

Preparation

In preparation for the upcoming MasterClass, let's consecrate ourselves for 5 days, starting on October 9, 2023, through October 13, 2023. We are committing to fast and pray to be found faithful stewards. Included in this package is helpful information and Scripture texts for each day to guide you through this time of consecration.

What does it mean to be "Consecrated"?

Consecration refers to persons or things being separated, or belonging to God, for His purposes. They are holy and set apart for the service of God. Leviticus 19:2 says... "You shall be holy, for the Lord your God is holy."

Servants of God let's agree to the following during the 5 Days of Fasting and Prayer

1. We will dedicate at least 10 minutes (per day) to reading God's Word.
2. We will dedicate at least 15 minutes (per day) in prayer.
3. We will strive to attend service during the 5 days of fasting and prayer.

Personal Inspection

Unconfessed sin is one of the biggest hindrances or barriers to our prayers. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us (Psalm 66:18). However, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

- Have I failed to center my thoughts and actions on reaching the lost and unchurched?
- Do I tend to worry and fret more than believe and trust God?
- Am I failing to claim God's promises and cast my cares upon Him?
- Am I robbing God by not tithing?
- Am I willing and ready to forgive any wrong against me or against my family?
Have I forgiven everyone?
- Do I have the right attitude toward my fellow church members?
- Do I have any relationships that do not honor God – that are questionable or have the "appearance of evil"? Do I engage in any conversations or meetings that do not please or honor God (in body, on the internet, text messages, or telephone)?

Fasting & Prayer Guidelines

A biblical definition of fasting is a Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes. Fasting is a spiritual discipline and one that goes so radically against the flesh and the mainstream of our culture. Fasting is a purifying discipline that helps us draw closer to Jesus Christ and surrender our will to his ways. Without a spiritual purpose for your fast it's just a diet. There is something about fasting that sharpens the edge of our intercessions and gives passion to our supplications. Fasting is one of the best friends we can introduce to prayer.

The great saints of the bible fasted. Moses (Deut. 9:9, 18, 25-29), Ezra (8:21-23), Elijah (1 Kings 19:8), Daniel (Daniel 9:3), and Paul (2 Corinthians 6:5 and 11:27) were men of faith and action who fasted for spiritual growth. The greatest example for any of us to follow, Jesus Christ, fasted – Matthew 4:2. When we separate ourselves from the daily routine of food and its preparation, eating, or whatever desired activity (watching TV, playing video games, golf, etc.) in our lives, then we can devote the extra time to prayer and reading/studying/meditating on God's Holy word. The hunger pangs or refraining from your designated activity will reinforce our human frailty and our dependence on God. When we take time to put God first in any endeavor, we are preparing well for whatever lies ahead. The result of sincere fasting and praying is that God responds and brings deliverance and blessings.

Tips for Fasting

1. Do not jeopardize your health. If you are unsure about fasting, please consult your physician.
2. Only do as many days as you feel you can – if you must break your food abstinence, substitute refraining from a desired activity (golf, TV, video games, etc.).
3. Pray for strength and focus before you start.
4. Make a list of specific things to include in your prayer.
5. Increase your prayer time, especially in the early mornings when you have the most time to pray and/or can create the most time to pray.
6. Establish a regular quiet time and location to pray.
7. During this fast we are abstaining from
8. If your flesh weakens, pray to the Lord for strength and perseverance. It's a good idea to have a "fast partner" – you can encourage each other and pray for each other. This is not a competition or test – there is no failing – trust and pray unto God through this endeavor – follow your heart.
9. Remember Jesus' teaching about fasting – it should be a normal part of a Christian's life and need only to be seen by God. Jesus wants his people to adopt spiritual disciplines for the right reason; not from a selfish desire for praise. Matthew 6:16-18 says: "Moreover when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting, assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your father who is in the secret place; and your father who sees in secret will reward you openly)."

Finally, reading Isaiah chapter 58 is highly recommended prior to starting your fast. This chapter will feature fasting that pleases God. Ezra chapter 8 and Nehemiah chapter 1 are other chapters regarding fasting and praying. The Scripture says, "So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer." (Ezra 8:23)

Day 1 – Monday, October 9th

- Read 1 John 4: 18-19. Meditate on 1 John 4:18
- Pray for at least 5 minutes for Bethlehem Baptist Church.
- Attend Prayer in Person or on Prayer Line.

- Call and forgive someone that you may be at odds or may have had a disagreement. If you think you're not at odds with anyone, then pray to God and ask if someone may be at odds with you
- Fast from negative thoughts

Day 2 – Tuesday, October 10th

- Read 3 John 1:1-4. Meditate on 3 John 1:2
- Pray for at least 5 minutes for your spouse, significant other, family or other love ones. Pray that Christians will be bold witnesses for Christ and that God will increase our faith and we will take care of our bodies
- Confess to God the sin(s) that you struggle with most and ask God to give you strength to overcome it
- Conduct a random act of kindness
- Fast from TV programming

Day 3 – Wednesday, October 11th

- Read 1 Corinthians 6:12. Meditate on 1 Corinthians 6:12.
- Pray for at least 5 minutes pray for the persecuted Body of Christ . Pray for Salvation for those who are lost and encouragement for all Believers
- Read the “Fast & Prayer Guidelines”
- Attend (Bible study) Noonday or 7:00 PM
- Fast from a favorite food, dessert, or TV programming

Day 4 – Thursday, October 12th

- Read Philippians 4:14-19. Meditate on Philippians 4:19
- Pray for at least 5 minutes. Pray for the financial stability of our Church. Pray that the Ministry staff and leadership teams will ask the Lord daily for wisdom and discernment
- Share with someone How Good God has Been to You
- Fast from the use of social media and broadcast news

Day 5 – Friday, October 13th

- Read Philippians 3:12-14. Meditate on Philippians 3:13-14
- Pray for at least 5 minutes that the Masterclass sessions are presented with accuracy and clarity, and that God's will be done. Pray that God's word is written on the hearts of our Children and Youth, Pray God's covering for the conference.
- Intentionally spend time with your family
- Fast from eating out.

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