

# Fourteen Days of Prayer and Fasting at CCF

*December 31, 2023 – January 14, 2024*

The CCF Leadership are asking the congregation to join them in prayer and fasting the first 2 weeks of the new year. This will start on New Year's Eve and conclude on Sunday, January 14, 2024.

## **WHY FASTING?**

As believers, our goal in life is to glorify the Lord and enjoy His presence. This simply does not happen without surrendering ourselves, silencing our flesh, and drawing near to Him in practical and challenging ways. Fasting is one of those tried-and-true practical steps.

In fasting, we abstain in some significant way from food and possibly drink. This quickly brings to the surface all the ways we use food to satisfy our emotional needs. A lot of our daily sense of peace and well-being can come from the pleasures of eating. As a regular discipline, fasting is a great way to train ourselves to rely on God first.

When we fast, we experience bodily our utter dependence upon God by finding in Him our true source of sustenance. Fasting teaches both our minds and our bodies that God's word to us is a life-sustaining reality, and that "man does not live on bread alone, but also the words that proceed from the mouth of God" ([Matt. 4:4.](#))

Most of the time when we think about collective prayer and fasting, the question quickly arises, "What answers to prayer are we fasting for?" It's true that most mentions of fasting in the Bible are connected with seeking God for answers to specific prayers: ([Ezra 8:21-23](#); [Jonah 3:10](#); [Acts 14:23](#)).

Seeking specific answers to prayer can and should come with fasting. But, it is an oversimplification to say that fasting is simply a way to show God that we are serious. For devout Jews in the Old Testament, for those seeking the Lord at the time of Jesus and for those in the early church, fasting was a regular practice, regardless of prayer objectives ([Lev. 23:27,32](#); [Is. 58](#); [Mark 2:18-20](#); [Luke 5:33](#)).

When teaching His disciples about fasting, Jesus didn't say "IF" you fast, He said "WHEN" you fast. Even though Jesus did not leave us a handy chart on how to fast, it is clear that Jesus assumes that his followers will fast at times ([Matthew 6:16](#), [Luke 5:35](#)).

So, there will be 2 major results from our choosing to fast together the first 2 weeks of the year. It will bring both a deeper dependence on God and also empowered prayer in the church body.

## HOW TO FAST

During this time there is no expectation that all of CCF go without food for 2 weeks. How you fast is between you and the Lord. Though not a complete list of methods, here are a few suggestions:

- **Periodic Fasting:** fast 1 day a week for the first 2 weeks of January
- **A Short Fast:** fast 1-3 days during those 2 weeks.
- **Sunset Fast:** Fasting food from sunrise to sunset (practiced in the early church until the 1700s in the west. Twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays.)
- **Partial Fast (a.k.a Daniel Fast):** Fasting from certain types of food like meat, dairy, or sugar. This is most effective if it involves fasting from something you like to eat.
- **A Non-Food Fast (abstinence):** While technically not a “fast“, giving up something other than food can certainly have a similar effect. Giving up screen-time, a hobby like Golf or Sudoku, or even physical intimacy with your spouse ([1 Cor. 7:5](#)) are good examples of abstinence.

## HOW TO PRAY WHILE YOU FAST

Besides deeper intimacy with God, what are we seeking God for during this time? Here is a short list of the major prayer points we're seeking God for during this time as a church body.

<b>Deeper dependance on the Lord, with Joy!</b>	<b>Revival at CCF and other churches and ministries in our region</b>
<b>For the Love of Jesus to flow through us individually and as a church</b>	<b>Victory over the works of the enemy</b>

### Some Good Resources on Fasting:

#### Dallas Willard Article on

**Fasting:** [http://storage.cloversites.com/doxology/documents/Fasting%20\(Dallas%20Willard\).pdf](http://storage.cloversites.com/doxology/documents/Fasting%20(Dallas%20Willard).pdf)

#### Chapter on Fasting from Celebration of Discipline by Richard J.

**Foster:** <https://storage.snappages.site/JHWKS7/assets/files/Richard-Foster-on-Fasting-Celebration-of-8.pdf>

**Fasting Basics by Jentezen Franklin:** <https://jentezenfranklin.org/fastingbasics>

#### Fasting as a Spiritual Discipline – by Focus on the

**Family:** <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/live-it-post/fasting-as-a-spiritual-discipline/>