looking at your own life, what fruit could you identify that proves you are a disciple of Christ?
3. Are you ever tempted to stop following Jesus? If so when are those times?

Activating the Word:

Spend some time asking the Lord to point out areas in your life that you need to surrender to Him. Find scriptures you can stand on to assist you in your journey. Journal whatever the Lord speaks to your heart.

Day 3 – January 10, 2024: Return to Jesus

Joel 2:12 NIV “Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.

God is calling us to return to Him with all our heart. There are times in our walk with the Lord that we may allow distractions to draw us away from Jesus but thank God for grace. Grace means that we have another opportunity to return to Him. We must decide every day to lay aside every weight and focus our hearts first and foremost on the Lord. Matthew 6:33 tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto us. Seek Him first – before we seek anything else, we must seek the Lord.

Thank God for the covenant of Grace that we live under. Under the Old Covenant, man had to rely on his works and his sacrifices to be right with God. Under the New Covenant, we have every wrong that we have done or will do forgiven at the Cross because of Jesus.

As you spend time in prayer and fasting today, you can establish a strong passionate connection with the Lord as He becomes the object of your affection. Do not allow your love or passion for God to become lukewarm and certainly not cold. To keep your relationship with the Father passionate, spend time studying God’s Word and in prayer and worship before the Father focusing on who He is. Do not worry about what problems you have, what prayer requests you want to talk to the Father about, just focus on honoring Him and celebrating Him for His goodness, His mercy, His unconditional love, His sovereignty. Focus on who God is, seek Him first, return to Him and receive all that He has for you. Make today a day where your passion will be reignited and grow from day to day especially during these days of fasting and prayer.

Questions for you to consider:

1. What have been some distractions that have deterred you from your walk with the Lord?
2. Would you describe your relationship with the Lord as strong and passionate? Lukewarm? Cold?
3. What are some practical things you can do to cultivate a passionate strong relationship with the Lord?

Activating the Word:

Be intentional today about hearing from the Lord and obeying what He speaks. Before you speak or act, take a moment to pray and ask the Lord how you should respond. At the end of the day, journal your results.

Day 4 – January 11, 2024 “Good Fruit vs Bad Fruit”

Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

The Holy Spirit is the One who produces fruit in the life of the Believer. The flesh produces works and the Holy Spirit produces fruit. Another way of saying this is when we are led by the flesh, we will produce bad fruit; however, when we are led by the Spirit, we will produce good fruit. During this fast, we hope that you will become led by the Spirit and controlled by the Spirit so good fruit (fruit of the Spirit) and not bad fruit (works) will manifest in your life.

Apples always produce apples; oranges always produce oranges; dogs always produce dogs; fish always produce fish. The seed always produces after its kind. The moment you receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, His Spirit now lives in you, and He will produce Himself in you. The fruit of the Spirit is an outward manifestation of an inner working.

As we focus upon sowing to the Spirit, we can expect to receive fruit back from the Spirit. The fruit that the Spirit produces is wonderful, godly fruit that blesses not only your life but all those you encounter. Surrender to the Lord and allow the work of the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit in you that will draw others to Christ.

Questions for you to consider:

1. What does being led by the Spirit versus being led by the flesh mean? When you evaluate your daily responses, what leads you the most?
2. If you were to ask others what kind of fruit they see in your life, how do you think they would answer?
3. What steps do you need to take so that the Holy Spirit can produce His fruit in your life?

Activating the Word:

Spend some time asking the Lord to point out good and bad fruit in your life. Be willing to be open for the Lord to speak. Surrender the bad fruit to the Lord and ask Him to cultivate good fruit. Journal whatever the Lord speaks to your heart.

Day 5 – January 12, 2024- Answer the Call

John 10:27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

There is nothing more frustrating for a parent to call their child’s name and the child does not answer. The parent continues to call until the child finally responds and acknowledge the call of their parent.

God, our Father, is calling us. His desire is that we hear His call and answer by obeying His Word (following Him). Fasting enables us to block out the distractions of the world and tune in to voice of the Father. As we fast, we deny our flesh and when we deny our flesh, we become more sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit and can hear His voice more clearly. If you open your heart and your spiritual ears, you will hear what the Holy Spirit is saying so that you can follow His leading and obtain His best for your life.

If you desire to intimately know Him, seek Him first and deny yourself (disregard, lose sight of and forget yourself and your own interests) so that you can follow Him. You must have ears that are open and willing to receive, a heart to obey His instructions and a willingness to yield to His instructions. The more we discipline our flesh and feed our spirit, the stronger our spiritual discernment will become so that we will hear the voice of our Father, know Him, and ultimately follow Him (***Proverbs 3:5-7***).

Continue to prepare yourself to hear the Lord by denying your flesh, fasting from the distractions of the world so you can answer His call.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Do you believe that God speaks to you? If yes, what are some ways He has spoken to you? If no, do you believe He can’t or He won’t?
2. Do you believe God speaks to convict you or condemn you? What is the difference between the two?
3. When you hear God’s voice, how do you respond?

Activating the Word:

God desires to speak to us and direct us; the issue at times is our inability to stop and hear Him. As you are fasting, your ability to hear God should become clearer as you deny your flesh, fasting from the distractions of the world so you can answer His call. Spend some time today asking the Lord to speak to you and journal what He says.

Day 6 – January 13, 2024 – Avoid Distractions

Luke 10:38-42, “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

Did you know it is possible to be in the presence of the Lord and still be distracted? Mary and Martha were both in the presence of the Lord, yet Martha was distracted with much serving. **A distraction is a well-conceived, well thought out plan designed to draw you off your present course.** In analyzing the word distraction, we must look at the root word tract. God sends us into the world with purpose and a course we must follow (tract). However, the enemy’s goal is to dis tract us from our purpose; take us off track. Any train that is not on the track causes a great deal of chaos and disorder.

God does not send distractions, Satan does. God would never distract us or take us off the course that He preordained for us before the foundation of the world. During this time of fasting, separate from all the convenient tools that so easily distract us from quality time with the Lord. It is okay to not surf the internet or utilize social media for a time of consecration before the Lord. It is okay to not spend hours chatting online or talking on the telephone about things that do not propel you forward rather become obstacles in your journey.

Martha believed that her serving was necessary; she was tending to details to host the Master. However, the most important thing was to spend time sitting at the feet of Jesus receiving strength and edification from being in His presence. Do not allow distractions today to take you off course, stay tracked up!

Questions for you to consider:

1. Has there been a time you were walking with the Lord, and “something” happened to change your walk? How did you respond?
2. Has your excitement or commitment to being with the Lord changed at all? In what way?
3. What are some distractions you’ve had to deal with?

Activating the Word:

Distractions are plans the enemy comes up with to take us off track. Spend some time asking the Lord to identify any distractions that may have been sent to take you off track that you weren't aware of. Ask the Holy Spirit to forgive you, cleanse you and lead you back on track. Journal your thoughts.

Day 7 – January 14, 2024- “Winning the War Within”

Romans 7:18-20 NLT, “And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t. I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is a sin living in me that does it.”

Did you know there is an internal war going on inside of a believer every day? This war is between our spirit which is born again and our flesh which contains sin. Paul describes this so well in this passage – we desire to do the right thing, but in our own efforts, we don’t have the power to, and we mess up.

Thank God that we do not have to rely on our own strengths to help us make right decisions and do the right thing. We don’t have to be controlled by our sinful nature and end up doing the things that we don’t want to do. But the only way we can be successful and win the war within is to yield to the Holy Spirit and rely on the strength of the greater One within.

When we are facing trials and temptations, we must rely on God’s power working within to guide us to do the right things. When we are Born Again, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts and gives us a desire to do what is pleasing to the Lord. The Holy Spirit always wants to do what is right and pleasing to the Lord. He always wants to be in fellowship with the Father. Instead of leaning to your own understanding, trust the Holy Spirit and allow Him to direct your path so that you will win the war within.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Are there areas you have struggled with that you just can’t seem to overcome?
2. What does yield to the Spirit mean to you?
3. What are some key strategies for winning a battle?

Activating the Word:

In reviewing some of the key strategies you identified in question 3, think about how you can implement them in your spiritual battle. What did Paul mean in Romans 7:25? How can you activate this in your own life?

Day 8 – January 15, 2024: “The Power of the Word”

Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

The Greek word for powerful is **energēs** which comes from the word **energy** which means at work, power in action. **Energy means the total work done to achieve a particular end; productive of due result; dynamic quality; a usually positive spiritual force; vigorous exertion of power.** It is the divine authority of God working in the life of a believer. Typically, divine energy refers to God’s will of transitioning the believer from point to point in His plan. As we spend time meditating on the Word of God, we receive newness of life within our minds to shape our lives. Time spent with God brings about transformation, healing, peace, grace, joy, love, prosperity and whatever we need to flow in our lives. It is precious and so powerful that according to **Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God will last forever”**. This is comforting to know we access to the Word of God which is so powerful that it changes lives and remains forever. It is essential to our success for living the Kingdom life on earth. When we allow God’s word to shape our thinking, our thoughts, speech, and actions will align with His divine purpose. Do you believe the Word can change every situation you encounter? How important is the Word to you?

The Greek word for discerner is **kritikos**. The bible reveals the impact of the word as it discerns the power of truth in our lives. The word can discern the truth in every situation we encounter. It determines God’s desire in a situation or for one’s life or identifies the true nature of a thing such as discerning whether it is good or evil. Discerner means **relating to judging, fit for judging, skilled in judging**. In I Corinthians 14:33, reveals how to discern disorder: **“For God is not a God of disorder but of peace – as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.”** When there is chaos, disorder, and division God is not present. The Holy Spirit will easily discern every situation for us when we allow Him to lead and guide us along the way. Our submission to the leadership of the holy spirit will reveal, expose, and show whether things are good or evil. But we must always remember Discernment does not entitle us to judge anyone. Have there been times when the holy spirit discerned something about someone you trusted or even yourself that you did not want to believe?

Questions for you to consider:

1. Are you satisfied with the amount of time you are spending in the Word?
2. How has the power of God's Word been effective in your life?
3. What have you allowed the Holy Spirit to discern for you? Did you receive it, or did you choose to ignore it?

Activating the Word:

Examine your life and focus on the areas the word has helped you to mature. Are there other areas the word is challenging you to trust God in? What things hinder you from spending time in the word? Do you allow the holy spirit to discern all things for you? Journal your thoughts as the Holy Spirit reveals.

Day 9 – January 16, 2024: The Power of Praise

Psalm 100:4, “Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him and bless His name.”

Praise is defined as adoration, thanksgiving (paid to God). It avails us to give thanks to God for all He has done, is doing and continually does for us. Praise is when we can lift God no matter what we are facing because we can see His goodness in every circumstance. It is an expression of favorable judgment of; to commend (to entrust for care or preservation). To praise God is to focus on His love, grace, and mercy for us. Sometimes it really is a sacrifice to offer praise. We do not always feel like it. We may be struggling or feeling weary. Or maybe, we feel like He let us down. We think God is so distant and far away to care about what we are experiencing. But we must remember that He promised to heal, deliver, set you free and place you on a high mountain.

When we decide to fix our eyes on Him, and daily give Him praise, no matter what is staring us straight in the face, we suddenly realize that God has already begun to release the grip those struggles can have over us. We can take heart in knowing Abba Father is truly for us, with us and working through us. Praise brings us to a place of humility as we remember our dependency on God and acknowledge our need for Him. Giving God praise is our ammunition to breakthrough as it redirects our focus from the problem and set our eyes on Him. The devil even knows the power of praise and worship; so, it is his tactic to distract us from praising God. Our praise is a powerful weapon to block the fiery darts and lies of the enemy.

We should be assured that the Lord is working on our behalf as our Protector, Defender, Deliverer, Healer, and Provider; and our intentions should be to give Him **ALL** praise, honor, and glory. There is a reason, according to **I Thessalonians 5:18**, we are commanded, **“To give thanks in every situation [no matter what the circumstances] be thankful and continually give thanks to God; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.”** Our praise should lift God every day for all the wonderful things He does for us.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Can you praise God even amidst a storm in your life? Describe a time when you were able to see God's goodness for your life.
2. What obstacles keep you from praising the Lord? Have you taken any steps to overcome it?
3. Do you praise God for everything He does for you each day?

Activating the Word:

What things can you do to get your focus off your circumstances and back on God? Are there times when you feel life is all about you? Think about this question and make a list of those areas in your life that need to be more about praising God. Journal your results.

Day 10 – January 17, 2024: The Power of Hope

Isaiah 40:27-31, “Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, but those who hope (wait) in the LORD will renew their strength; They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.”

Hope means to wait or look eagerly for, and to expect. Hope energizes and motivates us to act by causing us to step out in faith and act in obedience with God’s word. Hope believes boldly, decides daringly, speaks firmly, and perseveres passionately. Hope is full assurance, or strong confidence that God is going to do good to us in the future. As we place our hope in God, it refreshes us with courage to trust that whatever He has promised it will happen.

With hope, anything is possible. Without it, life can be uncertain. Hope in God enables us to see that there is light to guide us despite of the darkness that appears. Within the last year everyone encountered things that could have crushed our hope. But God would not allow us to be tested above what we are able to bear. He did something so amazing to help us to understand that even when we are not able to go about with our day-to-day so-called “normal” life. We could spend our time seeking Him for peace, strength, and wisdom for each day. He is our Sovereign God, and nothing happens without His permission. Be confident in knowing everything God allows will work according to His plan for our lives. God continues to say, ***“Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed (discouraged), for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”*** Having a relationship with the Lord avails us with power to hope and overcome every obstacle. When we are full of hope, we can identify the problems, but every problem must take a seat to God’s Sovereignty. No matter what storms may come, we can have hope in God to see us through. According to **Hebrews 11:1, “Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things unseen.”** Our hope in the Lord raises our praise to levels unknown to get through every valley safely. Are there things that are keeps you from having hope? If so, what actions have you taken to renew your hope in God?

Questions for you to consider:

1. What are you hoping for the Lord to do in your life?
2. Has God revealed things to you that have not manifested? Are you still hoping in Him to perform it?
3. What things do you base your hope upon? Do you believe God is able to perform everything He has spoken?

Activating the Word:

Do you feel your hope can increase in God? What things can you do to increase your hope? Are there things you are still hoping in the Lord to do? Journal your results.

Day 11 – January 18, 2024: The Power of Love

1 Corinthians 13:4-7, "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast, it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing; but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

The Greek word for **Love** is **Agape** which means affection, good will, benevolence, brotherly love. Love is a great attribute of God as His love for us never fails. Therefore, as believer's we should duplicate God's love to others.

When we love God; we are prompt to obey His word. Regardless, of unpleasant circumstances love is the greatest gift of all that we can share with others. Love will help us to see past our hurts and pain to attend to the needs of others. Our love for God should always desire to please Him in our obedience.

Gods prevails in all things. It is not the time for us to be drawn in by the evil of this day. But we must stand up with the love of God as it dwells richly within us. The time has arrived for us to walk in love just a Christ loved us and gave Himself f or us. Love is not unkind, impatient, rude, self-seeking, or envious but it is walks in a state of humility. As servants of God, we cannot allow our feelings to determine our love for another. Love is so important to God because while we were yet sinners, He gave His only begotten Son as a sacrificial lamb to redeem us back to Himself through Jesus Christ. ***Romans 5:8, "But God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*** We serve a God who sees all, hears all and knows all things. Most certainly there are things that come to test our love, but we can prevail with the love of God. His love is so powerful that it endures forever. As believer's we are to be rooted and grounded in love so, we can demonstrate our love for Jesus by loving one another. The word love appears in the KJV of the bible 310 times which reveals the importance God places on it.

Love can open blinded eyes to expose wrongdoing. It mends broken hearts; it can heal the sick; and change the hearts and minds of men. It is the same love that is so powerful there is nothing it cannot overturn. We can see love alive and active as it moves and works in the hard places in our lives.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Do you believe God loves you? If not, why?
2. Is there anything that keeps you from loving others?
3. Do you see areas where your love can grow?

Activating the Word:

Do you feel loved? How often do you express your love for God? Are there areas which keep you from expressing your love for others? Journal your results.

Day 12 – January 19, 2024: It's Already Done

Isaiah 26:3, "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."

Peace comes when we keep our minds stayed on Jesus. The Greek word is **Shalom**. Peace is defined as freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions. It is the inner sense of contentment and quietness, regardless of life's circumstances. It is steadfast confidence in our ever-faithful Heavenly Father. Peace is the presence of joy during times of unrest. True peace comes from the fact that God lives within us and has empowered us to handle every unpleasant or hard situation as it surpasses all our human understanding. Peace is considered perfect when our total being is fixed on God and not on our problems. Now, we can be confident that God's timing and purpose is perfect for our lives. Meditating on God's word and getting in His presence is necessary for us to have perfect peace. So, we cannot place more value on listening to the news, playing video games, focusing on what others are doing on social media or even thinking about what we are thinking, if it does not align with what God says. God wants to do a great work in and through us, but it is up to each of us to avail ourselves to Him. If we want this new year 2021 to be greater, then, we must spend more time seeking God in prayer, studying His word, hearing His word, and obeying the word.

Do you believe that Jesus has already provided everything we need? Are you abiding in peace knowing all God has done? As we desire for the Lord to order our steps each day; we must not allow anything to stop us. When we understand that it is already done, praise will live in our hearts each day and continually be in our mouths! We can take notes from Paul and Silas, even while in jail and chained to the floor; they did not allow their situation to keep them from praying and singing praises unto the Lord. Their mindset had to be strong to know that even in jail, we can praise the Lord for all His goodness.

God does not ask us whether we feel like praising Him but commands us to be thankful and bless His Holy name. God has given us many reasons to praise Him and as we give Him praise, He will reveal more reasons to continue to bless His name. Do not quit in the process. Only Believe!

Questions for you to consider:

1. How has peace impact your life?
2. Does worry hinder you from trusting others including your loved ones?
3. How has your faith increased to trust God more?

Activating the Word:

Do you sleep at night when trouble is present? Is there anything you believe God cannot do for you? What causes you to not have peace? What has God spoken to you to do to help others believe it's already done? Journal your results.

Day 13 – January 20, 2024: You Lack Nothing

James 1:4, “But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

Do you know that patience is a fruit of the holy spirit and important for the maturity of our spiritual lives? Patience requires us to deal with delays and obstacles. We live in a world where there is day to day interaction with others and everyone does not think or believe as we do. But it presents an opportunity for us to reveal God to them through our patience. Imagine, Joseph as a young boy being chosen to develop patience through separation from his father and mother and siblings. Sold by your brothers to merchants traveling to a far and strange land. For his freedom to be stripped from him and placing him captive as a slave to serve in the house of another. These are things which could break the positive spirit of anyone. I am sure there were times when Joseph lost his patience, but the blessing is that he did not allow it to overtake him. Even while being sent to prison for the lie of Potiphar’s wife. Although, the favor of God was with Joseph during these difficult times; it did not keep him from experiencing it.

I am sure there were times when Joseph felt alone and abandoned. Stress and fear were sure to have been looming around him. Waiting for the opportunity to oppress and eventually depress him. It was the perfect opportunity for Joseph to begin to become hopeless and in distraught while in prison and not knowing what his outcome would be. But God continued to shield him with favor in prison and raised him up to be a great leader. Throughout each ordeal, Joseph worked faithfully in every situation he found himself as he waited for God to fulfil His promise to make him a leader of the people. God promoted Joseph to rule over Egypt as the 2nd in command to only Pharaoh. We can be like Joseph even when we do not understand all that is happening; we can trust God to work out His divine plan.

When we wait on the Lord to perform His word in our lives, we can receive the blessings that He has prepared for us. We are not worried or fainting, but we are patiently waiting in faith, persuaded God’s plans will work out for our good. So, let patience have its way in our life and when it is finished, we will lack nothing.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Am I patient with myself and others? Are there things I can do to develop more patience?
2. Do you find yourself waiting with joy or with doubt?
3. Are there certain people that you have less or no patience with? If so, what have you done to change?

Activating the Word:

Do you fear things which God uses to develop more patience in certain areas of your life? Are you confident that God is with you and the plans He has for you are good? Journal your results.

Day 14 – January 21, 2024: Yes, You Can

Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.”

Often, we quote this scripture especially when we are trying to build up enough faith to make sure things work out according to our plans and desires. But do are we able to believe, yes, we can do all things through Christ which strengthens us? With faith we can believe that we are strong in body, sound in health and have the strength to avail over anything. No matter the opinions of others, with God on our side there is nothing we cannot achieve. Christ has given us the power to go the distance even when it appears unfavorable.

Consulting God’s word will confirm His will for us. Through the word we receive guidance to important decisions in life. The word of God enables us to be able to do all things. God promises us that, **“the young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but those who see the Lord lack no good thing.”** So, as we seek the Lord, He satisfies our every need and cancels lack.

Having a “Yes, You Can” mentality requires us to depend on God and trust that He will **never** go back on His word. Our faith assures us that what God has promised. He can perform it. We need faith in Jesus Christ to enable us to accomplish things we never dreamed of.

Questions for you to consider:

1. What do you believe you can do in Christ?
2. What does **all** things mean to you?
3. Have you placed limitations on the things you are strengthened to do each day?

Activating the Word:

Do you believe God has enabled you to do all things? Or do you believe it is in your own strength? Are there things you think you cannot do? Journal your results.

Day 15 – January 22, 2024: Endure the Process

John 15:1-2, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

Branches that are not fruitful are removed because God is not wasteful. There is nothing that He created that does not give. The sun, the moon, the water, fire, grass, birds, bees, etc. they all give. When we as people stop giving, we cease to function in our created role and stand in jeopardy of being removed by God.

During this time of fasting, you are being prepared to be more fruitful for the Lord. Don't succumb to temptation and quit. This process is one that may be challenging but will prove to be of great benefit if you would endure the process and overcome the challenge. It is human nature to take the path of least resistance. We have a natural inclination to always look for the easy way out. There is nothing easy about denying your flesh, your flesh will cry out for what it wants. Even though it is not easy, it can be done with a made-up mind. After you make up your mind, you must then control your flesh.

Endure the process, you will be better later!

Questions for you to consider:

1. What does it mean to abide in Jesus?
2. What are some ways you “give”?
3. What are some ways you can give more?

Activating the Word:

Have you ever struggled with being patient waiting on the Lord to bring you into a season of fruitfulness? When you finally arrived at that season, did you believe that was it? If you haven't arrived at that season, do you believe it is coming? Have you given up?

Day 16 – January 23, 2024 – Firm Faith

James 1:6, “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering...”

When you pray, do you expect God to answer? When we pray according to the Word of God, we should have an earnest expectation that God will do what He said He would do **(1 John 5:14-15)**.

The enemy will come to persuade you that what you are praying for is impossible or will not happen for you. We must determine to pray in confidence and trust the promises of God will come to pass in our lives. James reminds us that when we waver, we do not have faith. When we are not stable in our faith then we will receive nothing from God. God never wavers in His commitment nor His love for us, He is sure and firm. We can trust Him completely and always. Whatever has caused you to doubt, cast down those thoughts and decide that you will be firm in your faith. You will not doubt but trust that Your Father can and will come through.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Has there ever been a time in your life when you were so filled with fear that you couldn't pray in faith even though you said all the right words?
2. How important is it for you to pray with an earnest expectation?
3. What are some things that causes you to not remain stable in faith?

Activating the Word:

When you read today's devotional, can you list two things you have learned regarding firm faith? How can you put what you've learned into practice? Does anyone come to mind that you can share these truths in order to encourage him or her in their faith? Why not share it with them?

Day 17 – January 24, 2024 – Benefit of Pruning

John 15:1-2, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

Jesus states that when we bear fruit for God that we are pruned so that we can bear even more fruit. This is the pruning process that every believer must endure. As humans, we prefer to take the path of least resistance; we look for the easy way out. Pruning is very painful. The Greek word **purgeth** used in the text is **kathairo** which means to cleanse from filth and impurities which is often done by fire and by cutting.

The Word of God cuts both ways and sometimes we are being cut to bear more fruit and it may not feel good, but it will work for our good. This is why it is important to attend a good local church where the Word of God is preached without compromise.

Here are four reasons for pruning:

1. **Pruning trains, the believer.** Discipline is accomplished through pruning. You cannot be a disciple without discipline.
2. **Pruning maintains the health of the believer.** Things that are not kept clean become dirty and contaminated and eventually become sick, so they wither away and die.
3. **Pruning improves the productivity of the believer.** The healthier you are, the more productive you will be.
4. **Pruning restricts the wrong growth.** Cancer grows but it's not good growth. Your head should never outgrow your heart. When this happens, it is the wrong kind of growth. Pruning will keep your head small and your heart large.

Questions for you to consider:

1. Can you think of a time you have been pruned by the Lord?
2. What was your attitude like during the process?
4. What are some ways you overcame your flesh crying out during the process? What can you do differently next time to overcome even more?

Activating the Word:

Think back on a difficult time in your life. Now that you understand the process, can you see the Lord at work? How was He working? What can you point to that proves He was with you? Journal your thoughts.

Day 18 – January 25, 2024 – Create in Me a Clean Heart

Psalm 51:10, “Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.”

David, the writer of this psalm, is crying out to God for a clean heart. Something has happened to the heart he had when God called him a man after His own heart. David found himself guilty of adultery and murder thus having a contaminated heart.

Just as the heart is critical to our natural body’s survival and health, so it is even more critical for our spiritual life. Success with God lies in the condition of the heart. Healthy heart’s function and produce a life of peace, productivity, and prosperity.

David is asking God to create in him a clean heart. He wants a changed heart, the one that he has now is not right. The Hebrew word clean is **tahowr** it means to be without contaminates, to be pure both morally and ethically. David knows that the only way he could carry out such things against God is that he has allowed his heart to be contaminated by lust. He is asking God to do open heart surgery and take out all contaminates.

During this time of prayer and fasting, give your heart to the Master Surgeon for examination and whatever surgery is needed so that you can keep your heart clean.

Questions for you to consider:

1. What are you doing daily to keep your heart clean before the Lord?
2. What are some things that contaminate your heart?
3. What things are filling your heart right now?

Activating the Word:

Spend some time allowing the Lord to reveal contaminates that may be in your heart. Are there areas the Lord has performed surgery on your heart since the beginning of this fast? Journal your thoughts.

Day 19, January 26, 2024 – Maintaining a Clean Heart

Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me."

There are things that we must do to keep our hearts clean and free from contaminants.

7 Ways to Maintain a Clean Heart:

1. Abide in Truth (stay in the presence of the Lord). It is difficult to leave God's presence with an unclean heart.
2. Take a bath every day. We must bathe in the Word of God. How would we smell in the natural if we went a week without bathing in natural water? It would be difficult for people to stay around us. When our hearts are not clean, we smell bad, and no one can stay around us for long.
3. Count the costs before you make the choice. What is this decision going to do to my heart and my relationship with God? Will it strengthen or weaken?
4. Resist temptation. Submit to God, resist the devil and he WILL flee from you. David got into trouble because he did not first submit then resist.
5. Stay focused on your assignment. Distractions are not from God. Distractions are well thought out, well-conceived plans designed to draw you out and steal your heart from God.
6. Guard your heart as if your life depended on it because it does. The issues of life flow out of your heart.
7. Give. Giving is a test of your heart. The rich young ruler's heart was tested in Mark 10:17; he could not follow Jesus because his heart had been corrupted by what he possessed. He chose his possessions over Jesus. Our hearts will always follow our treasure. Giving keeps a clean heart rejoicing.

Questions for you to consider:

1. In reviewing the list above, which one(s) speak most to you?
2. What is God saying to you about these areas?
3. How will you respond?

Activating the Word:

Heart maintenance is not something we do once a year or even once a week on Sundays. It is something we should do every day. Spend time today asking the Lord to perform maintenance on your heart focusing on these 7 areas in this devotional. Journal your thoughts.

Day 20, January 27, 2024 – Jesus Loves Me

1 John 4:19, “We love him, because he first loved us.”

Yes, God loves YOU just the way you are. Every person has a desire to be loved and the enemy does not want you to know that God loves you. The devil has deceived so many people into thinking that God could not possibly love them. The truth is you are loved and special to your Heavenly Father.

During this time of fasting and consecration, ask the Lord to fill your heart with His love. As you ask Him, decide to open your heart, and receive His love. He loved us first when we were yet in sin. He loved us first when we were still disobedient and stubborn. Because He loved us when we were “unlovely”, it should be easy for us to love Him.

Certainly, a Perfect Father will take care of His children. Seeing that we have a Father in the heavens that has His eye on the sparrow, we should walk in confidence knowing that no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper. When this kind of truth is known and accepted it makes our Christian journey much more tolerable.

We should sing with joy and with a loud voice:

Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me for the Bible tells me so!

Questions for you to consider:

1. Do you believe there is anything you can do for God not to love you?
2. Can you think of one person who has loved you with real love at some point in your life?
3. What kind of impact did that real “no-strings-attached” kind of love have on you?

Activating the Word:

Ask the Lord to speak to you regarding His love towards you. Ask Him to guide you as you write a love letter from Him to you. Write down the things God speaks to your heart about His love for you. Make your love letter personal by writing the letter to yourself from the Lord.

Day 21, January 28, 2024 – “What’s Next”

Luke 4:1-2, 14-15 NIV, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days He was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them He was hungry... Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him.”

Fasting and prayer are essential to receiving a clear vision for God’s calling and assignment for our lives. Usually at the end of a time of fasting and prayer, a person becomes aware of instructions from the Lord and confident in what He has spoken. We have spent 21 days seeking the Lord through fasting and prayer, we believe God has revealed to you the answer to the question – What’s Next. Follow in obedience to what He said, do not worry about the details. The Holy Spirit will reveal to you on a need-to-know basis all that is required for you to accomplish your assignment. Follow Him with your whole heart and decide that you will not turn around but will continue to follow the Lord every day of your life.

The Holy Spirit will empower you and give you the ability to accomplish His plans and His purposes for your life. Do not get ahead of Him, follow Him wherever He leads. When we are full of the Holy Spirit, we are led by the Spirit. We must always remember: it is He that does the work within us. Without Him, we can do nothing.

Matthew 20:25-28, “But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Everything that God created was created to give. We have been gifted by God to serve. The above scripture was spoken by Jesus because two of his disciples wanted to occupy a high position in His Kingdom. His response to them speaks volumes to us today concerning God’s attitude and position related to serving others. The greatest of us in God’s eyes are those who are the greatest servers. You do not have to have the gift of service in order to serve great. We have all been gifted to serve.

4 Things to Remember:

1. Find your purpose. Your purpose is the reason you were born. Your purpose lines up with your passion. You are the answer to a problem in the earth. Ask the Lord to reveal to you your purpose.
2. Become a servant to your gift. Master your gift and be the best you can be at it. The more we activate our gift through serving, the more we become effective in our serving. Our service includes our local church but is not limited to the four walls of the local church. Serve for the Glory of God and the advancement of the Kingdom!
3. Invest in your spiritual growth and development. Regularly attend Sunday morning service, Wednesday night Bible Study. Take notes and review your notes throughout the week. **STUDY THE WORD.**
4. Connect with people who can encourage, empower, and equip you. Seek out a mentor/coach, someone who can impart wisdom into your life and hold you accountable.

CONGRATULATIONS! You completed our 2024 Corporate New Year Fast! Even though the 21 days of corporate prayer and fasting are complete, we encourage you to continue to seek the Lord's guidance and wisdom. Continue to silence distractions so you can clearly hear His voice.