

FASTING

Thanks for taking the time to read this guide! For the next 21 days, we will be taking some time apart to pray and fast together. For over a thousand years, fasting has been one of the central practices of the Way of Jesus. It was common for apprentices of Jesus to fast twice a week until sundown—on Wednesdays and Fridays. Fasting was simply one of the things that practicing Christians did. It's not about legalism or ritualism. It's about us, as believers, growing more like Jesus, going deeper in our faith, and being able to stand together in agreement as we are led by the Lord.

By taking up our cross daily, we lay down the heavy things of this world that distract us, and we pick up what God has truly called us to. We follow wherever He leads. Dying to ourselves and carrying our cross to follow Jesus is often easier said than done. It's all too easy to fall into the trap of distraction day by day. Whether it's work, school, children, stress, social media, finances, relationship struggles, or unexpected problems and delays that arise—it can all feel overwhelming and drain both our time and energy. With each distraction, it's easy to slip into “autopilot” in our relationship with God. But God never intended for us to have a passive or neutral relationship with Him.

From time to time, in our walk with Christ, it helps to press pause on our daily routines and hit the refresh button on our spiritual lives. One of the best ways to reset and renew our relationship with God is to set aside intentional time for fasting and prayer. Fasting isn't a “quick-fix crash diet.” It's a spiritual discipline designed to help us shift our focus away from something (like food, social media, or TV) and redirect our time, attention, and hearts fully to Jesus.

When we fast, we put aside distractions—even essential things like food—in order to stir up a deeper hunger for the Lord. Some signs that it may be time to fast and pray include feeling weighed down, being stuck

in a pattern of sin, feeling oppressed by the enemy, seeking God's direction or answers, or simply needing spiritual renewal. Fasting often reveals the raw state of our hearts. The goal of fasting is not to lose something, but to gain something—a deeper, more intimate relationship with God.

There are different ways to fast. The most common is fasting from food, but there are many approaches. We have a church App and a page on our website with detailed information about different fasting practices. Feel free to adapt or combine them in a way that fits your context. In the end, the most important thing is to ask the Lord what kind of fast He is leading you into. It's not about success or failure—it's about drawing closer to God, laying your daily needs on the altar, and declaring with your life that He is more important than anything else.

Over these next 21 days, we will pray together through the daily devotionals. Then we will break the fast together at the church table! I hope you have a wonderful time seeking the Lord.

Day 1 (02/01)

PRAYER POINT: POSITIONING OUR HEART

Matthew 5:6 (ESV) *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied”.*

It's so important we start with the right attitude to a fast.

As mentioned on the introduction video and on our website, this isn't about getting answers or divine revelation. This is about seeking the Lord.

We need to adjust our mindsets and focus our hearts.

Are we content ending this fast having just spend 21 days seeking Him and being filled by Him? If not, why not? This is a great time to answer that question for yourself. And if you have a “why not” to tell God yourself. Letting Him be your sustainer, your fulfilment and being satisfied by Him.

It's also important that we set ourselves open to hear and to align our hearts to His. This is why, during the fast, we set aside anything that interferes with that. Whether it's people, inputs, content, discussions or books.

The verse for this year is about those who hunger and thirst for righteousness or righteousness's sake. For the Lord. It's a moment to put the saying “do we have a heart for the Lord?” to the test. If we really do, we will be willing to lay things down for Him, to sacrifice things for 21 days, for Him. To be inconvenienced, so that we can spend more time with Him.

Let us pray: Lord, I pray that You would change my heart and that during this fast I may be able to hear You and be filled with Your presence. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 2 (03/01)

PRAYER POINT: PURPOSE

Fasting without prayer and purpose is just going hungry. We need purpose and prayer for a fast to be worth it.

Like with the fast of Daniel, he was waiting on an answer to a prayer request. Also, David mourned and fasted for his dying child. When your fast's purpose is accomplished then you can break your fast. So having a purpose is part of this need to keep the fast going. It gives motivation but also perspective.

We have a general purpose. 21 days to seek the Lord. But there's also the vision to get input and leading for the coming year as well as the many topics listed in this very devotional.

You may well have your own needs, desires and purposes for the fast. Maybe you're in need of breakthrough, maybe you want vision or direction for the season to come. Whatever's on your heart. Take some time today to write it all down.

Now comes the most important part. As I said yesterday, don't let these purposes become an idol for the fast. We are seeking the Lord's face and its from this place of connection that we bring our petitions. But then we leave them there. We can come back to them throughout.

But the core point from this time: What God wants to talk about and deal with is far more important and timely and needed than anything we can bring.

So we can have our needs and purposes. But His purpose for the fast is most important. So let's take some time to ask for His

purpose for the fast to be revealed. His agenda to be brought forward.

Let us pray: Lord, I pray that Your purpose would be fulfilled in my life. I ask that You help me open my heart to understand You more deeply, to receive Your vision for my life, and to make myself fully available to You in this year. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 3 (04/01)

PRAYER POINT: FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness can be one of the hardest things we will ever have to do, especially if we do not receive an apology for an offense or wrongdoing against us. However, we cannot walk in full wholeness if we are carrying around bitterness or unforgiveness within us, even if it is justifiable by the world's standards. When we carry unforgiveness within us, we are hurting ourselves more than we are ever hurting anyone else.

Jesus said in **Matthew 6:14-15** *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

This may seem like a rather bold statement, that our forgiveness is tied to how we forgive, but the truth of the matter is, we were forgiven before Jesus ever received an apology.

Romans 5:8 *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

In comparison, the way we forgive others is minimal compared to how we have been forgiven.

Today, make the bold decision to release those who have offended and wronged you, whether they ever have or ever will apologize. Forgiveness does not deny consequences, but it means

we give our right for justice to God.

But this does mean you get to walk a little lighter today! When we forgive, the enemy loses!

Let us pray: God, I thank You that You forgave me for everything I have ever done or will ever do long before I ever even thought to apologize and repent. Today I choose to reflect Your love by releasing and forgiving [name person or people]. I set them free as an act of my will from any unresolved issues or bitterness, and I choose to show them an abundance of grace as I have been shown an abundance of grace by You. I choose to bless them and ask that Your hand would cover them everywhere they go. I ask for discernment when it comes to the future of our relationship with one another. I thank You that this weight of unforgiveness has been lifted off my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 4 (05/01)

PRAYER POINT: TRUSTING IN THE LORD

Proverbs 3:5-8 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.*

There are moments when life looks uncertain, when we don't get the answers we want, when we don't know which direction to go. It's tempting to lean on your own wisdom, experiences, and reasoning to make decisions that would make our lives easier and more comfortable. But often because we try to do things our way, we exchange God's plans for personal short-term solutions that give us the feeling like we have control.

However, God invites us to do something much greater, surrendering the parts we like to keep in our control and to trust Him fully.

Trusting the Lord means placing our faith not in what we see, but in who He is. He is faithful in every circumstance of our lives and is wise and loving to help us confront the doubt and situations we experience.

When we lean on Him instead of ourselves, we can be sure that He'll guide us in the right direction. This isn't necessarily the easiest road, but it is the right one.

Choosing to trust in Him protects us from other paths that lead us into sin. Walking with Him affects our well-being and brings us peace that strengthens us inside and outside.

Reflection: Where am I tempted to rely on my own understanding instead of trusting God? What would it look like for me to submit my plans to Him today?

Let us pray: Lord, teach me to trust You with all my heart. Help me to surrender my worries, my plans, and my need for control into Your hands. Help me to lean on Your wisdom instead of my own understanding. Guide me, keep me close to You and let my life bring glory to Your name. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 5 (06/01)

PRAYER POINT: YOUR LOCAL CITY & NATION

Jeremiah 29:7 *But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.*

1 Timothy 2:1–2 *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.*

Scripture tells us we should pray for our local leaders. In Jeremiah we have this idea as believers we should plant ourselves where we are sent and become part of society. Those around us and the places we reside are blessed by our presence.

Therefore, we should pray for the places we live. Pray for its local leadership. Pray for the people who live there. Praying for open doors to be able to share the gospel with our neighbours, those in our street, work etc. But also, for Belgium. For its government, despite all its flaws.

We should pray for their success and that they would meet God but also be able to do their jobs well. As Christians we are not seeking to take over society. We are praying for it. Praying for our light to shine in its midst.

With this mindset, let's take some time and begin with your local area. Praying for the people around us. For open doors to connect and build relationships. Then moving to our local neighbourhood/borough/village/town for its leadership and workers. And then our province for its leadership and finally for our country and the government.

Then finally for ourselves. Let's pray we can be these citizens who seek to be a blessing and a light in our area. That God will open our hearts for those around us and give us an increased desire to see the people reached and changed.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, I pray that You would open doors of blessing where we can proclaim Your Word in Hoboken and be a light in the darkness. We desire to rise up in Your holy name and to raise the banner of victory over Antwerp. I pray that You would bless the entire nation of Belgium and protect it from every plan of the evil one. I also ask that You give me courage to go and boldly declare Your Word wherever it needs to be proclaimed. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 6 (07/01)

PRAYER POINT: GOD'S STRENGTH IN DIFFICULT TIMES

As Christians, we are confronted with all kinds of struggles. These can be both physical and mental. Think of situations where we are under pressure, feel discouraged, or are involved in a battle. This can have to do with our finances, health, family, marriage, or friendships—you name it.

Whatever the circumstances, we may know that God never lets us go. Perhaps you've just gone through a heavy storm, or you are right in the middle of one. Yet the Word of God says that we are not alone. He carries us through it.

Let us be encouraged by God's strength. In difficult moments, it is not our own strength that keeps us going, but the power of God that surpasses all. It even says the all-surpassing power of God.

As Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 4:7-9** *But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;*

These verses remind us that we may be broken and vulnerable like jars of clay, but that we carry a precious treasure with us: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Whatever happens, God does not abandon us. We may be under pressure, in doubt, persecuted, or struck down, but we are not destroyed.

We are called to stand firm, exactly as Paul describes. Because it is precisely in our weakness that God's power becomes visible.

God has entrusted us with this treasure—His love, His gospel, His grace and forgiveness—so that we may continue to pass it on to others. When we persevere and hold on to hope in difficult times, it becomes a powerful testimony. Not because we are strong, but because God's strength becomes visible in our lives.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, help us not to focus on our circumstances or the struggles we experience in the storms of life, but on You. Grant that, especially in difficult times, we may realize that we are not alone, that You help us through. Let Your power be made visible in our weakness so that our faith may be a testimony to others.

I also want to pray for all our brothers and sisters worldwide who are being persecuted for their faith in You, Jesus Christ. Be with them in their suffering and let them experience Your nearness. Let their struggle not be in vain but bear fruit to the glory of Your Name.

Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, as it is written in Hebrews 12:1, so that all honor and glory may be given to You, Lord Jesus. Not by our strength, but by Your strength and all-surpassing power of God. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 7 (08/01)

PRAYER POINT: DISTRACTION

During a fasting time, it's easy for every other to do list to come out because we want to be busy. It's easy to fill our time with other placeholder activities. These moments are where we crave distractions. Especially if we are not used to being bored or doing nothing.

Today let's take a moment to just be still for 10min. Sit and just be. Take a couple of minutes to let all your thoughts settle and if needed, take a pen and paper and write down everything which comes to mind so you can come back to it.

Then once your settled give yourself 10min to just focus on God. Give Him space to speak and invite Him to speak.

And then as far as possible, seek to keep yourself still and give space for Him to speak. Maybe some new ideas and thoughts and dreams or visions happen. It's good to note them down. But whatever comes up which distracts or leads you off, bring it to Him.

Another option which I personally like to do is take a walk in a quiet location. I put headphones on with no music to ensure I don't hear the cars and other noises around, but if it's somewhere more scenic and quieter with nature, that's not needed.

Being thankful for nature and the things I see is a great way to focus my mind.

It's important to remember that the goal of this isn't to have some divine revelation which changes everything, nor is it to write a to-do list. It's to spend time with our maker and give him space to

speak. To eliminate the distractions which so easily take hold of us.

Let us pray: Jesus help me to set aside the worldly distraction in this fast. If there is anything else which I haven't set aside and should, please reveal it to me and help me to do so. Amen.

Day 8 (9/01)

PRAYER POINT: INTIMIDATION

One of the usual side effects of fasting is Spiritual warfare. The enemy hates it when we put God first and when we be like Jesus in denying the flesh. So he comes in whatever way he can to distract, intimidate and disrupt our focus. All he needs is our focus to shift away from God and onto anything else.

Intimidation comes in many forms. But its goal is always the same and often it comes in ways which force us to deal with things or try to captivate our headspace. A good example would be like a family emergency or a pest in the house (mice or moths). Therefore, in this times, we must come up with ways to refocus. We may not be able to stop these distractions, but as we know our God isn't going to let them go to waste. As it says in Romans God will work out all things for good for those who love him. So let's bring any of these intimidations and issues to him and see how we can walk with Him through them and what we can learn through them.

Let us pray: Father, we thank you that you're a good father and you have the best for us. We bring all intimidation, distractions and warfare to you this fast and ask that you will walk closely with us through it and help me and remind me when I get distracted or intimidated not to lose sight of you and to refocus and draw near. In Jesus name Amen.

Day 9 (10/01)

PRAYER POINT: BREAKING GENERATIONAL CURSES

It doesn't take us very long in life to learn that our choices have consequences, but something we may not be as aware of is that our choices can also affect others for generations to come.

A generational curse is a negative lifestyle pattern or sin that we see in generation after generation.

The Bible talks about negative lifestyle patterns or sin patterns being passed down from one generation to another multiple times, especially in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 30:19 says, *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life, that you and your offspring may live."*

Thanks to the finished work of Jesus on the cross, we have the authority to choose that generational curses and bondage stop with us. We have been given the authority to set up a new pattern, one of generational blessings, for the generations to come. Take a few minutes today and ask God to reveal any generational curses that need to be severed in your family line.

Let's choose life today for ourselves and generations to come!

Let us pray: Jesus, I thank You that by Your finished work on the cross, my family and I have the authority to choose life. I break, loose, and renounce myself from all curses and bondages, whether physical, mental or spiritual, in the name of Jesus.

I declare life over myself, my family, and generations to come that the negative lifestyle patterns and sin patterns stop here. I pray that only blessings would be passed down, generation after generation. The enemy has no place in my family line any longer. I thank You for this freedom, Lord. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 10 (11/01)

PRAYER POINT: IDENTITY

Each day we have a lot of voices speaking into our lives.

If we don't learn how to use our discernment, we can begin to allow the wrong voices to shape our identity. The truest form of our identity begins and ends in Jesus.

In a time of fasting, when we are weak, frustrated or tired, its easy to give more weight to the things we hear. However, from the moment we were created, we were formed in His image, not the image of what our culture suggests we should be. How do we allow the voice of God to be the loudest voice shaping our identity? By diving deeper into His Word, and by getting alone with Jesus in prayer.

Let His words about you be the loudest, most powerful words shaping you. The One who created you is the only One who has a right to define you! Our identity is not defined by our actions, our jobs, what we have done, or what we will do. Our identity is who we are in him. Saints, sons and daughters. Loved. Through obedience to him we are just living out this identity. So it's even more important we know our true identity so we can live it out!

Let us pray: God, I thank You that when my identity is rooted in You, I can be completely secure. I silence the voice of the enemy from speaking to my identity right now, in the name of Jesus. I pray that Your voice would be the loudest and most reassuring voice speaking to me. I pray that any part of my identity that is not rooted in You would be uprooted and removed. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 11 (12/01)

PRAYER POINT: PERSEVERANCE

Life can sometimes feel like a long, heavy march.

Recently, I watched a military competition where participants carried massive packs without knowing how long the challenge would last. Many wanted to give up. But those who discovered they had more strength inside than they thought finished stronger than they imagined.

Our lives have moments like that too—pressures at work, in our families, with finances, or health. Sometimes, we can't see the end, and our faith starts to falter.

Job understood this. After losing everything, he said in **Job 1:21** *And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."*

And Jesus, in Gethsemane, prayed in **Luke 22:42** *"Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."*

Both show us that perseverance doesn't mean pretending things are easy. It means trusting God even when it's hard.

Paul writes in **Romans 5:3–5** *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

So, if you feel weighed down, remember: God has not abandoned you. His Spirit is with you. Keep moving forward, even if your steps are small. Knowing that we have the grace of our heavenly Father, that we are in Christ through faith in Jesus, and that the Holy Spirit is by our side—this gives us the strength to endure. But we must continue to seek Him in the midst of our struggles.

Let us pray: Lord, thank You that we can endure through Your strength. Help us to hold fast to hope, knowing that You are faithful to Your promises. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 12 (13/01)

PRAYER POINT: KINGDOM UNITY IN ADVERSITY

Since the pandemic, much has changed—and not all for the good. Division has grown in our world, our communities, and even our churches and families. It's not hidden; just look at the news or at the people near you. There is real pain, unrest, and discord.

Yet this shaking is also birthing both rebellion and revival. God is using this season to purify His Church. The middle ground is shrinking; there is no room for being neutral or lukewarm. A line is being drawn between those who love Him and those who reject Him—because light and darkness do not mix, just as oil and water cannot. **Luke 11:23** *Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*

We are called to live in the world but not be of it. This is not the time to hide or compromise out of fear. Jesus challenges us to take up our cross and truly follow Him—not with arrogance, but with courageous loyalty and love. **Matthew 10:16** *“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”*

Nothing in this world can compare to the salvation Jesus has given us. We need divine wisdom and discernment so that the Word of God remains the only truth, above every ideology, tradition, or movement—otherwise even good things can become idolatry. He is calling us up higher, to know Him fully in all His facets—the Lamb and the Lion, the Prince of Peace and the Divider, the Alpha and the Omega. His desire is that we be closely interwoven with Him and with one another, like vine and branches, leaving no room for the enemy's schemes.

Jesus prayed in **John 17:22–23** *The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*

True wisdom, understanding, and discernment come from Him. Staying close to Him gives us the clarity and courage to choose well, stay obedient, and walk in unity with His people.

Let us pray: Lord, forgive us for the times we have compromised or grown fearful. Strengthen us to stand firm in all of Who You are. Keep us united in faith and close to You. Open our eyes to the enemy's schemes. Make us people who build bridges and multiply Your love. Give us Your wisdom, discernment, and courage to obey You no matter the cost. Help us to be the head and not the tail, because the One who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world. In Jesus's holy name, Amen.

Day 13 (14/01)

PRAYER POINT: HOLINESS

You may not have expected Holiness to be a topic on a fasting devotional.

Holiness is to be set aside; this happens as we fast. By fasting we make ourselves Holy by setting ourselves apart and this very time is holy for the same reason.

Secondly, holiness is giving space for God to make us more like Him. It's a 2-sided process. But in this time of fasting, it's also a moment when parts of us come out that we may not be most proud of. I'm always reminded of how grouchy I can be in week one of a fast. Each year, I try to be less grouchy, less selfish, and less frustrated.

Thirdly, holiness is also about the pureness and glory and power of God on display. As we draw near to Him, we are fasting that we would reflect that glory more. In the New Testament there are 2 words to describe the power of God: *dunamis* (δύναμις) (inherent ability, might, miracles) and *exousia* (ἐξουσία) (delegated authority, right, jurisdiction). *Dunamis* is this physical power. But *exousia* is this relational power. Holiness is the latter. It's this delegate authority right and jurisdiction given to those who look like God. Fasting is to look more like Jesus, so we grow in the power of God in this moment. It's not a superpower to be wielded. It's a power to bring forth His kingdom. It's a time where we let His kingdom take more ground in us and around us. Where we can see breakthroughs, victory and much more.

Let us pray: Jesus, we pray that this fasting season we would see more of your holiness and power at work in us. That as we look more like you we would see your heart and power at work through us in Jesus name Amen.

Day 14 (15/01)

PRAYER POINT: WRESTLING WITH GOD

Genesis 32: 24-32 *And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.*

In this curious story, Jacob is about to return home to face his brother Esau. But then in the night he is alone and he wrestles with a man. A mere touch on Jacob's hip is enough to make him limp, but he does not give up. He won't stop until the man blesses him. It's the strangest wrestling match in history! The man gives Jacob a new name, Israel: "because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." And he blesses him. By now Jacob realizes that this man is God.

It is okay if we wrestle with God. He won't throw us out of the ring with a flick of his wrist. Even when we wrestle with him, he wants

to bless us.

What do you struggle with today? Do you struggle with distractions during fasting and praying? You are not the only one. Who do you struggle with? With God? You can only struggle with God if you are close to him. And if you are close to him, he can bless you.

What happened after the wrestling? Jacob and Esau got reconciled. Have hope, don't give up, and be blessed today.

Let us pray: God, you are dear to us, you are near to us. Hear our pains, hear our prayers, hear our praise. Embrace us, encourage us, build us up. Your kingdom come. In Jesus' name. Amen

Day 15 (16/01)

PRAYER POINT: LOCAL CHURCH

Today our prayer focus is on your local church and city!

The local church has the unique opportunity to impact your city in a powerful way. Let's set aside some time today to pray for favor, guidance, protection, and blessing for your local church and the city in which God has placed it today. Let's believe together for an abundance of fruit from the seeds that are sown in cities throughout the world through local churches!

Let us pray: Lord, I thank You for the incredible church home that You have placed me in. I thank You for all of the lives that have been changed and all of the lives that will be changed through my church. I ask today that You would give my church favor in this city. I declare this place holy ground, set apart for You and Your purposes. I pray that You would stir the hearts of the people in my city and draw them into the doors of our church. I pray that my church will continue to be a catalyst for change in my city.

I pray that as we seek You first as a church, Jesus, that an overflow of Your Spirit would spill out in our city. I ask that You give us new opportunities to be the hands and feet outside the four walls of our church. I ask for your favor with our city, and for Your guidance, protection, and blessings to cover our church. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 16 (17/01)

PRAYER POINT: UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS / MISSIONS

Part of the mission of Jesus to his disciples was to make disciples to the ends of the earth. Like in the covenants in both Old and New testaments God's heart is always reaching for the whole world. He cares for each person individually and uniquely, and His desire is that none would be lost but that all would find hope, freedom, and salvation through Jesus.

Yet it is easy to become so focused on our own lives and responsibilities that we forget the billions of people who desperately need the hope we carry, a hope found only in Christ. There are millions of believers around the world partnering with us to accomplish this task.

Today, let us pause and take a moment to ask God's to align our hearts with his for the lost and the wider mission going on. Whether the unreached person is sitting one desk away or living across the globe, God is already at work, drawing them to Himself. Our role is to be attentive, willing, and obedient—to slow down, to see, and to respond when God places someone in our path. Aswell as praying for our fellow brothers and sisters also at work all around the world.

Let us boldly believe that every unreached person will encounter the love of Jesus. Especially the groups around the world who havent heard the gospel. Let us pray for softened hearts, divine encounters, and courageous faith—both for those who do not yet

know Him and for believers who are called to reach them. Secondly, this is particularly relevant for us here in Belgium.

Let us pray: God we pray you will embolden and strengthen your church in our nation to stand up and proclaim the gospel to everyone in our land who hasn't heard the good news and also for the many kids who are growing up who also haven't heard about Jesus yet!

Day 17 (18/01)

PRAYER POINT: FREEDOM

The Bible says that when we commit sin, we are a slave to sin.

John 8:35-36 tells us, *“The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”*

The truth is, we have all been slaves to sin, but God is calling all of us higher! Because of Jesus, we are no longer identified as slaves; we are identified as sons and daughters. But it is a process to have the habits of sin worked out of our lives. Sometimes because we have held onto them others because they sit have a root in our life.

Fasting is a great tool as we die to ourselves to let go of unhealthy and unhelpful habits but also to cut any roots out left in us. As we fast this is the time to bring areas of our lives in which we need freedom to Jesus and ask for his help to take steps into freedom in them and to make him Lord of them.

Today we are praying for total freedom in every aspect of our lives!

Let us pray: Lord, I ask you to forgive me for allowing sin to rule me at times. I ask you to release [name known sin specifically] from within me, and anything else that hinders me from walking in true freedom. Today I accept and embrace the gift of total freedom that is only found in You. I thank You that I no longer have to walk in sin and shame because You paved a way for me to boldly walk with You in freedom. From this day forward, I commit to walking the path of freedom that You have set before me. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 18 (19/01)

PRAYER POINT: SALVATION OF LOVED ONES

We all have loved ones, whether they are close or distant, that are far from God.

As we have come to find our own salvation and relationship in and with the Lord, we all have a desire for our lost loved ones to experience the same with Him. God cares about your loved ones more than you ever could and desires a relationship with them more than you will ever desire one for them.

Let's pray and believe today for our loved ones who have yet to come to know Jesus.

Let's take advantage of every opportunity to be a shining light of the love of Jesus in their lives!

Let us pray: Jesus, I thank You for the gift of salvation today. I pray that [list loved [ones by name] would come to know You as their Savior. Stir their hearts and draw them close to You. I pray that You would use me to show them Your love, and that You would bring other believers into their everyday lives to be a light. I pray for protection over them, and that the enemy's voice would be silenced in their ears. I pray that they would have such an overwhelming sense of Your love and presence that it's undeniable. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 19 (20/01)

PRAYER POINT: JOY

I can only imagine you're counting down the days to be able to finish the fast. As we come to the last days let's end well.

But despite how we feel, it's important we know that despite our situations even when fasting there is Joy to be had.

Fasting is tough. It's denying the flesh But as Jesus counted the cross a joy, we too can count fasting a joy. It's something we can learn from Jesus and receive from Him.

Counter to what the world seems to preach, we are not meant to lead sad, depressed lives in which we simply muscle through day to day. God is calling us higher; to live joyfully, despite our circumstances, because our joy is rooted in Him.

This does not mean that we will not encounter valleys, sadness, fear, or grief. What this does mean is that when our strength comes from the Lord, we can still find joy in seasons of the lowest valleys. Because we have hope in Jesus, we have a reason to rejoice, always!

Today we are praying for a renewed joy, despite what our current circumstances may look like!

Let us pray: God, I thank You that my joy is found in You, not my circumstances, my job, my relationships, my finances, my home, or my possessions. I ask that You would breathe fresh life and renewed joy into me. I pray that as I focus in on the joy that is rooted in you that my worries would become silent. I know You hold my tomorrow, and because of that, I can walk in joy. I give you praise for every reason You have given me to be joyful today. IN JESUS' NAME, AMEN

Day 20 (21/01)

PRAYER POINT: NEXT SEASON

With today being the last full day of the fast, let's look forward and pray about what does God want to do in our lives in the next season. What is He up to, lean into God and hear from him.

Throughout church history it has been spoken, implied or accepted that all believers can hear from God for themselves. Each one in different degrees. But during a time of prayer and fasting which is meant to draw us closer to the Lord is a great time to practice this.

A few things we can pray for is that our hearts can align with His, that He will put a conviction or passion on our hearts. That if we don't know already, "Lord what is my next step?" "What do you want me to do." Etc.

It's also a great time to note down, what are the kingdom dreams and visions that you have. Then to pray over them asking the Lord to give direction over them.

The Lord has given each one of us a ministry and giftings to be able to accomplish this. But the most important thing is that we can identify what that ministry is and seek to fulfil it.

2 Timothy 4:5 *But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

Paul also says earlier on in his letter to timothy that we should stand strong and live out this gifting and ministry.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*

So, today, let's pray to hear from the Lord for ourselves and others in the church. But also, that we can live out our calling and ministry and take steps towards doing so.

Let us pray: God, we thank You for the Holy Spirit, for the gifts you've given us and the calling for our lives. Help us to hear from You more clearly so we can know where to go. Show us the steps we can take and give us courage to go in obedience. We just want to follow Your plan and not ours, In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 21 (22/01)

PRAYER POINT: REFLECTION

Read: Colossians 3:1–17.

As we come to the end of the fast. It's easy to jump back to normal. To restore old habits and routines and forget what's happened. These are the moments when we break old habits and traditions to reflect if they were healthy and to go forward as like with the day of atonement seeking to do better the coming year. Although these things most likely don't affect our salvation, they limit our impact and freedom in Christ. Part of fasting is this purification and removal of the old self. The things which are as scripture might even say 'provisions of the flesh'.

For example, imagine before the fasting you watched Tv or streaming service every night. Try to maintain more of what you did instead, maybe a prayer walk, or bible reading or add a life group into the week as a healthy replacement. These are the ways to crucify the flesh. To put on the new man. We have already done a lot of the hard work of taking off the old self. Now it's the discipline and consistency needed in conjunction with the Holy spirit to put on the new man Christ died to enable us to be.

As we read in Colossians, part of the new man is this community. Spending time with other believers. It's about building in these God centric habits. Giving more space for him to speak and move in our lives. It's building each other up. If possible, share with someone things you got from the fast this week and what God said to you, and the next steps you feel you can make in your walk of faith.

Let us pray: Father thank you for your grace for this past week. Thank you for sustaining me and guiding me and refining me. I pray that the things which came up during the fast would not go to waste. That I can take steps forward to continue to grow into the person you've called me to be.

TO CLOSE

Thank you for following this fast! I hope you were able to benefit from it! I hope that you will find your next time of prayer and fasting even more beneficial too.

There's no "right" length, as fasting is never once commanded by Jesus or required by the New Testament writers. But many have found that a one-time or infrequent longer fast (of a week or 21 days) can be a before/after moment in one's spiritual journey. The key is to only do this if you sense the Spirit's invitation. Do not practice this out of idealism, spiritual heroism, or a misplaced desire for weight loss or a spiritual high.

These practises aren't always easy but they are a great way to take us deeper in our faith and in relationship with God. You may find in the future God calls you to fast for specific or personal reasons that he puts on your heart. As his people we know that fasting is just part of the journey. And to close I Pray for you that as Paul wrote in 1 Thess 5: 23-24.

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Don't forget there's a church table coming up on the last day of the fast: January 23rd! It's a great way to connect and talk about

what God said and to grow in unity with others! We hope to see you there.

If you have any feedback or thoughts please do feel free to reach out to one of the pastors and deacons to talk about it and you can also contact us at info@lighthouseantwerpen.be. Blessings from the Lighthouse Team.