

**PRAY UNTIL
SOMETHING
HAPPENS**



**GRACE CHURCH
PRAYER & FASTING 2025**

P.U.S.H.

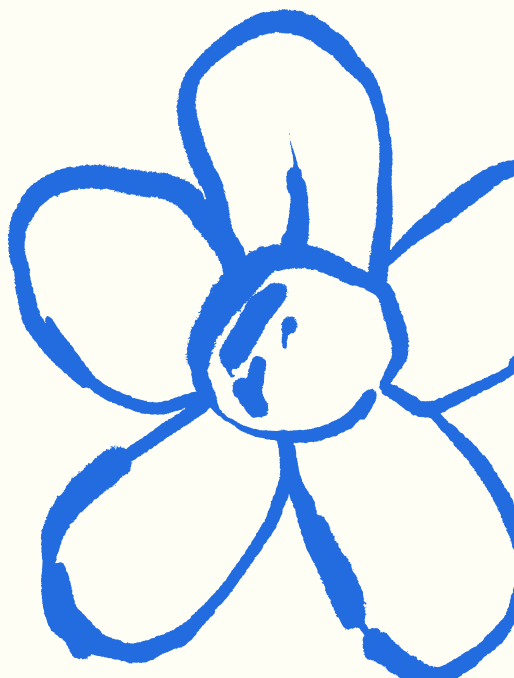
**Online gathering at 7:30pm
January 13-16 (Mon to Thurs)**

**In-person gathering at 7:30pm
January 17 (Fri)**



“Therefore I tell you,
whatever you **ask** for
in prayer, **believe** that
you have received it,
and it will be yours.”

MARK 11:24



WHAT IS PRAYER?



HEBREWS 4:16

“So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will be treated with undeserved kindness, and we will find help.”

ACTS is a simple, but powerful way to pray. The origin of this prayer model is unknown, yet it is used today frequently. The model helps us remember the steps of prayer, and acts as a guide to opening up our conversation with God. That’s what prayer is, after all!

If you’re new to prayer, this method might help you feel more comfortable talking with God freely and resting in silence with Him.

Adoration

Praising God for who He is and what He has done.

Confession

Saying sorry for the hurt we’ve caused God and others.

Thanksgiving

Thanking God for all He has done for us.

Supplication

Asking God to grant us what we need.

WHAT IS FASTING?



Fasting is a spiritual discipline that is taught in the Bible.

It is an outward expression of an inward commitment to take our eyes off the things of this world and pursue our God who is abounding in love. As Jesus Himself fasted, He expects His followers to do the same.

Self-Emptying and Seeking God

The Bible usually refers to fasting as the voluntary reduction or elimination of food intake for a specific time and purpose. We do this to bring the flesh under control, express our desire for God, and seek His will in our lives.

JOEL 2:12-13

12 “Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” 13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

WHY DO WE FAST?



1. Fasting gives you more time for prayer.

You can use the time you'd normally spend eating in praying for what God wants to do among us. In the Bible, fasting is always connected with prayer.

2. Fasting demonstrates the depth of your desire when praying for something.

It shows you mean business with God—you are serious enough about your prayer request to pay a personal price. God honors deep desire and praying in faith. *See verses Joel 1:14 and Joel 2:12.*

3. Fasting releases God's supernatural power.

It is a tool we can use when there is opposition to God's will. Satan would like nothing better than to cause division, discouragement, defeat, depression, and doubt among us. God has always used united prayer and fasting to deal a decisive blow to the enemy! *See verses Ezra 8:23 and Isaiah 58:6.*

4. Fasting helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.

Fasting is setting a believer's priorities by expressing to themselves an undivided and intense devotion to the Lord and the concerns of spiritual life. Fasting is about changing yourself to be in agreement with God's plan and to be prepared to carry out your role in His plan.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF FAST?



Full fast

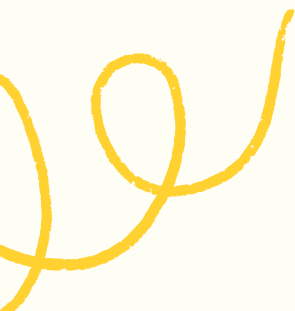
Refraining from eating all food and drinking only liquid beverages.

Acts 9:9 describes that Paul went on a full fast for three days following his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus: “For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.”

Partial fast

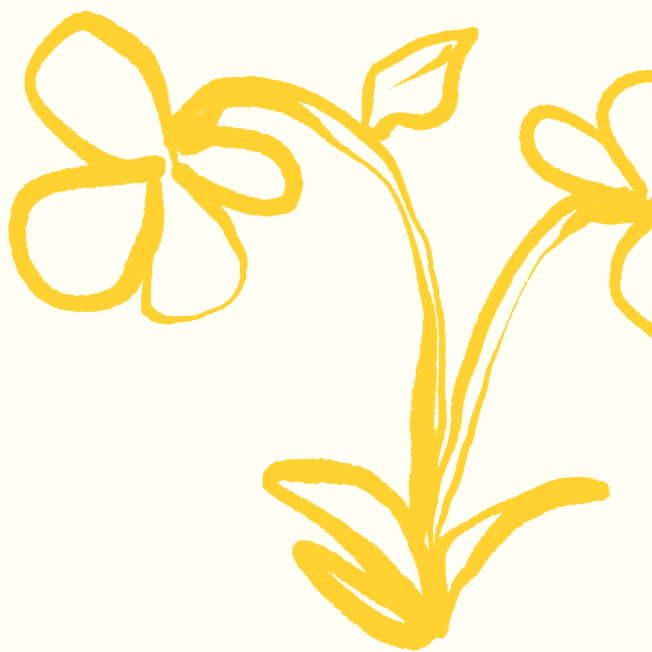
Omitting a specific meal from your diet like consuming only one or two meals a day or certain types of foods.

Daniel 1:12 says that Daniel and other believers restricted their diet to vegetables and water: “Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink.”



DAILY DEVOTIONS

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” —Matthew 6:33



DAILY DEVOTION / DAY ONE



EPHESIANS 5:8-10

8 “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10 and find out what pleases the Lord.”

The greatest freedom any of us can ever possess is when we finally decide to seek to please God above anyone else.

Some of us are people pleasers, living our lives for the approval of others, while others of us live by the mantra, “Whatever makes me happy.” Both of these philosophies are contrary to God’s Word, and will rob us of the fulfillment that comes from living for God alone.

Letting the expectations and opinions of other people drive us will leave us exhausted, frustrated, and often brokenhearted. It is like scattering our energy to the wind because it is impossible to please everyone all of the time.

When we live under this self-imposed pressure, life can be like a roller coaster of emotions. When the people we are trying to please are happy, we are happy. When they are unhappy, we are unhappy. This is not the life that God intends for us to live.

Living only to please ourselves will undoubtedly leave us feeling **unfulfilled and empty**.

Inside of each of us is a deep longing for more. That “more” is God. Because He created us in His image, we all desire to know our Creator.

The problem is that sin has marred this image of God in each of us, leaving us searching frantically for something to worship other than Him. We can try and try to cure the ache ourselves, filling the deep sin-hole with almost anything...but it will never work. We were not created to worship ourselves.

Only God will never drive us to be what we are not. He will never ask us to perform to gain His favor or acceptance or love. He will never ask us to go anywhere other than Him for purpose or fulfillment. He doesn't look at our appearance or achievements. He looks at our hearts.

Freedom in Christ means letting go of everything and everyone except for Jesus.



This does not mean we will no longer love and serve others. It does not mean we will hate ourselves or have low self-esteem. The opposite is true. When we seek to please God, not only will our lives be better, but the lives of those we love will be better as well.

The more we love Jesus, the more we will love others. And wholehearted devotion to Christ will satisfy us more than all of the treasures and pleasures of this world ever could.

REFLECTION



1

How can I shift from pleasing others and myself to pleasing God?

2

When I falter and revert to pleasing others as well as myself, how can I refocus my efforts on pleasing God once more?

DAILY DEVOTION / DAY TWO



1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-7

1 You know, brothers, that our visit to you was not a failure.

2 We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.

4 On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed — God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else. As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, 7 but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.

Whom are you trying to please: other people or God?

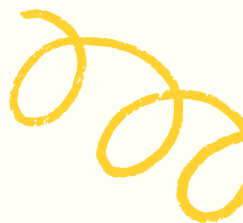
In their commentary on 1 Thessalonians, John F. Walvoord and Mark Hitchcock wrote: “The most basic test of any service rendered for God is the question, ‘Is it pleasing to Him?’”

Our little houses of self-praise and self-gratification tumble in a moment when we stop to consider, ‘What does God think about it?’

Paul was energized and propelled by a burning desire to please God. Certainly, this is a standard to challenge every thoughtful Christian.”

When he preached the gospel in Thessalonica, Paul was not trying to win human approval or admiration:

“You know how we lived among you for your sake.” –1 Thessalonians 1:5



He'd arrived after an unjust imprisonment and miraculous liberation in Philippi, and despite opposition in Thessalonica as well he'd continued faithfully proclaiming the gospel.^a

The paramount motivation of Paul and his team was to please God alone.^b Based on this governing purpose, they didn't preach falsehoods with impure motives nor did they use deceptive rhetoric or techniques.^c They were not greedy for monetary gain; they did not flatter their listeners or seek to inflate their own egos.^d Then as now, the integrity of the preacher goes hand-in-glove with the message!

Instead, Paul and his fellow missionaries viewed their calling as from the Lord. They'd been entrusted with the gospel. None of this was about them! Ultimately their work and motivations would be approved by God.

Rather than exercise Paul's legitimate apostolic authority to ask for financial support, they “were like young children among you,” that is, they took a low social position in obedience to Christ. God Himself could witness to the veracity of these claims.^e

It can be easy to fall into the trap of seeking to please people. What would the Lord find if He examined your heart in this area today?

a. 1 Thessalonians 2:1–2; Acts 16:16–17:9) b. 1 Thessalonians 2:4 c. 1 Thessalonians 2:3
d. 1 Thessalonians 2:5–6 e. 1 Thessalonians 2:7

REFLECTION



1

What is one change you could do to make your life more pleasing to God?

2

How is my service to God pleasing Him?

DAILY DEVOTION / DAY THREE



1 THESSALONIANS 2:4

“Our purpose is to please God, not people.
He alone examines the motives of our hearts.”

God did not make you to be what somebody else wants you to be. God didn't make you to be what your parents want you to be, what your girlfriend or boyfriend wants you to be, what your spouse wants you to be, or what your boss or your friends want you to be.

God made you to be you. If you're going to become all you can be, you have to refuse to be defined by others.

Hebrews 11:24 says, “By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.”

Moses had an identity crisis. He was born a Hebrew slave but raised as Egyptian royalty, the grandson of Pharaoh. When he grew up, he faced two options: He could pretend to be Pharaoh's grandson for the rest of his life and live a life of luxury and fame and power. Or he could admit who he really was: a Jew.

If he admitted who he really was, his family would kick him out to live with slaves for the rest of his life. He would be disgraced and humiliated and live a life of pain and drudgery.

Which would you choose?

Most people today are living lies. They're trying to be people they're not. But Moses refused to live a lie because he was a man of integrity. He insisted on being who God made him to be despite all kinds of peer pressure.

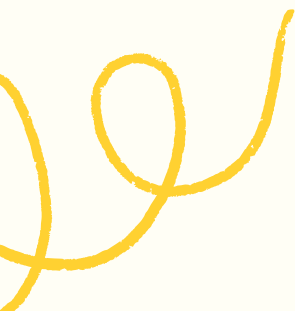
Here's a question for you: **Who are you letting determine your identity?**

Is it your friends and family? Maybe you have parents who died years ago, but you're still trying to live up to their vision for your life. Perhaps you are hanging on to what others once said to you, and you're trying to prove them wrong. Or maybe you are trying to keep up with what social media and culture and the competition all say you should be.

But the Bible says this: "Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts" (1 Thessalonians 2:4 NLT).

The first resolution you need to make is this: "I resolve that I will no longer let other people press me into their mold. I'm going to be what God wants me to be. I'm going to do what God wants me to do, and I'm going to fulfill the plan that God has for my life, not somebody else's plan for my life."

Friend, that is real success. Real success in life is being exactly who you were created to be and nothing more.



REFLECTION



1

Who or what is attempting to shape your identity by pressuring you to be someone or something you are not?

2

Spend some time writing down who you are in Jesus Christ. How does He define your identity?

3

How can you discover exactly who God made you to be?

DAILY DEVOTION / DAY FOUR



HEBREWS 11:6

You can never please God without faith, without depending on him. Anyone who wants to come to God must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely look for him.

Faith pleases God more than anything else.

The Christian life is dependent upon faith. We stand on faith; we live on faith. Faith is loved and honored by God more than any other single thing.

The Bible teaches that faith is the only approach that we have to God. No man has sins forgiven, no man goes to heaven, no man has assurance of peace and happiness, until he has faith in Jesus Christ.

You may be saying, “God, I believe you are a great person, but I do not believe your Word; I do not believe what you say.” In order to please God, you must believe Him. Perhaps your faith is small and weak.

It does not matter how big your faith is, but rather, where your faith is. Is it in Christ, the Son of God, who died on the cross for your sins?

REFLECTION



1

Do I really have faith in Jesus Christ?

2

Faith needs proof. What is the proof of my faith in Christ?

DAILY DEVOTION / DAY FIVE



PSALM 147:11

The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
in those who hope in His mercy.

What does it mean to **fear the Lord**?

It's not that God delights in having us be terrified of Him. Psalm 147:3 describes God as the One who “heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

The passage praises His mercy, His knowledge (He knows the names of all the stars!) and His power to save the humble.^a

The Bible tells us to fear God, not because it is good for Him, but because it is good for us to accurately recognize that He is more powerful than anything else. Acknowledging this shows our deep respect for Him.

The proper fear and respect of God will motivate us to avoid sin.^b It reminds us that God will hold us accountable for our actions.

Fearing God allows us to rely on Him and revere Him—which can deepen our love for the All-Powerful God who cares enough to stoop down and deliver a puny little human like me!

a. Psalm 147:4-6 b. Exodus 20:20

REFLECTION



1

How can I start fearing God?

2

What are the things that distract me from fearing God and pleasing Him?



**“We exist to raise and send leaders who will
plant, direct, share, nurture, and teach others
until everyone matures in Jesus.”**

Grace Church’s Mission

Devotional resources

Pleasing God by Dr. James Merritt

www.touchinglives.org

Pleasing God Alone by Brad Baurain

www.todayintheword.org

Focus on Pleasing God, Not People by Pastor Rick Warren

www.pastorrick.com

Faith Pleases God by Billy Graham

www.billygraham.org

How to Please God by Mike Bennett

www.lifehopeandtruth.com

ACTS Prayer model by Joe Fredrickson

www.hallow.com

ACTS Prayer by Christina Van Starckenburg

kidscorner.net


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