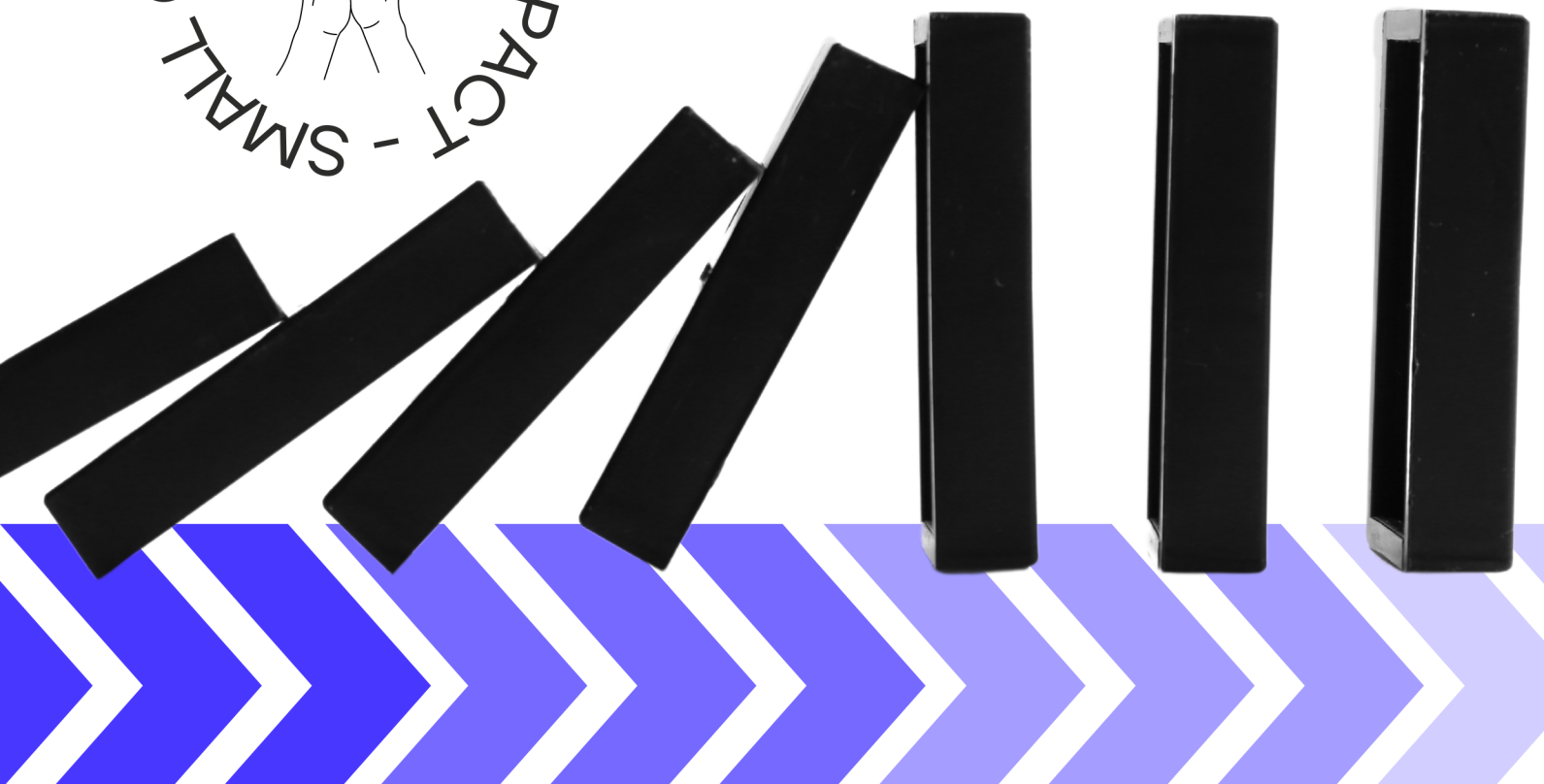


21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING GUIDE

JANUARY 8TH- 29TH

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It's January again and that means a new year, new beginnings, and new goals. January also means checking in with our hearts and seeking God more. That's why we're doing 21 days of prayer and fasting as a church. Whether you've done this before or not, we invite you to join us as we pray to see God move in our lives, church, community, and all around the world.

There's no one size fits all way of doing your 21 Days, but we hope this guide will help you as you prepare.

- Take some time to pray and ask God to reveal any problems, people, or areas of your life to pray over during this time.
- Choose to fast from something to focus on God. It can be something that tends to limit your time with God or something that without it, you'll be required to lean more on God.
- Figure out how you will spend more time with God through prayer, worship songs, reading your Bible, joining a Bible study, talking about God with your family.

Remember that you are not alone in doing this. We are doing this together to support one another. Also remember it's not about doing it perfectly, but intentionally. We've been praying over you and these 21 days for months, and look forward to hearing stories about what God does during this time.

- Arise Church Denver Prayer Team



'Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.' 1 Timothy 4:8, NLT




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WHAT IS PRAYER?

At its most basic, prayer is simply talking with God. When we have put our trust in Jesus, God's perfect and only Son, we are given access to our holy, all-powerful Creator. In fact, we are invited to approach God as a child approaches a loving father, or as one confides in a trusted friend. God welcomes us to come to Him whenever, wherever, and, however.



HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Just start by talking with God. Go somewhere quiet, if possible, and pour out your heart to Him. Get alone with Him and get real. You can do it aloud, silently, or in a journal. He knows everything before you even say it, so there is nothing that will shock or offend Him (Ps. 139). Many of the Psalms in the Bible are examples of heartfelt prayers. You can tell Him your thoughts or emotions, seek His wisdom and help, ask Him to forgive you for something, tell Him how wonderful He is, thank Him for all He has done... God will meet you right where you are with patience, love, and grace.

You can also start by asking God to teach you. When we trust in Jesus, we are given an incredible gift: the Holy Spirit. Did you know it is one of the Spirit's jobs to teach us how to pray? He even prays for us when we don't know what to say (Romans 8:26-27). So ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into prayer day by day, and He will!

WHY SHOULD I PRAY?

There are many reasons. You may have heard the quote, "Prayer does not change God; it changes us." Prayer helps us experience the peace and presence of God. But although our prayers do not "change God's mind," they can change the future. The Bible tells us that our prayers can indeed be "powerful and effective" (James 5:16). It has been said that God not only "ordains the ends, He ordains the means to the ends." He does this through the prayers of His people and other good works He has prepared for us to do (Eph 2:10). It is part of the way God allows, invites, and commands us to get engaged in His work. As we pray, we help carry the burdens of others by lifting up their needs to our strong Father (Gal 6:2). Prayer is a beautiful mystery, an amazing privilege, and a great responsibility.

HOW DO I LEARN MORE?

Like anything else when we seek to follow Jesus, the more we ask, seek, and knock, the deeper we can go. There are countless books and sermons out there, and it is possible to spend a lifetime learning about prayer. One easy way to start is just to ask an Arise Prayer Team member to pray over you at the end of a worship service, or join one of the weekly, online prayer meetings. All are welcome!



HOW TO PRAY: THE ACTS METHOD

Sometimes it is hard to know how to get started in prayer. Despite the amazing privilege we have to “come boldly before the throne of grace,” we may put prayer off. The good news is that God knows this about us and has provided just what we need: Not only do we have a model for “how to pray” that Jesus taught His disciples, and examples of “what to pray” from His Word, we have been given a personal Teacher who lives within each of us -- the Holy Spirit. When we don't feel like praying or don't know what to pray, we can simply ask and trust the Holy Spirit to lead us (John 14:16-17, Romans 8:26). In fact, we are instructed to “pray in the Spirit at all times,” (Eph 6:18) so this is always a good way to start.

One easy way to start praying is to use the ACTS method. This is not based on the book of Acts in the Bible, but rather is a mnemonic that stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. It reminds us that prayer is more than just bringing requests to God, but also includes essential elements of praising God, confessing our sins to Him, and thanking Him for what He has done. The ACTS method helps prepare our hearts and minds before we launch into a list of requests: We are in the presence of the Almighty Creator of the universe. We are completely dependent on His power, provision, and mercy. He does not exist for our purposes; we exist for His.

A

Adoration

Spend some time recalling to God His character and attributes from Scripture (Deut 32:3-4) – whatever the Holy Spirit brings to your mind as especially meaningful in the moment, such as the fact that He is unchanging, He is in control, and He cares for every detail of your life.

C

Confession

Follow this by asking for His forgiveness for any sins of which the Holy Spirit convicts you. These should be specific. Let Him show you the root of what tempted you (pride, greed, etc.) so that you can turn away next time you are tempted in the same way. God is faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you of all unrighteousness! (1 John 1:9)

T

Thanksgiving

Next, thank God for what He has done. You can start with His greatest gift, His Son Jesus, and move on to things you may take for granted, such as every breath. You can thank Him for providing food and friends. As the old song goes, “count your blessings, name them one by one...”

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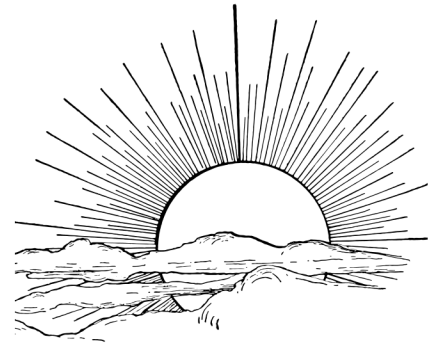
Supplication

After this, you will be ready for the “Supplication” part of prayer, in which you present your requests in the Name of Jesus, remembering to pray for His purposes and to intercede on behalf of others too. You may want to start “outward” with requests for the world, the nation, and the Church, and then move “inward” with requests for your community, your friends, and your family, before you finally finish with personal requests. Our natural inclination is to be self-focused, so it is good to be intentional about putting others first. However, you do not need to feel guilty for asking God to provide for your own needs and desires. He tells us to ask so that we may receive. He is the Giver and a good Father who loves to bless His children! (Matt 7:7-11)

A REFLECTION ON WHO GOD IS

Purpose: Prayer using Scripture that highlights different aspects of who God is can be one way in which we worship our Lord. In doing so, we glorify a wondrous God who we are so blessed to call our own.

Reflection & Prayer: Take some time to reflect on the bible verses below. Choose 2-3 characteristics/descriptions of the Lord to pray over in worship. Feel free to incorporate parts of the bible verses in your prayer. (Example: "Lord, we are so thankful that you are the Creator of the universe. We delight in the vast heavens and earth that you have created.")



- **Alpha and the Omega**

- (Revelation 1:8) "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the LORD, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."
- Context: Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet

- **Creator**

- (Genesis 1:1-3) "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light."
- Psalm 33:6) "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth."

- **Fortress**

- (Psalm 62:1-2) "My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken."

- **Healer**

- (Exodus 15:26) "for I am the LORD, who heals you."
- (Psalm 30:2) "Lord my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me."

- **Holy One**

- (Isaiah 12:6) "Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

- **Immanuel**

- (Matthew 1:23b) "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

- **King**

- (Psalm 145:1) "I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever."
- (Psalm 24:10) "Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty – he is the King of glory."
- (Isaiah 6:1) "In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple."

A REFLECTION ON WHO GOD IS

- **Provider**

- (Luke 12:22-24) “Then Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!’”
- (Isaiah 58:11) “The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.”

- **Redeemer**

- (Job 19:25) “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.”

- **Ruler**

- (Psalm 22:27-28) “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before Him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and He rules over the nations.”

- **Savior**

- (John 4:42) “They said to the (Samaritan) woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”
- (Luke 2:11) “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

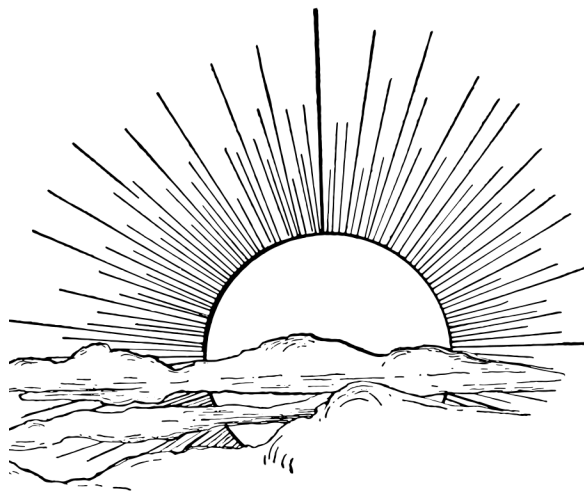
- **Son of God**

- (1 John 5:11-13) “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”
- (1 John 4:10) “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

***Adapted from the ABCs of Adoration by JHK**

Application Questions:

- Which characteristics or descriptions of God stood out to you the most?
- How can you celebrate these characteristics in your daily walk with the Lord?



HOW TO HAVE A QUIET TIME WITH GOD.

“Quiet time” means time spent alone with God. A time to withdraw from our regular responsibilities and spend time with Him. It is a time to rest in His presence and recover from the hectic routine of life. Let’s get started with the acrostic START R&R to help you get started with a time alone with our Lord.

START R&R

S - Set aside a specific time. God knows our busy schedules. You must pick a time that is right for you. Put God on your schedule.

- Before everyone gets up in the morning
- 10 minutes of your lunch hour
- While your kids are napping
- While on a walk (audio Bible)
- In the car on the way to work (audio Bible)

T - Thank God. Prepare your heart. Quiet your mind. Turn off your phone. Take a few deep breaths and thank God for who He is and what He is doing in your life.

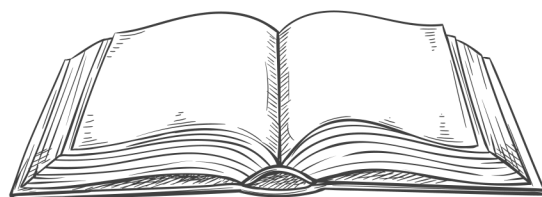
A - Ask God for His presence and guidance. Ask Him for insight. Ask for His forgiveness.

R - Read and Record Scripture. Get into the Word. Reading and praying out loud helps us to keep our focus. You are not only reading the Word, you are hearing it. Record words or phrases that stand out. Is there a command to obey? A promise to claim? A sin to avoid? A new truth?

T - Think. Meditate on what you have read. Record your thoughts. Allow God time to speak.

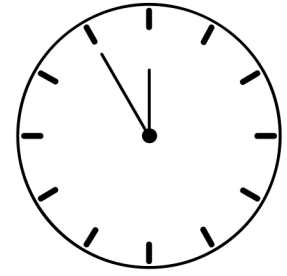
R - Reflect. How does this passage relate to you?

R - Respond. Obey His direction. What is God saying to you? A comfort, a challenge, a new direction, a confirmation?



WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is abstaining from something for the purpose of humbling ourselves before the Lord. “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble” (see 1 Peter 5:5; 2 Samuel 22:28). What you give up and for how long is up to you. Ultimately, fasting is more about replacing than abstaining. It is filling our lives with God’s Word instead of food, social media, or entertainment.



WHY SHOULD I FAST?

Fasting, along with prayer, helps us experience breakthroughs, including our own spiritual growth or that of a loved one who is far from Christ. It can also bring power into situations such as damaged relationships, critical decisions, and crises. Fasting can change our hearts and draw us closer to God. Fasting helps remove barriers that separate us from God allowing us to be more sensitive to hearing the voice of God.

FASTING IN THE BIBLE:

- Mordecai and the other Jews prayer and fasted in response to Haman’s plot to exterminate them. Esther also asked Mordecai to have all the Jews fast before she went and talked to King Xeres. (Esther 4:3, 15, 16)
- Jesus fasted in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights before starting his ministry. (Matthew 4:1-17; Luke 4:1-14)
- Ezra declared a corporate fast and prayed for a safe journey for the Israelites as they made the 900- mile trek to Jerusalem from Babylon (Ezra 8:21-23).
- Paul and Barnabas prayed and fasted for the elders of the churches before committing them to the Lord for His service (Acts 14:23).
- The prophetess Anna worshiped night and day in the temple, fasting and praying, giving thanks to God. (Luke 2:37)

HOW TO GET STARTED?

If you’ve never fasted take some time to learn more. You can check out the page on ways to fast, read some of the stories listed above, or talk to other Christians about their experience with fasting. Take some time to fill out the fasting planning sheet. In it, you’ll get to identify your reason for fasting, the type of fasting you plan to do, and the timeframe of your fast. Writing it down will help you stay focused and allow you to better see how God is working in your life.

If you plan to fast from everything except water for more than 3 days, talk to your doctor before starting the fast.



WAYS TO FAST:

Each one of these fasts should be done with an attitude of humility and a hunger for God. When denying ourselves food and even water, we set aside the time we would typically use to be eating or drinking to instead, pray, read the Bible, or worship.

FOOD FASTING METHODS

- **Regular Fast:** Abstaining from all food, both solid and liquid, except for water from 3-40 days.
- **Daniel Fast:** Certain foods are abstained from. These include foods like dairy, sugar, meat or caffeine. You can find examples and recipes online that can help with your fast in addition to reading books that explain it in more detail.
 - Recipes
 - <https://www.allrecipes.com/gallery/daniel-fast-dinner-recipes/>
 - <https://www.acouplecooks.com/daniel-fast-guide-recipes/>
 - Book: Ultimate Guide to the Daniel Fast by Kristen Feola
- **Absolute Fast:** No food or water is consumed. This is the most extreme and should not be embarked upon if you have any existing health or medical concerns.

OTHER FASTING METHODS

- **Soul Fast:** soul fasting is when you abstain from an activity that may be consuming a disproportionate amount of your time and redirecting your energy towards growing your relationship with the Lord. Some examples could be watching T.V., using social media, playing video games, etc.
- **Sexual Abstinence:** the Bible also mentions a sexual fast for a brief period of time.
 - *“Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” -1 Corinthians 7:5*

ACCOUNTABILITY & GROWTH

- During your period of fasting, you can choose to fast with your church, a Bible study group, your spouse, or a friend. Staying connected with others during your fast can provide encouragement when the going gets rough. Engaging with others can also provide opportunities to share and reflect on how God is working in your life and the lives of others.
 - *“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” -Matthew 18:20*



FAST PLANNING GUIDE



WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE FOR THIS TIME OF PRAYER AND FASTING?

EXAMPLES:

- FOR WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT
- FREEDOM FROM SIN/REPENTANCE
- HEALING
- TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD
- MORE RESOLVE IN ATTITUDE OR BELIEF

WHAT TYPE(S) OF FASTING DO YOU PLAN TO DO?

EXAMPLES:

- DANIEL FASTING
- SOCIAL MEDIA FAST
- WATER FASTING
- TECHNOLOGY FAST

WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME FOR YOUR FAST(S)?

EXAMPLES:

- SUNRISE TO SUNSET
- ONE WEEK
- 21 DAYS STRAIGHT
- SUNSET TO NOON

SMALL CHANGES - BIG IMPACT



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