

A stylized, dark-toned illustration of a person in a prayerful pose, with hands clasped and head bowed. A radiant halo of light rays surrounds the head. The illustration is rendered in a dark, textured style, blending into the background.

TWENTY-ONE DAYS OF PRAYER

CONNECTION CHURCH RINCON

I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the Lord; and they will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Jeremiah 24:7

That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children, That they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments,

Psalms 78:6

INTRODUCTION:

As we enter a new year, we believe God is calling us to pray and fast, first. God has been moving in and through our church in incredible ways over the past few years and we want to start this year asking Him to continue His work in us. That starts with an acknowledgement of our desperate need for Him.

As Christians, God is always trying to realign our hearts with His. We believe He is always trying to captivate our hearts with the Gospel and the mission He's entrusted us with. When God saves a person, He always draws that person in to send them back out to be His hands and feet in a world that so desperately needs Him and the hope in His Gospel. We believe we are called to **Live Sent**.

As we start this year, what if God is trying to slow you down to get your attention? Are you in a place where you can hear His voice? What if God is trying to turn your life in His direction? What if He is trying to take our Church on a journey together that we never dreamed of? In these 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is not only possible but it's probable that God will speak into our lives and into the life of our Church to use this time as a turning point in the direction of our church.

We believe that as we **Live Sent**, God will use us to build His Kingdom in ways we cannot imagine. Our greatest desire is to look back one day on this season of our church and see the Legacy that God was building through a group of people who were committed to following Jesus wherever HE leads. One thing we always say at Connection is that *we believe that the Local Church is God's plan A for reaching the world* and our greatest desire is to be directly in the middle of His plan.

These 21 days of prayer and fasting will be aided and accompanied by several tools in this booklet, including: a Biblical guide to fasting, different fasting options, and a short devotional written by different leaders from within our church. These tools are meant to help you get started, not to govern your time by giving you a check list.

Our prayer is that God would move our hearts as a family to deepen our roots in this body, in this community and globally. That we would be led to invest in the mission and vision He is putting before us to see this generation reached with the hope of the Gospel!

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:17-19a

FASTING GUIDE:

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT FASTING?

Biblical fasting involves abstaining from eating (*and/or drinking*) for spiritual purposes.

In the Old Testament, Israel celebrated certain annual fasts, the most prominent being the Day of Atonement. There were also occasional fasts tied to specific historical events, sometimes individual and sometimes corporate. Here are a few of the occasions for fasting: at a time of grief (I Sam. 31:13; Nehemiah 1:4), at a time of repentance (I Sam 7:6; I Kings 21:27), as an expression of humility (Ezra 8:21; Psalm 69:10), and as an expression of a need for God's guidance and help. What all of these fasts share in common is that they were an expression of dependence on God and a turning back to Him.

Several New Testament passages give us more insight about fasting.

Fasting teaches us that it's God's Word that truly nourishes us:

Matthew 4:1-4 records the only example of Jesus fasting, just prior to His being tempted in the wilderness. He faced temptation with these words, *"Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."* Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 8:3-5 which talks about the 40 years Israel spent in the wilderness, depending daily on manna to sustain them. He says that God humbled them and let them be hungry in order to teach them to depend on God's Word to sustain them. By His example of fasting, Jesus reminds us that food alone can't sustain us. We need to be nourished by God's Word.

Fasting teaches us that doing God's will sustains us:

John 4:31-35 records Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well. When the disciples return, they encourage Jesus to eat. He responds by saying, *"I have food to eat that you know nothing about."* Then He adds, *"My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."* Again, Jesus reminds us that food alone is not enough. We are sustained by doing God's will.

Fasting teaches us that Jesus Himself sustains us:

In John 6:48-50 Jesus says, *"I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die."* We see this pictured symbolically in the bread and the cup of the Lord's Supper. Jesus is the source of eternal life. Fasting is literally feasting on Jesus.

Jesus assumed that fasting would be a part of His disciple's spiritual life. In Matthew 6:16-18, He says, *"When you fast,"* **not** *"if you fast."* He warns us not to fast to impress people, but to be near to the heart of God.

FASTING GUIDE:

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF FASTING?

Fasting is designed to intensify our dependence on God by weakening our dependence on food and other things. How does it do that?

Fasting reveals and heals our dependence on food (and other things) to fill the discomfort caused by low self-esteem, unsatisfying work, unloving relationships, uncontrollable circumstances, etc. It removes the false peace that comes from the pleasure of eating or filling our schedules with busy work or useless entertainment.

Richard Foster says, *“More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately.”* David writes, *“I humbled my soul with fasting”* (Psalm 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear—if they are within us, they will surface during fasting.

Fasting teaches us that we can go without getting what we want and still survive.

Fasting can free us from having to “get” what we want. Therefore, fasting can teach moderation or self-control, not only in relation to food, but in other areas as well. It teaches contentment. (1 Timothy 6:6)

Fasting expresses and deepens our hunger for God.

Fasting reminds us that we are sustained *“by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”* (Matt. 4:4). Food does not sustain us; God sustains us. In Christ, *“All things hold together”* (Colossians 1:17). Therefore, in our experiences of fasting, we are abstaining from food or other activities and feasting on God’s Word and God’s presence.

Fasting must always, first and foremost, center on God. It must be about Him.

Step 1: clarify the purpose of your fast

As a church, we are fasting to declare our dependence on God as we **Live Sent** together and to position ourselves to honor Him with everything we do. Our heart is that you would join us in praying for our church, its leaders, and its future.

Why are you fasting? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer and fasting. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically. Fasting is God-led and God-initiated. That means that He fuels a desire to fast and pray. He loves it when we fast.

Step 2: specify the kind of fast you will do

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast. (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15) For Him, it was a matter of *when* believers would fast, not *if* they would do it. Before you fast, decide the following up front:

- How long you will fast - one meal, all day, sun-up to sun-down (*beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts*)?
- The type of fast God wants you to undertake - discussed in the *Types of Fasts* section below.
- What physical or social activities you will restrict.
- How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God's Word. Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life's pressures tempt you to abandon it.

Step 3: prepare your heart, mind, and body for fasting

Fasting is not a spur-of-the-moment thing. It is planned. We must prepare. The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Un-confessed sin can hinder your prayers. There are several things you can do to prepare your heart

- Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision.
- Do not rush into your fast. Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high fat and sugary foods. Eating raw fruit and vegetables prior to your fast is helpful. Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.
- Prepare your heart and mind: Remember that God is your Father and He loves you and is for you.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4). Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1, 2). Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others. (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11-13)
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart. (Hebrews 11:6)
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit. (Galatians 5:16-17)
- Finally, and of deep importance, Jesus instructs us in Matthew to not let others know about your fasting. The strict details of your fast should not be something you constantly talk about to others. It should remain between you and God.

TYPES OF FASTS

Now that we have explored the Old and New Testament teaching and instruction on fasting, we can proceed to discuss specific kinds of fasts. Let's begin with the helpful words of Richard Foster in, *Celebration of Discipline*: *"As with all the Disciplines, a progression should be observed; it is wise to learn to walk well before we try to run."*

Biblical fasting always concerns food. Since the purpose of fasting, as we saw above, is to focus on God, to humble ourselves and to remind ourselves that we are sustained by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, then the task in fasting is connecting our "going without" to "hungering for God." This takes time, focus and prayer. Please do not expect to be an "expert" at fasting right away. Fasting is a discipline that can take a very long time to understand well. Also, do not let this fact deter you or intimidate you.

Fasting is not unlike the writings in scripture. It is simple enough for a youth to understand and enjoy, and yet deep enough for the scholar to devote his/her entire life to.

Abstaining from certain types of foods (*meat, sweets, etc.*) - Daniel 10:3

This type is a good one for beginners to fasting or those with health needs and special or restrictive diets.

Choose to abstain from something like breads, sweets, sodas, coffee, or even red meat. Perhaps spend some time reading through Daniel's fast in Daniel chapter 1 and chapter 10. Stick to only fruits and vegetables like he did or something similar. Determine the timing and duration of your fast and begin. You may choose to go without this specific type of food on only certain days like Fridays, or you may go without during the weekdays only or perhaps every day. Finally, choose the duration of your fast. This fast is 21 days (*January 5th – January 25th*) but that does not mean you must go without for all of the 21 days. Determine the timing and duration ahead of time and stick to it. Pray through this entire process.

Abstaining from all food - Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9

This kind of fast is more difficult but can be broken up by timing and duration. This seems to be the most prevalent of the fasts we see in the Bible. It is also the most intimidating, but refuse to let it scare you. Fasting from all food is not scary if you determine beforehand when you will do so and for how long. Here are some ideas.

TYPES OF FASTS (cont.)

- Start slowly. Begin with fasting for only a part of a day (lunch, or lunch and dinner). Do this for one day a week, or perhaps three days a week. You determine the timing and duration. Take a step of faith. Fasting is risky and involves our faith.
- Next, try fasting from food but not beverages. This means that according to your timing and duration, you would not eat any solid foods but only water, juices, smoothies, or perhaps simple soup broths.
- Do this for the first one or two weeks. Devote the time that you normally would eat to Scripture reading and prayer. Focus on Jesus' statements about food.
- Next, try a 24-hour fast. This means that you get up and eat a good breakfast and drink only water or juice until the following breakfast the next day. Set aside specific time, during normal meal times if possible, to pray and seek God.

Abstaining from entertainment - Daniel 6:18

The king's voluntary "*fasting*" from entertainment in the time of Daniel helps us further understand yet another type of fast. Fasting from entertainment can be particularly helpful and accessible to kids and teens. Think of abstaining from television, mobile devices, video games, music, or texting, etc. for the duration of your fast. This can be a very powerful decision even as a supplement to food fasts.

Choosing your fasting plan is a very personal decision. We are all at different places in our walk with God and our spirituality should never be a cause for comparison or competition. There is nothing more "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but know your body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. It's also important to not let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. This is a time to disconnect enough with your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God.

If you do not choose to fast, or no matter what kind of fast you choose, seek God with us in prayer.

About this Journal:

The purpose of this journal is to help you process each day of your fast. It will also help direct you in your times of prayer and reflection. The days are divided up into scripture for you to read through, a short devotional, some reflection questions and a place to journal your thoughts. There will be extra space at the end of each 7 days for you to continue journaling if you run out of space on the provided lines for a specific day.

This journal will be divided up into 3 sections. The themes will be basic on purpose. We are wanting you to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you through each of these “*focuses*”. The 3, 7-day focuses are inward focus, outward focus, and a mission/vision focus.

Remember that this is a tool and should not be used in lieu of the Bible. As you fast, dig into scripture to find encouragement, motivation and wisdom to **sustain** you as you progress. There will be times as you read where you are asked to read a certain passage from scripture. Don’t just read past these references, read them for context, and read them to allow the Holy Spirit to bring wisdom and understanding to your heart as you read.

WEEK 1

FOCUS INWARD

Every fast should begin by focusing inward. Intentionally allowing God to pull out the idols in our hearts. As we begin a new year, let's come before the Lord honestly. We may think we are in one place spiritually, but in reality, we may have drifted far from the places that we think we are. Take these 7 days and come before the Lord in humble surrender and ask Him to reveal to you where you are, and where He wants to take you. You will be amazed at the answer.

Day 1 - HONESTY

By Morgan Brown

Psalm 139:23-24

As we enter into the 21 day fast, we are stripping ourselves of momentary comforts for the eternal satisfaction that comes from Christ alone. This is a time to lay our hearts bare before the Lord, honestly assessing our habits, motives, and desires. Is Christ truly first in your life?

Does Jesus get the best of your time, talents, and treasure, or do you give him the leftovers? Is there a next step that you have been delaying obedience in taking? Is there sin or an idol He has been asking you to lay down? Invite the Lord into this space and trust Him to reveal areas that He wants to prune and refine in you. Lean into the discomfort by praying honestly and then listening bravely.

In Psalm 51:10 we see David's plea with the Lord to "*create in (him) a pure heart*". This comes immediately after his confession of sin and rebellion, demonstrating complete and raw honesty with himself and before the Lord. Later on in that same Psalm, David reminds himself of the joy that comes from the promise of forgiveness and restoration in the Lord.

Sin disrupts our fellowship with the Lord - confession and repentance restores intimacy with the One for whom every soul longs and is satisfied.

The Lord will not heal what you're holding onto in the dark. Come before the Lord honestly and openly, entrusting yourself fully into the tender care of your Heavenly Father. Ask him (and allow him) to search your heart. Confess any sin that the Holy Spirit brings to mind, repent, and commit to following the Holy Spirit's leading "*in the everlasting way.*"

Father, thank you for the providing me a way through Jesus to be in a relationship with you. Thank you that even though I fall short daily, your mercies never end and you offer forgiveness when I come to you. Search my heart and bring to mind areas of sin or disobedience that you want to heal and refine in me. Strengthen my spirit and help me walk with you willingly, joyfully, and obediently. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2 - REPENTANCE

By Meredith Page

Psalm 51:10-13

These verses were especially meaningful and formative for me last year, because *renew* (v. 10) was my personal “*word for the year*”—a theme I intentionally study and meditate on, trusting that God has something specific He wants to teach me through it. As I stepped into 2025, I sensed there were places in my heart and mind that needed shifting—areas where I needed God to renew my thoughts, my spirit, and my joy. I knew that kind of change wouldn’t come from striving, but from sitting in the presence of a loving Father and allowing Him to prune me, cleanse me, and make me whole.

When I first came to Christ, a friend introduced me to 2 Corinthians 5:17 where Scripture declares that we are made into a “*new creation*.” That truth helped me understand the weight of my sin before salvation and the beauty of how God now sees me through the redeeming, forgiving love of Jesus. Psalm 51:10-13 has reminded me that while I am already a new creation and forgiveness was given to me instantly at salvation, the Holy Spirit continues to make me new day by day. God is always shaping me into the newest version of who He wants me to be.

Transformation into the image of Christ is not a one time moment, but a continual renewal — one that requires a steady posture of surrender and daily repentance.

As I yield to God and allow Him to lovingly expose the places in me that drift, He forms me into the image of His son more than ever before, leading to the sweetest places of intimacy with Him. True restoration of the joy of our salvation (v. 12) begins with a renewal of our minds, habits, sin, and desires. And when God renews us, He equips us to run the race well and to walk confidently in the purpose He has for us.

May we seek that renewal every day, trusting Him to restore joy and sustain us with a willing spirit! I’ve learned that it’s not until we receive a clean heart through ongoing repentance that we can be truly free and available to be used for His purposes. Verse 13 says, “Then I will teach the rebellious your ways, and sinners will return to you.” Renewal leads to witness and usefulness.

When we are cleansed and made whole, we are released from guilt and condemnation and empowered to share the gospel and make disciples with boldness, confidence, and assurance.

Father, help me to be a willing participant in your plan for healing, renewing and restoring every part of me. Jesus I pray these verses back to you: please create in me a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit with me so I can be used for your great Kingdom purposes. Bless you Lord for being quick to forgive. Reveal to me the wicked ways of my heart so I can be made new. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 3 - PURSUIT

By Trevor Phillips

Psalm 27:4

When you think of pursuing something what comes to mind? Is it a police chase? A horse race? Kids running around playing tag? ALL of these things would be right, looking at it from the definition you would find on Google.

But what if we looked at this through the lens of David in Psalm 27?

David says, *"I have asked one thing from the Lord; it is to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, gazing on the beauty of the Lord and seeking him in His temple."*

All of the things mentioned above take physical movement, but David just wants to be in the Lord's presence. To do that would mean doing the complete opposite, SLOWING DOWN and communing with the Father! Something we can all do better with if we're honest with ourself.

Biblical pursuit isn't always about movement, it's about attention.

So what does this mean? How do we pursue the Lord? A few months ago, at a conference, I had a moment of clarity that helped me understand the question better. One of the speakers asked a simple question, *"What was the last thing you heard from the Lord?"*

That should be a straight forward question, right? But nothing came to mind right away. The Lord was asking me, *"when are you making time to sit with me?"*. I've been doing all the things, reading the Bible, reading studies and other Christian books. But I let the main reason for doing this slip my mind, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

So let me ask you, What was the last thing you heard from the Lord? Do you hear your Father Calling? If your like me and a nothing comes to mind immediately, why is it? Have we squeezed out the Lord with our busyness?

Take this scripture and meditate on it. Read it and sit and listen to the Lord. Seek His face not just His hand.



Day 3 (cont.) - PURSUIT

Lord, we thank you for your steadfastness. During this fast, reveal to us the things we need to let go or reprioritize in our life to make you the thing we seek. Let us have a longing for you as we see in Psalm 42:1-2. We know you're the only thing that can quench what our spirit desires. Help us seek you, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Day 4 - OBEDIENCE

By Larry Branson

Isaiah 26:8

“All to Jesus, I surrender. All to Him I owe.” These are key lines from the beloved Christian hymn *I Surrender All*, written by Judson W. Van Deventer and Winfield S. Weeden in 1896. How many times have I (*and you, perhaps*) sang these words - or thought them? But do we surrender ALL to Him? To surrender, we must possess. So, do we own our wealth (*our money and our “stuff”*), our talents? Are we truly in control of all that we see and surround ourselves with - or are these blessings bestowed by God for His glory?

I want to encourage you in your walk the Lord - and especially in this time of prayer and fasting. The simple truth is that we must simply surrender ALL to Him. Please allow me to share with you how this act of obedience was made so very apparent to my wife and I a number of years ago:

We were blessed with a healthy baby boy, the first of five children. Two months into our lives together, he suffered a catastrophic illness which left him in a persistent vegetative state; he would no longer be able to walk, talk, see or hear; he required a surgically implanted feeding tube to survive and because the illness permanently damaged his brain, he was unable to regulate his body temperature. He was wholly dependent upon his mother and I.

My wife and I were broken-hearted, numb, and exhausted in the months that followed. But by the mercy and grace of God, we drew closer to Him each day. We prayed together; we prayed with friends, family, and people who didn't know us but came to offer whatever solace they could. We affectionately know our son as *“the little evangelist”*, one who never spoke but that God used him to touch so many lives and draw them closer to Him. In our obedience, and through the obedience of others, to surrender to Him we continue to witness the Lord glorified in sharing our son's story. We live today waiting upon the Lord in all of His righteousness. In Isaiah 26:8, we read, *“Yes, Yahweh, we wait for You in the path of Your judgments. Our desire is for Your name and renown.”*

*In times of distress, the faithful find comfort
not in changing their circumstances but in waiting on the Lord.*

Father, I come before you acknowledging your righteousness, your love, your grace and mercy. Help me, Lord, to be obedient that your Name would be glorified before you and among the people. Help me, Lord, to surrender fully in obedience to your Will in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen

Day 5 - DELIGHT

By Kaitlin Barber

Psalm 37:4

What does it truly mean to delight in the Lord? The Hebrew word used here—“*anag*”—means to find enjoyment and take pleasure. It’s not merely enjoying Him occasionally, but making Him our deepest joy, our greatest desire, and our truest satisfaction.

We often read this verse and rush to its ending: “...*He will give you the desires of your heart.*” But this promise cannot be separated from its first command: *Delight yourself in the Lord.* This verse does not promise that God will fulfill our every wish. Rather, it is an invitation into an intimate relationship with Him, the One who transforms our desires.

As we grow closer to God, our desires begin to reflect His, our prayers echo His heart, and our motives and goals are shaped by His purpose and presence.

When our joy, security, identity, and purpose are rooted in Him, He gives our hearts what they were designed to desire. When our hearts desire what they were designed to, we stop craving what is temporary and begin longing for what is eternal. We no longer chase material things or selfish ambitions, but pursue the God whose presence is our true reward.

This promise is echoed throughout Scripture: when the Lord becomes our delight, He gives us more of Himself. He sanctifies us, draws us near, and fills our hearts with desires that align with His perfect will. **Our greatest delight becomes the Giver, not the gifts.** When we seek God first, He shapes our desires and provides what truly matters.

Delight begins with surrender. We learn to delight in God as we spend time in His Word, seek Him in prayer, obey His leading, and live sent on His mission. Delight grows from a cultivated heart of gratitude and trust in the Lord, which He fully deserves. It becomes the natural overflow of knowing Him, seeing His character, receiving His grace, and experiencing His faithfulness.

Father, I praise You right now for who You are. I thank You for your promises and for your faithfulness to fulfill them. So often I look to the world to satisfy my desires when I should be placing every desire in You. Help me, Lord, to delight in You again and again, above all things. Teach me to submit my heart and mind to You, and transform my desires so they reflect Your will. I pray that my delight would be found in You alone. Help me to know You more, love You more, and enjoy You more. Give me an all-consuming delight that finds pleasure in You and your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 6 - DRAW NEAR

By Jamie Culpepper

James 4:8

The book of James gives us a promise wrapped in an invitation: if we turn our hearts toward God, He will meet us there. Drawing near begins not with grand outward actions, but with a quiet inward posture—a reorienting of the soul toward the One who already seeks us.

So much of life demands our attention. Responsibilities, pressures, and expectations constantly compete for our time. Yet, Scripture reminds us that God often speaks in the stillness. When Elijah stood on the mountain, God was not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, but in a “*gentle whisper*” (1 Kings 19:12). That whisper is heard only by a heart willing to quiet itself.

*To draw near to God is to create space within—
space where His voice rises above the noise.*

Psalm 46:10 invites us, “Be still, and know that I am God.” Stillness is not passivity; it is *intentional attention*. It is choosing to let God be the center rather than our worries, plans, or fears. Jesus Himself modeled this rhythm. He often withdrew to solitary places to pray (Luke 5:16). In those quiet moments, His inward communion with the Father fueled His outward ministry. If Jesus sought intimacy in stillness, how much more do we need it?

James continues, “*Cleanse your hands... purify your hearts*” (James 4:8). God draws us inward not to shame us but to shape us. When we bring Him our cluttered thoughts, scattered affections, and hidden wounds, He gently restores us. In His presence, our hearts are refined, and our minds renewed. Nearness to God is not something we achieve—it is something we receive. When we turn inward toward Him, we discover He was already near, waiting to meet us with grace. The more we practice inward focus—through silence, prayer, meditation on Scripture, and honest surrender—the more aware we become of His steady presence.

Today, pause. Breathe. Let God’s gentle whisper draw you close.

Father, Help me quiet my heart before You. Teach me to turn my focus inward, not toward myself but toward Your presence within. Cleanse my thoughts, purify my desires, and draw me into deeper communion with You. In the stillness, speak to me. In Your nearness, transform me. Make my heart a place where You are welcomed, heard, and loved. In Jesus’ name, Amen..

Day 7 - FAITH

By Michael Page

Romans 15:13

Today is the seventh day, and by now you're probably beginning to find out where your heart and faith are truly rooted. When food is limited and routines are disrupted, what you trust in most begins to rise to the surface of our hearts. Fasting has a way of exposing the quiet agreements we've made with comfort, control, and certainty. And right here, on the last day of this inward-focused week, Romans 15:13 calls us back to the beginning... *Faith*.

Paul doesn't separate faith from real life. He ties our experience with joy, peace and hope directly to our faith. Not just believing something about God, but placing the full weight of our life on who He is and what He has promised. Faith, in Scripture, is not just prayerful optimism, it's radical dependence. It says, "*God, if You don't come through, I don't have a backup plan.*" At our church, we say,

"Faith is belief in action based on something you know to be true."

That's uncomfortable for most of us. Because we want faith to include a safety net. We'll trust God... as long as we can still manage the outcome. But biblical faith loosens its grip. It stops negotiating. It admits need. And that's exactly where God meets us, not with disappointment, but with provision and grace.

Notice the order: faith comes before provision. Faith first. Then joy and peace. We often try to reverse that order, waiting to be sure God will catch us before we jump. But God says, "*Trust Me, and I'll fill you.*"

This outworking of faith, matters a great deal for a church whose rally cry is "Live Sent". Because what you're sent **with** matters just as much as **where** you're sent. If faith hasn't taken root in your heart, you'll rely on your own strength or strategy when God calls you to go.

But when your faith is active, when your faith produces obedience, your life starts to carry something supernatural. The Holy Spirit produces fruit from our faith that can't be faked and people are drawn to Christ.

So pause today and ask the honest question: *Where have I placed my faith? Where have I trusted God with words, but not with my life?* Bring that to Him! Because faith grows best in the light, not in performance. Come before Him today in repentance and expectation. Expecting Him to fill you!



Day 7 (cont.) - FAITH

As this inward focused week ends, don't rush past the work God is doing in your heart. Let Him strengthen your faith. Let Him do His work, His way. Because the world doesn't need more noise, it needs people who are so anchored in God and His Word that hope literally spills out of them wherever they go.

Lord, I thank you for your patience and your goodness! You have done so much in my life that I look past and forget. Help me to remember your faithfulness to me today. Help me to honor you with how I obey your Word and your leading! Give me the grace that I need today to be your messenger to the people you have placed in my life! Help me be generous with the Gospel out of an overflow of faith! In Jesus' name, Amen!

WEEK 2

FOCUS OUTWARD➤

During these next 7 days, begin to turn your focus outward and ask God to guide you individually and guide us corporately as a Church. That He would begin to cultivate a heart for those outside of the church. We will begin to see that God's heart is for all people to be reconnected to Him, and every follower of Jesus has a part to play in that plan. So many times, in our faith we get so focused on what's right in front of us that we miss the bigger picture that God is trying to show us. Take these next 7 days and come before God and ask Him to begin to show you where He's working around you and then begin to get involved in His work that He's already doing all around you.

Day 8 - LIVE CONNECTED

By Eric Owens

John 15:5-8

Think about a week when your schedule stayed full from the moment you woke up until you went to bed. Constantly scrambling to keep up with deadlines at work, trying to make sure the kids are where they need to be, their homework gets done, dinner would be nice and who cares if it was cooked at home. At some point you finally make it to bed and it is quiet long enough for you to realize you haven't opened your Bible or even prayed all day. You have been busy but it just feels like you have not done anything.

In John 15, Jesus declares that He is the Vine and you are a branch. As we move from *"inward"* into the *"outward"* section of this fast, be reminded that real life, strength, and fruit come as you remain in Jesus. The theme for today, *"live connected"*, is a call to stay close to Jesus so that everything in this outward focused week flows from Him. Before you try to serve, help, or influence anyone, you need a heart that is resting in Him.

Every day you feel pressure to depend on your own strength. You try to solve problems, serve people, or handle stress with your own ideas and effort. Jesus is above all of that. Jesus invites you to remain in Him, to stay near through His Word and prayer. When you stay close to Him, your life bears fruit that lasts. When you are connected to Jesus your life produces peace, obedience, and love.

When you are connected to the Vine through prayer, time in the Word, and fasting your actions become fruit, not just busy activity.

Fruit does not come from effort alone, but it is a product of your time with Christ and it flows through you into your family, neighborhood, workplace, and church. Jesus also gives a promise in verse 7 that is a result of our abiding. When you live connected to the Vine, your prayers begin to line up with His will. Your desires change. You start asking for strength to obey, for chances to encourage, and for boldness to share the hope you have in Him. God delights to answer these prayers because they reflect His heart.

As you fast and step outward, let your actions be rooted in His presence, not in performance. Live connected to Jesus, and trust that as you remain in Him, He will produce the fruit you long to see in your life and in the lives of others.



Day 8 (cont.) - LIVE CONNECTED

Father, help me stay connected to You. Show me where I have depended on myself. Shape my heart through Your Word. Guide my steps so my life produces fruit that brings You glory. Use this fast to pull me closer and prepare me for the work You want to do through me. In Jesus' name, amen.

Day 9 - EMPTY YOURSELF

By Masun Womble

Philippians 2:3-4

“Mine! Mine!” From our very first steps as a child we learn that what is mine is mine and that what is yours is, well... still mine! It’s easy to live life through the lens of “mine”. But, that’s not what Jesus did. Though everything is His, He took on the form of a servant and gave His life for sinners. What?! Why would He do that? Why would He do this for a creation that screams nothing but “MINE”? It’s because of who He is.

It’s based on who He is, not what we do. And as followers of Jesus, we are called to live a life like Him. Paul puts it like this in Philippians 2:3-4; he says *“3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. 4 Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.”*

You know what that means? It means we adjust our perspective from “mine” to “His.” Everything belongs to Jesus. Your family, money, time, car, house, kids, co-workers. They are all His, including the people in your life. Everyday you go to work, school, home, restaurants, parks, etc. and encounter people who are His. People who He has purchased with his blood, if they only knew Him.

*The ultimate act of valuing others above yourself
is reflected in sharing the Gospel with others.*

At the expense of you being seen as weird, religious, awkward, foolish or whatever other label might get put on you. What would it look like in your life to truly value others above yourself? What would it look like to have others’ interests above your own? If Jesus is the Lord of your life, He is the only one who can claim “mine”. Our time, our treasures, our talents, our identities, all of it belongs to Jesus. He calls us to leverage everything in our lives for His Kingdom and to build up His church.

What areas of your life are you saying “mine” in? What parts of your life is God calling you to look outside of yourself and focus on those around you with Gospel intention? I want to encourage you to write down that one person God has called you to reach with the Gospel. It’s probably someone you talk to on a regular basis. It may be someone you see occasionally.



Day 9 (cont)- EMPTY YOURSELF

But who is that one person God has given you specific influence with to reach for His Kingdom? Because what I know is that God wants to use you. He wants to use you to push back the darkness in this world so that His light might shine in. But it takes setting your eyes on Jesus and others rather than yourself. Jesus wants to use you to bring others to Him, so that He can look at your heart and their heart and say “*mine*.”

Jesus, You are King and You are Lord. I praise you for being a God who is full of mercy, love, and humility. I ask that you reveal any areas of my life that I have not fully given over to you and ask that you give me faith to surrender those areas of my life to you. Change my heart to match yours in showing genuine love to those around me. Give me boldness to step out in faith to do all that you have called me to do. I pray all of this in your name and to your glory. Amen.

Day 10 - LIVE AS LIGHT

By Jo Cuthrell

Matthew 5:16

“I believe in Christ like I believe in the sun– not because I can see it, but because by it I can see everything else.” - C.S.Lewis

I’ve been told that I am a peacemaker, a people pleaser. There have been times where I was more concerned with how others saw me, than how God did. It is so much easier to think that I could earn my way to heaven. That I could check all the right boxes, and that I could compromise and still walk in the light. But I was actually tiptoeing so close to the dark, and thought that I was still ok. We are not called to live that way.

What does it mean to live in the light?

For me to understand this command, I had to comprehend the darkness that Matthew is pleading with us to resist. This world, for now, is Satan's domain (*John 14:30, Eph. 2:2*) There is nothing and no one good in it apart from Christ. Our “good works” are seen as filthy rags. So when I took my blinders off, I saw that the darkness had me where it wanted me. Isolated. Religious. Compromised.

So when Jesus leads us to be a light for others to see, it drastically changes the way we view the world. The reality of walking in the light means we are called to be set apart – called to live a holy and different life.

To be ‘*in the world but not of the world*’ has a new meaning for me. It’s not about being seen as a nice person and working hard to make everything and everyone good. We have to let go of the sin and let our light be revealed. When we are walking in the light, the darkness has no appeal, it tastes so bitter, so off. We start adopting the attitude of Jesus. Walking in the light of Jesus means that He is pouring out of us in every area, how we speak, how we look, how we respond, even to the point of how we act on and view love, because of Him.

The light referenced has nothing to do with us or our own abilities (*James 1:17*). It comes from above, and it’s only through God that we have the ability to live in the light. Living in the Light free of sin is what allows us to do those good works that magnify the glory of God! (*1 John 1:7*)

We are made for His glory, to give Him all the glory. Live sent today, walk in His marvelous light!



Day 10 (cont) - LIVE AS LIGHT

Father, help us to adopt the same mindset as you. I pray that we give these verses to you: That every work that is done today by our hands is pointing straight back to You for Your glory. Help us view our works in a way that reflects all that You have done. Showing your glorious light to all those around and revealing Your truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 11 - INVEST IN COMMUNITY

By Savanna Page

Romans 12:5

Christian community is designed by God himself. Have you ever asked yourself what the goal of Christian community is? Sometimes we approach community as if it's about us. In some ways it is about us and our spiritual maturity but we see in scripture that there is a lot more to it. In Exodus, instructions were given to God's people from God himself and it came along with a promise:

"Now if you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you will be my own possession out of all the peoples, although the whole earth is mine, and you will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation." These are the words that you are to say to the Israelites."

Exodus 19:5-6

God's desire was for his people to be set apart among the nations and mediate the presence and blessing of the Lord to the nations around them. Similarly 1 Peter 2: 9-10 gives instructions to the New Testament church.

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

1 Peter 2:9-10

When we invest in covenant community with our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are showing Jesus to the world around us. In Connect Group we drop our cultural distinctive, cultural differences, preferences, and plans and we unite around the one true God who calls us "a people for his own possession."

Because of his mercy and grace we have the opportunity to invest in covenant community with our brothers and sisters in Christ so that we can then mediate the presence and blessing of the Lord to the world around us and "proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

A healthy investment in Christian community is the starting point for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.



Day 11 (cont.) - INVEST IN COMMUNITY

Lord, thank you for how you have set up your church! The community of the Church is such a gift and I pray you would remind me over and over how important it is for me to be deeply invested in your body. Through you body being unified together, your Kingdom is built and that's what I want my life to be used for. Please reveal to me areas where I am not invested in the community of the church and give me the courage to take a step. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Day 12 - CARRY BURDENS

By Kaitlin Barber

Galatians 6:2

In John 11, Mary and Martha grieved deeply over the death of their brother. Jesus did not act on their timetable, yet He met each sister exactly where she was. Martha needed clarity, so He carried her burden by giving her truth and explanation. Mary needed comfort, so He carried her burden by entering her sorrow and weeping with her. He bore both of their burdens personally and perfectly, even before He resolved the situation.

As Jesus carries our burdens, we are called to make ourselves available to carry the burdens of our brothers and sisters. Salvation is a free gift, but being children of God comes with a responsibility, one that is not heavy or oppressive, but a privilege empowered by the Holy Spirit. We are invited to come alongside one another and help lift the physical, emotional, and spiritual weight that threatens to overwhelm others.

Sisterhood and brotherhood in Christ matters deeply, especially in difficult seasons. Burden bearing is far more than offering quick answers, polite words, or quietly adding a name to a prayer list and moving on. True *burden bearing* is the opposite of selfishness. It requires time, energy, presence, and often sacrifice. We cannot carry the full weight—only Christ can—but we can walk with people in compassion and love. We can ensure that no one walks through the valley alone.

Be present. Listen well. Offer encouragement, patience, forgiveness, and grace. We are not the solution, but we can point others to the One who is. We carry the burdens of others because we have been carried first. Jesus bore the ultimate burden, our sin. He took what was not His and carried it to the cross. He did so willingly, sacrificially, and completely.

His selfless love becomes the pattern for ours and in that, we fulfill the law of Christ by loving God and loving others above all.

Lord, give me an aware, intentional, and compassionate heart that reflects Yours. Give me eyes to truly see the people around me who are weighed down within this beautiful community You've placed me in. When one part of the body hurts, we hurt with them; when one weeps, we weep with them, until the day we all rejoice together in your glory. I pray over our Connection Church Rincon family, may we be known as Your disciples by the love we show one another, the way we build one another up, and the way we reflect Your selfless love for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 13 - CARRY THE GOSPEL

By Larry Branson

1 Peter 3:15

We ought to at all times be ready to share the joy in our heart for what the Lord is doing in our lives. It is only through the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ that we have breath in our lungs and a future secured. We ought to be prepared to come alongside anyone who is suffering and be able to properly share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to give hope to someone who is hopeless, to provide a light to the lost.

Romans 10:13-14 - *“for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?”*

We hear this often in our time together, in our Connect Groups and in our discipleship with others. Many of us are blessed to boldly share the gospel, to extend our hands and our hearts for the glory of our Lord Jesus. Let us continually humble ourselves before the Lord and seek His Will, His guidance in preparing us to be so bold.

Pray continually. Study His Word, be intentional in understanding His message to us. Seek accountability with another person to read and learn what God is showing us in His Word. Talk to others and build relationships, offer to pray with them, and answer questions with Gospel truth. Consider 1 Peter 3:15 - *“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”*

Peter urges believers to regard Christ the Lord as holy from the center of our being. How do we do this in a world that demands so much of our time and attention? We must be intentional. In Acts 20:24, Paul sets the bar for believers: But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Heavenly Father, I come before you now to praise you for your Son, Jesus, our Savior. I pray that you would be glorified in all that I say and do, in all of my thoughts in serving you. Lord, I pray to be bold in Your Spirit as I carry the Gospel to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 14 - SERVE THE BODY

By Savanna Page

1 Peter 4:10

In 1 Peter we see several interesting things and are also given several instructions. Take a second to journal all of the instructions given to us in 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Do you notice that Peter gives instructions about the action of serving but also personal instructions about how to properly serve the body with the proper heart posture? This section of scripture breaks down what it means to serve the body with the heart of God.

We don't serve the body our way but we serve the body Gods way.

Notice in vs 10 it says:

"Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God."

1 Peter 4:10

According to this scripture we each have a unique gift given to us to serve the body through Gods grace alone. When we discover our gift, we can then serve the body God's way with the heart of service found in 1 Peter 4:7-11. These gifts aren't meant to serve our selves but to serve others to build up the body of Christ (the Church).

We get a glimpse of the long term benefits of service in 1 Peter 1:10-12. Peter tells us that the prophets longed to see God fulfill the coming of the promised messiah. Through out the Old Testament we see the prophets sacrifice to serve and lead to usher in the coming of the messiah BUT in 1 Peter 1:12 we learn *"It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you. These things have now been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven - angels long to catch a glimpse of these things."* We are part of the legacy of the prophets! When we serve the body Gods way, we get to participate in ushering in the second coming of Jesus and our legacy could last for generations to come.

However you are graced to serve the body through the varied grace of God there is one purpose behind it and that is "so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything".



Day 14 (cont.) - SERVE THE BODY

Lord thank you again for your Church. Thank you for the way you have set it up so that each member is cared for by each member using its gifts to build up the Church to maturity and usefulness. Lord I pray you would give me a selfless attitude toward you and your church. Give me an awareness of how you have called me to serve your body, the Church. I repent of selfishness or of times where I choose my own desires and life over the life and effectiveness of your Church. Lord I pray for courage to take steps closer to you and your bride, the church. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Day 15 - OWN THE MISSION

By Michael Page

Matthew 28:18-20

As Jesus was ending His earthly ministry He gathered His disciples together and gave them a mission. They understood that this wasn't a suggestion. He doesn't gather the disciples and say, *"Here's an option for you if you feel called."*

In Matthew 28:18–20, the risen Christ declares, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **GO**, therefore..."*. This wasn't a mission up for debate; it's a mission rooted in authority. The One who conquered sin and death now sends His people out to do and teach the same things their Lord did. And that means the mission is not someone else's responsibility; it's ours.

From the beginning, God has been about His glory being known. 1 Chronicles 16:24 says, *"Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples."* These are marching orders and the Bible is littered with many verses just like this. This is the theme of the Bible, to know God, and to make Him known.

But mission doesn't start with guilt; it starts with awe. We declare because we have delighted ourselves with Him. But let's be honest: owning the mission can feel overwhelming. We feel inadequate, unprepared, and many times, afraid. That's why Jesus doesn't just send us, He empowers us.

In Acts 1:8 He promises, *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses."* Notice He doesn't say you might be witnesses. If the Spirit of God lives in you, witness is not optional.

*The question isn't if you're on mission;
it's whether you're owning it or outsourcing it.*

Owning the mission of God means understanding that God has sovereignly placed you where you are, your neighborhood, your workplace, your family, your city, for His purposes. You are not an accident. You are not a backup plan. You are a *"sent one"*. The same God who rules the nations also orchestrates your daily interactions. And He delights to use ordinary people who are radically surrendered.

This mission is not about building your platform or proving your worth. It's about making disciples—teaching people to obey all that Jesus commanded—and trusting that He is with us always. The mission is fueled by grace, sustained by the Spirit, and guaranteed by Christ's authority.



Day 15 (CONT.) - OWN THE MISSION

So don't spectate. Don't settle for comfortable Christianity. Own the mission God has given you. Declare His glory. Make disciples. Rely on the Spirit. And go with confidence, because the King who sends you also goes with you.

Lord, thank you for what you have done for me in the Gospel. You have accomplished something I never could. Thank you for including me in your mission of seeing every nation know and love you! Building your Kingdom is not something I want to take lightly, so I pray you would help me understand the task at hand and make me aware of your presence with me as I go! In Jesus' name, Amen!

WEEK 3

LIVE SENT

There's no doubt about it. We are better together. As the Church, God has empowered us to reach the world with the hope that is found in the Gospel message! What is your part in the larger mission and vision God has given our church? Like Abraham, is it to go to a foreign land that He will show you to share the Gospel with a people who have never heard? Or is it to stay here to defend the Gospel in a culture that doesn't see God as important or even real? Whatever He is calling you to; we know from scripture that He is calling you there through the context of the Local Church. Spend these last 7 days praying for our Church Leadership. Also spend time praying that God would continue to pour a fresh mission and vision into our body as we seek to honor and follow Him into the future. We have seen God move in some incredible ways over the course of the past 8 years but we believe He's just getting started.

Day 16 - PURSUE MATURITY

By Jamie Culpepper

Ephesians 4:11-16

To “*Live Sent*” is to live with purpose—rooted in Christ, empowered by the Spirit, and directed toward the world God loves – and Scripture teaches that being sent is inseparable from becoming spiritually mature.

A life sent on mission must first be a life submitted to Christ.

In Ephesians 4:11–16, Paul explains that Christ gave leaders to the church “*to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*” The goal is not simply knowledge or religious skill, but maturity—growing into the fullness of Christ.

Maturity steadies us so we are no longer “*tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine,*” but grounded in truth and love. As we grow, we learn to speak truth with grace, serve with humility, and reflect Jesus with increasing clarity. Spiritual maturity is not instant. It is cultivated through abiding in Christ (John 15:4), renewing our minds (Romans 12:2), and training ourselves in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7). It is also deeply communal. Paul reminds us that every believer has a part to play: “*When each part is working properly, [the body] grows so that it builds itself up in love.*”

We mature as we worship together, submit to God’s Word, welcome correction, and practice love in real relationships. And maturity is never an end in itself. As we grow, we become more faithful ambassadors—sent into workplaces, families, neighborhoods, and nations as carriers of Christ’s presence. The more we reflect Jesus, the more clearly the world sees Him through us (Matthew 5:14–16).

Living sent means pursuing maturity daily. Allowing Christ to shape our character. Letting Scripture form our convictions. Inviting the Holy Spirit to transform our desires. Choosing obedience in the ordinary. And trusting that God uses a mature life to advance His mission in extraordinary ways.

As we grow up in Christ, we naturally grow out in mission.

Heavenly Father, grow me into the likeness of Your Son. Mature my mind, my heart, and my habits so that I am rooted in truth and steady in love. Shape my life through Your Word, Your Spirit, and Your people. Teach me to live sent—faithful in every task, courageous in every opportunity, and humble in every relationship. Make me a reflection of Christ so that others may see Him through me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 17 - FIGHT FOR UNITY

By Eric Owens

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

Going into my senior year basketball season, I was filled with anticipation. We were coming off a great season last year after making it to the state finals. We had all been working hard to get better, but by December we all knew something was different. It was a struggle to win. Looking back it is so obvious to see why we weren't winning. It was because we weren't playing for the guys next to us. We had gotten better individually but had not grown together.

In John 17, Jesus prays for unity for His people. He prays that we would reflect the oneness that He has with the Father. This unity is not based on preference, personality, or background. It is rooted in their identity. This kind of unity stands out in a divided world. When the Church walks in unity like this, the world sees a clear picture of the Gospel.

We fight for unity because unity does not happen by accident. You face moments when your preferences seem more important than peace. You face situations where pride tries to take the lead. These are the moments when you decide if you will build up or tear down.

Jesus is calling you to lay down selfish ambition and pursue oneness with the body of Christ.

Romans 15:5-6 shows you the source and the purpose of this unity. God gives endurance and encouragement. God gives you the strength to think the same way as Christ. When you depend on Him, your relationships change. You begin to see others the same as yourself, rescued from sin by God's grace. This creates one voice that glorifies God which is the mission, bringing glory to God beginning here and extending to the ends of the earth.

1 Corinthians 1:10 shows you how serious this call is. Paul urges believers to agree in what matters. He pushes them to stand together and refuse division. This takes effort. It takes honesty. It takes an intentional commitment to protect the unity of the church. You do this by being slow to speak, praying for others, and dealing with conflict in a healthy way, and recognizing what matters to the mission and what is personal preference.



Day 17 (cont.) - FIGHT FOR UNITY

Fasting gives you space to examine your relationship not only with God but also with others. It sharpens your awareness of sin that can harm unity. It pushes you to ask hard questions. Are you holding bitterness towards a brother or sister in the church? Are you speaking carelessly? Are you giving more energy to preferences than to the mission? God uses these days to realign your heart with His mission.

Jesus links unity to witness that the Church will have. When His people walk in unity, the world sees that the Gospel is true. Your relationships become part of your mission. You show the world that Jesus changes the way people live, forgive, and love. Unity becomes a clear sign that He is alive in His church.

Father, give me a heart that protects unity. Remove pride, anger, and selfishness. Help me walk in humility. Teach me to forgive quickly and speak with clarity and love. Make our church one, so the world sees the truth of the Gospel through us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Day 18 - INVEST YOUR LIFE

By Meredith Page

Galatians 2:20

One single verse can compel and encourage us in many ways. Paul speaks directly about his identity; sharing who he once was and who he is now after salvation. We should see ourselves the same way: the old is gone, and a new life has come.

We cannot underestimate the power in this! When Paul says, *“I have been crucified with Christ”*, he reminds us that the cross is not only where Jesus died, but where He died the death we deserved. It is the place where our old, sinful self died and where our new life in Christ began – a life that comes with greater purpose. Paul continues: *“I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”*

God doesn't just improve us; He fills us!
The power of Jesus Christ Himself is at work in and through us every day.

When we are weak, Christ is our strength. When we are empty, Christ fills us. When we are unsure, Christ is our wisdom. The Christian life is not about performing for God, but depending on God and His power within us. We don't have to try to muster it up, it's there within us and we just have to abide in it. But how do we actually live this out? Paul gives us the answer: **faith!** We live by faith, putting all of our trust in Jesus because He loved us enough to die in our place, for our sins, to give us salvation and eternal union with God. Trusting Christ should be a constant in our life.

In every circumstance and fear, we trust that Jesus is able and in control. Let's look ahead to Galatians 5:24: *“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”* What died with Christ were our old passions, sinful ways, and selfish desires. Now, we have new desires because His desires and plans replace ours. Trusting Christ, living by faith, walking in power, and crucifying our flesh leads to usefulness in God's Kingdom.

We don't just enjoy the grace given to us, we live it out by extending His glory to the ends of the earth. We **LIVE SENT**. Today, let this verse breathe fresh life into your spirit. Remember that the life you live is not up to your perfection or ability. Christ in you is your hope, your help, and your power. Walk in faith knowing that the God who loved you and gave Himself for you now lives in you empowering you to live sent, on mission to see others experience the salvation and freedom that you have.



Day 18 (cont.) - INVEST YOUR LIFE

Jesus, thank you for not giving me a task that you expect me to do in my own ability. Thank you for giving me power and assurance to follow boldly wherever you lead me. Give me increased faith and ears to hear your leading as you lead me to those who need you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 19 - PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS

By Morgan Brown

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

In God's grace, He showers the Body with a variety of gifts to build up the Bride of Christ and to display the fullness of His glory. In that, our leaders intentionally and prayerfully shepherd us into maturity to carry out the mission of bringing the gospel to the nations.

The Lord has blessed our church with leaders whose hearts are set on both our personal growth and the health of the body. They serve faithfully and tirelessly for the church to be a beacon of Christ's hope for the world around us that is desperately lost. There is tremendous spiritual weight to their role, and they need our prayers. We have an enemy that wants to steal, kill, and destroy what the Lord is doing in His church (John 10:10).

In this season of fasting, let's pray specifically and boldly for the Lord's continued guidance and clarity in our leaders' hearts and minds for where He is leading our church. Pray for protection over their marriages, their families, their health, and their endurance in leadership. Pray for strength in the face of temptation of sin that wants to lead them astray from what God has for them. Pray for unity among leadership and in the body, so that they may continue their work without distraction and with joy. Most of all, pray for their ears to be tuned to the Holy Spirit, and their hearts to be aligned with God's will so that they can lead our body effectively.

We cannot have a healthy church without healthy leaders. Let's not leave any room for the enemy to distract us from how God is moving in our church, or from fulfilling our part of the Great Commission!

God, Thank you for being our Good Shepherd. Thank you for the calling that you've placed on those that you've chosen to lead and guide us. Help our leaders discern your voice and will, so that you will be glorified in all that we do. We ask that you would place a hedge of protection around them and their families as they serve you. We pray that they would arm themselves with the full armor of God daily, and that you would thwart the attacks of the enemy. Lord, shepherd them as they shepherd us. In Jesus name, Amen!

Day 20 - BE A WITNESS

By Jo Cuthrell

Acts 1:8

The first thought that comes to my mind when I think about “being a witness” reminded me of a street preacher on the corner of my small, downtown, pedestrian street. That man preaching just happened to be my dad. I was able to be a witness to these events because he would have a few of my siblings and I go with him to share the Gospel with everyone that walked by. There was a lot of ridicule in those attempts, and embarrassment. But in my younger years I definitely remember the excitement and urgency of sharing the Gospel with anyone that would listen.

But what does it mean to be a witness in today’s world? And what does it mean to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:37-38 tells us that when we submit to Christ we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. The Holy Spirit gives us power for the mission & this power is greater than we can possibly comprehend here on earth. Read Acts 2:1-4 to see how the Holy Spirit came on believers... it was a powerful event! He is God, and He dwells in His Church, us! Let that settle for a second. So why do we doubt the power of the Spirit inside of us? He hasn't changed. Why do we resist the urgency of sharing this with others? He’s with us!

**The Holy Spirit promises to give us the words to speak.
However, that doesn't take away our responsibility of knowing His word.**

To be a witness we have to know the Gospel and be able to articulate it. If we have placed our hope in Jesus, then we have a testimony of Jesus’ saving grace in our life. My testimony is life altering to me, and God will use it to draw someone to Himself. Being a witness today is about sharing the Gospel in its fullness, and then telling the death to life experience you have through Jesus.

When you have the Holy Spirit inside of you, you can’t contain the good news. I want to live in the mindset where I am always looking for an opportunity to share His truth with others.

Have you ever seen a pebble thrown into a calm lake? Being a witness here in your community will have a ripple effect through your county, state, country, and then watch the Holy Spirit as He works through our lives to send the Gospel to the nations. He invites us to be a part of His plan. Let’s join Him! Let’s Live Sent!



Day 20 (CONT.) - BE A WITNESS

Father, I pray that we can live in the promises of this verse. That we would believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, and have a boldness today as we look for ways to share Your word with everyone. Thank you for inviting us to be a part of your bigger plan of reaching the nations. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 21 - LIVE SENT

By Michael Page

Romans 10:14-15

As we conclude this 21-day fasting and prayer journey, a week focused inward, a week focused outward, and a week mission-focused, we arrive at a simple truth: the Gospel does not travel on autopilot. It moves because *God sends His people*. And this sending is not just an idea; it's a posture, a rhythm of life. As we go into 2026 together as a church, this is the challenge we want every one of our members to carry well. Live Sent!

The first seven days we invited you to focus inward. We examined our hearts, confessed sin and learned how to repent. We leaned into God's presence. We learned how to practice humility, silence, and dependency. We want to remember that our inward posture always shapes our outward life: a heart saturated with the Word becomes a mouth ready to speak the Word with boldness.

The second week we turned outward. This is the natural overflow of an inwardly healthy heart. The Christian life is never a solo act; it's always lived in the tension of community, always on mission to point others to Christ in tangible ways.

These past 7 days have been mission focused! This brings it all together for us! Romans 10 reminds us that people cannot hear unless someone is sent. And that "*someone*" is you and me! God has placed you strategically, given you a voice, and equipped you with courage, not to elevate yourself, but to carry His glory to the world.

*Our ultimate joy is found in seeing Christ exalted,
and God's mission is the vehicle of that joy.*

To live sent is not optional for the christian. It is the purpose that every believer is ultimately searching for. It is stepping beyond comfort, choosing obedience over convenience, and carrying the Gospel with you everywhere you go. It is the outward expression of an inwardly transformed soul.

As this fast ends, the question is: will we return to routine, or will we step fully into our "*sentness*"? Will we allow this identity to define our everyday lives? The Gospel is urgent! The world is waiting. And God's Spirit is calling you to be the feet, the hands, and the voice of Jesus.

Day 21 (CONT.) - LIVE SENT

So, as we enter 2026 together let's go, speak, serve, give, love, and live as if you have been sent by King Jesus, because you have. Let's Live Sent together and watch what God will do through our church!
The Best is Yet to Come!!

Jesus we thank you for your grace that you have so overwhelmingly lavished on us. The Gospel is a message that we never want to get over. It drives us out and we want to be faithful bearers of this message you have sent us with. Thank for all that you've done in my heart through this 21 day fast. Please empower me and equip me to be faithful and passionate about the things you are passionate about. Help me to Live Sent! In Jesus' name, Amen!

