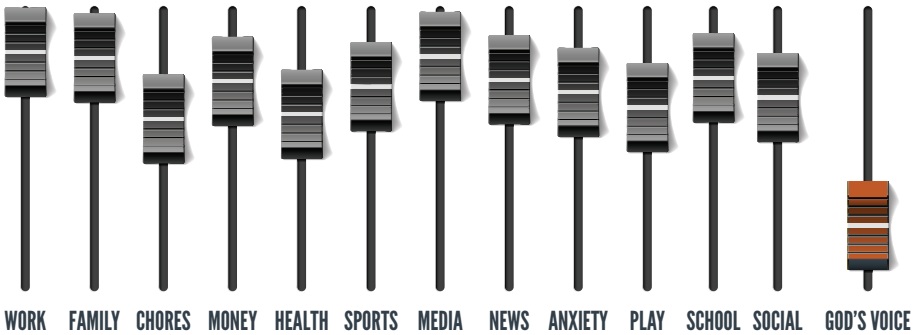


HUMBLE

A Week of Prayer and Fasting



WHO FASTED AND PRAYED?

1. Moses fasted and prayed.

Exodus 34:27-28 // Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.

2. David fasted and prayed.

Psalms 35:13a // Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth and **humbled** myself with fasting.

3. Jehoshaphat fasted and prayed.

2 Chronicles 20:2-4 // Some people came and told Jehoshaphat, “A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Dead Sea. It is already in Hazezon Tamar” (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah. The people of Judah came together to seek help from the LORD; indeed, they came from every town in Judah to seek him.

→ Jehoshaphat called for a *corporate fast*. There’s are times for a *personal fast*, when a person decides to seek God individually through fasting and prayer. But there are times when a group of God’s people are called to fast **together** as a community.

2 Chronicles 20:12 // Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

→ When we *don’t know what to do* (career choices, job, kids, grandkids, finances, anxiety, depression, crisis, housing) the biblical model is to seek God through fasting. Fasting forces us to surrender, **ask** God what to do, and then obey what He reveals.

4. Ezra fasted and prayed.

Ezra 8:21-23 // There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might **humble** ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions. I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him.” So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

→ God answers when people **humble** themselves, pray, and fast.

5. Nehemiah personally fasted and prayed.

Nehemiah 1:4 // When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

6. Nehemiah called for corporate fasting and prayer.

Nehemiah 9:1-3 // On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshipping the LORD their God.

→ The book of Nehemiah is the definitive biblical example of **revival**: people seeking the Lord through praying and fasting leading to confession and getting right with God then spending extra time reading and hearing God speak through His Word. Revival comes corporately when we intentionally set time aside for this.

7. Esther called for corporate fasting and prayer.

Esther 4:15-16 // Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

8. Daniel fasted and prayed.

Daniel 9:20-23a // While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill — while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed.”

Daniel 10:3 // I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

Daniel 10:11-13 // He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to **humble** yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia.

→ Fasting is a forgotten powerful **weapon**. Most Christians’ don’t fast and most will attend churches their entire Christian life without hearing a teaching on fasting.

→ Fasting is a weapon fighting in the spiritual realm we live in the midst of, but are typically **oblivious** to.

9. Josiah fasted and prayed.

Jeremiah 36:9 // In the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, a time of fasting before the LORD was proclaimed for all the people in Jerusalem and those who had come from the towns of Judah.

10. The king of Nineveh called for corporate fasting and prayer.

Jonah 3:6-9 // When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

"By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."

→ You don't need to be a spiritual **giant** to fast. The king of Nineveh was a brand new God follower and his call to fasting led to one of the greatest revivals ever seen.

11. Anna fasted and prayed.

Luke 2:36-38 // There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child [baby Jesus] to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

12. Jesus fasted and prayed.

Luke 4:1-2 // Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 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.

Luke 4:14a // Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.

→ There's a direct connection between the **power** of the Holy Spirit & fasting.

13. The Disciples failed to fast and pray.

Matthew 17:19-21 // Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

→ Some warfare against the enemy can only be accomplished through fasting. There are some strongholds that can only be **boken** through fasting. Is is a powerful weapon that the church has lost.

14. The Church at Antioch fasted and prayed.

Acts 13:2-3 // While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

→ People earnestly desire to know what God's calling on their life is. However, what people **miss** is that God's calling upon our lives is connected to prayer and fasting. The question is—"Why don't churches fast anymore?"

15. The early Church fasted and prayed.

Acts 14:23 // Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

*“We want the results of the early church without the discipline of the early church.”
—unknown author*

WHAT IS FASTING AND PRAYER?

1. Fasting is for the **Lord**.

Zechariah 7:4-6 // Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: “Ask all the people of the land and the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted? And when you were eating and drinking, were you not just feasting for yourselves?’”

2. Fasting literally means **“No food.”**

3. Fasting is saying **“NO”** to food and **“YES”** to **God!**

- Fasting is saying, “God I’m going to say ‘no’ to eating for a time: what do you want me to say ‘yes’ to?”
- Fasting is saying, “I love you, I’m hungry for you. I want you more than I want food.”

4. Fasting is denying the **physical** to seek the **spiritual**.

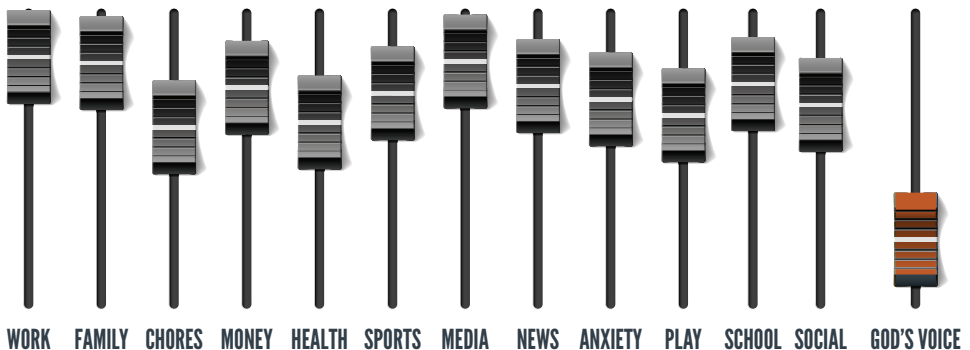
5. Fasting can involve saying no to things we **enjoy**.

1 Corinthians 7:5 // Do not deprive each other [of sexual intimacy] except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer.

→ Although fasting in Scripture is almost always a fasting from food, there are other ways to fast. **Anything** given up temporarily in order to focus all our attention on God can be considered a fast

- Examples: sex, exercise, television, media, technology, coffee, sugar, phones, etc...
- Make your own list. These are areas of your life to say “God, I want these things, but I want you more. I love you. How can I express that to you?” By fasting.

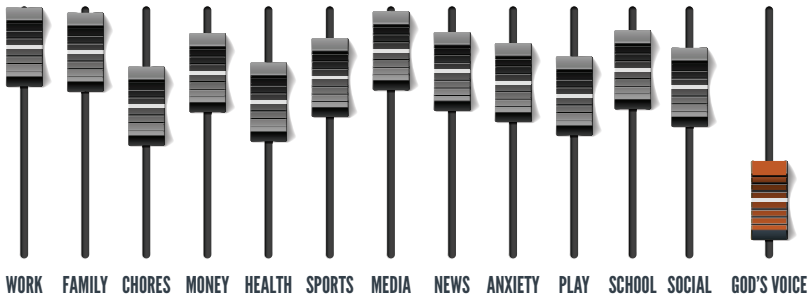
6. Fasting is about turning down as many **dials** as we possible so we can turn up **God’s voice** in our lives.



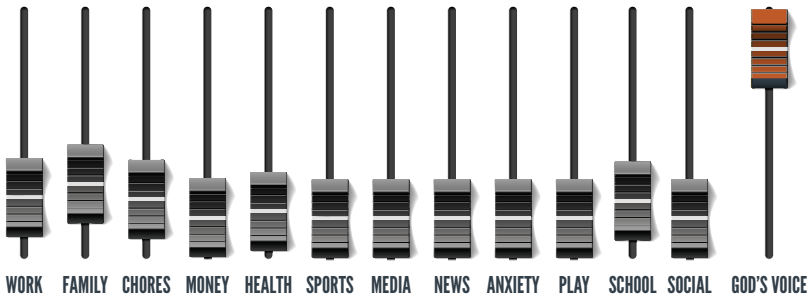
SOUND MIXING 101

101. Mixing is about turning up or down faders (dials controlling volume) in order to hear the song properly.
102. If all the faders (dials) are turned up it causes distortion and “clips” the instruments so you can’t hear anything but noise.
103. “Clipping” is when the instruments or voices cut off completely so you cannot hear them.

Most people are “clipping” in life with every dial turn to the max causing so much distortion and noise they cannot hear God’s voice.



Remember: Fasting is about turning down as many dials as we possible so we can turn up God’s voice in our lives.



*“The desert is God’s place because in the desert, all other voices are silent.”
—Mike Pilavachi*

→ Gym? News? Music? Sweets? Coffee? You can make your list. The question is: How many dials could you turn **down** so you can turn God’s voice up?

→ Fasting is like a **master** fader to turn all the other dials down so that God’s voice can be turned up.

WHAT FASTING AND PRAYER IS NOT

1. **NOT to be righteous.**
2. **NOT a hunger strike.**
3. **NOT a diet.**
4. **NOT about health benefits.**

***NOTE: If you have, or have had, any type of eating disorder, do not fast from food. It is recommended you fast from something different.**

WHEN WE FAST AND PRAY

1. **Fasting should be limited to a set time, especially when fasting from food.**

“Our seasons of fasting and prayer at the [Metropolitan] Tabernacle [Church] have been high days indeed; never has Heaven’s gate stood wider; never have our hearts been nearer the central Glory”

—Charles Spurgeon

2. **When fasting we should not draw attention to what we are doing.**

Matthew 6:16-18 // “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

3. **Be intentional: Is there any way you can clear your schedule now?**

January 21-27, 2024 // Breakfast, Lunch, and Evenings

- **Sunday January 21** 7pm in the Sanctuary
- **Monday 1/22 - Friday 1/26** 6am in the Family Ministry Building
Noon in the Family Ministry Building
7pm in Sanctuary and on Zoom
- **Saturday February 25** 7pm in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

WHY FAST AND PRAY?

Why would decide to be part of this week?

- To Ask for help from God
- As a way to humble ourselves before God
- Direction
- Breakthrough
- Powerful weapon in the spiritual realm
- Crisis
- Decision Making
- Repentance
- Answers
- Personal Revival
- Corporate Revival
- Victory
- To Share in what God is doing
- To Seek and Hear God

HOW TO FAST AND PRAY?

Types of Fasts

1. **Absolute Fast** // No Food or Water
2. **Normal Fast** // No Food
3. **Partial Fast** // Daniel Fast OR a Juice Fast OR (anything) .

Daniel 10:3 // *I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.*

● WEEKLY PLANNER ●						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						

→ _____ about what you will fast from. It could be the same fast all week, or it could be a combination of type of fasts that fit your responsibilities and schedule.

→ As you pray remember the key question: *How could I turn _____ down?*
What could I say “no” so that I can say “yes” to God all week?

FAQ's

1. What if I take medications or have health issues?

If you take medications or have any health concerns, please make sure you first talk to your doctor before fasting from food or water.

2. Should kids fast?

NO, not from food.

Consider encouraging your kids to fast from video games/TV/Lego bricks/toys.

3. Should kids see their parents fast?

YES. According to Deuteronomy 6:1-8, it is a parent's job to pass on a heart for God to their children. Let them know what you are doing it, why you are doing it, and how they can prioritize prayer in their own life. Bring them at 7pm to pray with them in our family section.

4. If I'm not fasting can I still come to the meetings to pray?

YES! This is a week of PRAYER and fasting. Not just fasting.

For a more detailed guide to fasting click on the link to Bill Bright's excellent *PERSONAL GUIDE TO FASTING* at montrosechurchonthehill.org/humble-week-of-prayer-and-fasting.

1 Peter 5:5-7 // *All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*