

**The People's Christian Fellowship  
21 Days of  
Prayer and Fasting**

**4th January - 24th January 2021**

**The People's Christian Fellowship exists to  
SPREAD the gospel through SERVING our community  
and STRENGTHENING the body of Christ**



# Let the Church be the Church - 2021

**Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,**

Thank the Lord for His mercies and grace which is incredibly rich. He is always faithful and worthy to be praised.

I am so glad that we can be united again for this special period of consecration, as we prepare ourselves to be the ministers of His worship in 2021.

Our spiritual objective for the year 2021, is to study and understand our Lords teaching and His expectation of us based on His message commonly known as the 'Sermon on the Mount.' In this sermon, Jesus makes clear the standard for Christian living, Jesus delivers an exposition which unravels the core principles at the heart of God's law.

It is necessary for the church in 2021 to be clear regarding the light that we are commissioned to portray in this world. We are the called-out people of God and our distinction is meant to be unmistakable, the church must be the church. In this 'fast', we consecrate our hearts to the Lord. Each day we have to make physical choices to restrict what we eat, but we must ensure also, that we do the same for our spiritual input as well.

Let us seek to encourage each other not so much by the inevitable physical transformation, but in our spiritual transformation to the glory of His praise.

God bless you all always, and may the church be the church

**Pastor Dave**

# Getting Started

## REASONS FOR FASTING

- to know God's will and direction for your life
- for a miracle or breakthrough
- for a word inside you that only God can make possible
- a fresh touch from God in your life
- a deeper, more intimate, and powerful relationship with the Lord
- to have greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's voice
- to break free from bondages that have been holding you captive
- for the salvation of friends and/or loved ones
- to bring your flesh into subjection, to be more influenced by the Holy Spirit

## TYPES OF FAST

- **Complete Fast:**  
Abstaining from food and liquids for a period of time (see Esther 4:15-16).
- **Normal fast:**  
Abstaining from food but drinking liquids. This fast can be exercised over the course of a full day or for a specific period of the day. The majority of people do this type of fast. Fasting from for example, from sunrise to sunset, or from 6am to 6pm. Or from 8pm in the evening and breaking the fast at 3pm the next day.
- **Partial Fast or Daniel Fast:** Some people see the daily periodic breaking of the normal fast as a type of partial fast. But a partial fast could allow the eating of certain foods. The Daniel type fast is based on Daniel 1:8 and 10:2-3 which includes a restriction on the consumption of all meats, sweets, alcohol, and pleasurable foods.
- **Electronic Entertainment Fast:**  
Abstaining from social media and all forms of electronic entertainment (movies, TV, video games, etc.) This is a wonderful fast for everyone! Still, it is important that when you embark on any spiritual food fast, that you

include this form of abstinence also. When you break the fast, try not to rush back into social entertainment. Continue to think about whatever it is the Lord had shown you during

### **MEDICAL ADVICE:**

For medical reasons, some people may not be able to fast from food altogether. They may choose to abstain only from certain foods, like sugar or chocolate, or from something other than food. Doing without something temporarily, such as television, as a way of redirecting our focus toward God. Consult your doctor before going on the fast.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: How many meals do I eat per day? Can I have snacks?**

**A:** The number of times you eat throughout the day is a personal decision. Some people choose to eat three meals. Some might add a snack or two in between. Others may skip a meal to pray. There isn't a particular formula for the frequency of meals. Let God guide you as to what your fast should look like.

## **Q: Pastor, what is one thing a first time 'faster' like me should remember?**

**A:** This is a spiritual fast. What you do during this period of consecration is more important than the food restrictions you have chosen. Fasting is about denying the physical body and soul of things it may both need and desire, to focus on providing for one's spiritual necessities. So, we may like to be entertained by many things, but in this period of fasting, we choose to develop our spirits and relationships with Christ.

### **Note:**

- Always keep a paper and pen nearby so that you can write down the things the Lord lays on your heart.
- During the evening it might be good to fill out a journal which recaps your thoughts and feelings throughout the day
- Put on Christian radio and TV channels, ask the Lord to direct you to a book that you should read or a Christian magazine. Speak to the Admin Office about signing up to Right Now Media. (if you have not already done so). Do not let non-spiritual things cloud your mind. If you watch the news or TV do not allow things to cause you to lose focus.
- Call a Christian friend and entertain them with godly words of comfort and encouragement.

## **Q: Are salt and pepper allowed? What about herbs and spices?**

**A:** Yes, you can use salt and pepper to flavour your food. Also, herbs and spices are allowed. However, you need to make sure any store-bought seasonings are Daniel Fast friendly. Read the ingredients list on the label to be sure. Watch out especially for added sugar.

# A few extra bits

## **EAT BUT...**

In a normal fast, we fast for a certain number of hours each day, then we are permitted to break our fast to eat. In the Daniel Fast, you are permitted to eat at any time, but you are restricted to only eating specific things (see Daniel 1: 11-16; 10: 3 for reference). It is not uncommon for believers to do a 'normal fast' but restrict their eating to the foods approved on the Daniel fast list.

## **10 OR 21 DAYS**

Officially we are doing a 21 day fast and I hope everyone is aiming for this. But there may be some of our congregation who may have never fasted before. 21 days might seem too great a challenge. Well maybe you could aim at doing 10 days and see how you feel on the 10th day. You could then either continue, or if not, still restrict yourself from other things like TV etc till day 21.

## **FOOD IS ONE THING**

Restrict yourself from all forms of fleshly entertainment for the duration and increase your spiritual intake. Seek the Lord regarding which external things to abstain from. Read and study the Word, increase your prayer times connect with other believers. Be confident that through this spiritual sacrifice, God will take His rightful place within your heart.

Make extra time to pray, this is imperative. Prayer is talking with God; you will find that during a period of fasting, your spiritual senses become finely tuned. Do prayer walks with other believers, bike prayer rides, prayer journals, prayer conference call sessions, email encouraging words to each other (be creative). Remember to pray for others.

## **OPPORTUNITY**

There are habits, attitudes, beliefs, practices, weakness, and other carnal powers that can only be broken through fasting. During this period of fasting, let us stop doing those things that we know are wrong (the Lord speaks to our conscience) and do the things we know that are right and pleasing to Him.

# Foods to eat on the Daniel Fast

## **Whole grains**

Amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur, freekeh, millet, oats, purple rice, quinoa, rye, sorghum, spelt, teff, whole grain pasta, whole wheat, and wild rice.

## **Beans and legumes**

Black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, and split peas.

## **Nuts and seeds**

Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, nut butters, peanuts (actually legumes but people think of them as nuts), pecans, pepitas (pumpkin seeds), pine nuts, pistachios, poppy seeds, walnuts, sesame seeds, soy nuts, sunflower seeds.

## **Vegetables**

All vegetables are allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned).

## **Fruit**

All fruit is allowed (fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, and canned). However, any dried fruit should not contain added sugar (check ingredients to be sure).

## **Oils**

Oils (such as coconut, olive, and sesame, for example) are allowed but should be used minimally. For example, you can sauté foods in olive oil but avoid deep-frying them.

## **Other**

Unleavened bread (whole grain bread made without yeast, sugars, or preservatives).

All herbs, spices, and seasonings are allowed, including salt and pepper. Soy products (such as edamame and soy nuts) and tofu are acceptable.

## **Beverages**

Water should be the main beverage on your Daniel Fast. Distilled, filtered, sparkling, spring, and mineral water are allowed as well. However, you may

have 100% fruit juice on occasion. You can also use 100% fruit juice in recipe

## Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast

### **Animal products**

Meat (bacon, beef, bison, chicken, lamb, pork, and turkey).

Dairy (butter, cheese, cream, milk, and yogurt)

Fish

Eggs

### **Added sugar**

Agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, brown rice syrup, brown sugar, cane juice, corn syrup, honey, malt syrup, molasses, and raw sugar.

### **Yeast**

Yeast and, therefore, leavened bread is not part of the Daniel Fast.

### **Refined grains**

White flour and white rice. Only whole grains are allowed on the Daniel Fast. A whole grain product contains the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.

### **Processed food**

Foods that contain artificial flavourings, chemicals, food additives, and preservatives.

### **Deep-fried food**

Examples are corn chips, French fries, and potato chips. (Baked chips are acceptable if they do not contain restricted ingredients. Check the label for “baked” to be sure.)

### **Solid fats**

Butter, lard, margarine, and shortening.

### **Chocolate**

Milk chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, dark chocolate, chocolate syrup, and cacao.

### **Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages**

Alcohol, coffee, caffeinated tea, and energy drinks.

## DAY 1

***Blessed are the poor on spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3)***

Jesus in this first section of Matthew 5 repeatedly mentions the word 'blessed,' "Blessed are the poor in spirit then in the next verse blessed are those who mourn and so on until verse 11. The word 'blessed' actually means happy. But it doesn't simply denote a personal subjective feeling of happiness, it describes a state of being. It describes how God sees us because of our devotion to Him and intimate relationship with Him through faith. Indeed, when we consider the second part of the verses, we can see how we are truly blessed. We inherit the Kingdom of heaven.

These are challenging times and one area which has become severely affected, is the challenge of poverty. Our churches food bank has been very much in demand these days. In the past, some may not have asked for help because of pride and the perceived belief that people could have a low opinion about them, and so they do not ask. The person who is truly poor, will recognize their need for help and that they cannot help themselves and so they will ask for help.

The bible says in Psalms 34:6 - *This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

To be poor in spirit means to recognize that we are spiritually destitute and cannot save ourselves. So, our trust and hope and faith are totally in the Lord. We cry out to Him in desperation, for He is our only help. We are comforted, that because we trust in Him for salvation, we shall inherit His Kingdom. So, we are the happiest people on the planet, despite whatever challenge we face. Because we know that our need for salvation has already been met.

### **Prayer Point:**

1. Be encouraged to cry out to the Lord with all of our needs confident in His help

### **Action:**

Be thankful for salvation but pray and look for someone who might be spiritually impoverished, seek to point them in the direction of Christ so that they too might be spiritually satisfied with salvation.

## **DAY 2**

### **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. (Matthew 5:4)**

When I think about people who mourn, I automatically think of those who have lost someone. Losing someone you know can be one of the most difficult experiences in life, especially if it is someone close. Every year we sadly lose loved ones, but this year has seen many people sadly lose someone to COVID19

The emotional pain experienced is hard to measure, and for some, it is a weight that can affect them as they journey through life. Thank God for family and friends, people who support us through our most difficult times.

We see in this passage of scripture; Jesus is not just referring to those who mourn for those reasons. Jesus is referring to people who mourn for any reason, and He is also saying that the comfort they receive will come from Him.

As believers, knowing that our Heavenly Father makes Himself available to us in our times of need is so reassuring. He comforts us in so many ways; by the Holy Spirit, the comforter, by the promises of His word that soothes our heart and mind, through others and the support they bring, and by His sovereign power, that keeps us in perfect peace.

Truly, blessed are they that mourn, for they will be comforted...

#### **Prayer Points:**

1. For God's presence to be with those who mourn.
2. For those who feel lonely, that they are comforted by others in the right way.
3. For God's people to draw comfort from His word in their most difficult times.

#### **Action:**

As believers, let us know the comfort of God and His word, in our challenging times, and let us be a comfort to others during their challenging times.

## DAY 3

### ***Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5)***

In many wild animal societies, the male animal of the species has to fight it out with other males to see who is the strongest. The winner becomes the leader of the pack, herd or pride. He is more than 'Mr. popular', he is the one whose offspring are said to have the best chance of succeeding. He also decides where they travel to and even when to eat.

We, much like instinctual animals in human society are drawn to wealth, strength and accomplishment. We live in an age of celebrity, online persona's and fame. Our culture craves popularity.

Jesus wanted His listeners to come to an understanding that as a true follower of Him, we would need to march to a different drum! Our outlook on life or an even better term is 'worldview' creates a tension between us and the popularized worldview of an unbelieving world.

We are to be enigma's within culture, our lives and decisions are supposed to raise questions to those who don't know the true and living God... the question for us today is; "do we too easily fit in to society?" If there isn't a tension between us and society, are we living out Gods call for true Christian living?

The meek weren't and aren't supposed to be the ones who win! That wouldn't have and doesn't make sense to society. The meek rely on God and recognises its human frailties, society relies on itself and its perceived strength to succeed.

#### **Prayer Points:**

1. That we will continue to be counter cultural, embracing the worldview that Jesus has set out for us. Pray that our lives and decisions will draw attention to the salvation we have received.
2. Bring our society before God. Pray for those around you who live contrary to Gods design.

#### **Action:**

Use today to meditate and study the word meekness. Search out its biblical meaning and its dictionary definition.

## DAY 4

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

This beatitude is a standard of conduct for all believers. It inspires that there is a blessing in being spiritually hungry and thirsty after the righteousness of God. The blessing is more than happiness, it is the status of the children of God; “they shall be satisfied”.

To hunger and thirst after righteousness is an intense longing to be right with God and a yearning to know him more. In Psalms 42:1-2 – King David – puts it like this:

*As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God*

To hunger and thirst and being satisfied works simultaneously and should be a natural desire of all believers. **The more one is satisfied, the more they will hunger and thirst after God. This is the cycle of our Christian journey** and evidence of spiritual lifestyle as intended by God.

Accepting Jesus is not enough, but we need to seek His righteousness as He commands.

### **Prayer Points:**

1. Knowing God must be our No. 1 goal
2. To maintain a daily spiritual hunger and thirst of being right with God.

### **Action:**

- Hunger and Thirst – to be more like Jesus.
- Get into God’s word every day, it is nourishment to our bodies, food to our souls – and it will help us to grow in the fullness of our salvation
- Join a Fellowship Group – for support, accountability, and to keep an appetite for the things of God. Proverbs 2:20.

## DAY 5

### ***Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. (Matthew 5:7)***

There are a couple of ways of viewing the virtue of being merciful. One way is in line with being compassionate. When a person falls on hard times or experiences some kinds of trouble, to help that person in their time of need, could be described as showing mercy. In the parable of the good Samaritan for example, Jesus asked the lawyer, which of the three in the parable exemplified what it meant to be a neighbour?

He said, "The one who showed him mercy." (Luke 10:37 ESV). So, acts of kindness, care and compassion to those in need of help, is to show mercy.

Again, when someone does something wrong towards us and we have the right to claim justice but choose to show mercy by forgiving the offending party, then this is also an example of being merciful. We can see how God has been merciful to us. For we were sinners under condemnation, but God was merciful towards us and forgave us. The implication now is that we imitate Him and show mercy by being compassionate to those who have fallen on difficult times, and by forgiving those who have offended us.

Jesus taught us to say when we pray: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us (Matthew 6:12). The weight of God's forgiveness towards us for our sins against Him, should compel us to forgive others also. To not be merciful to others is a sign that we have not repented and so therefore, we will not experience mercy from the Lord.

#### **Prayer points:**

1. Pray for our church's food bank ministry, ask the Lord that this might be the catalyst for more opportunities for us to exercise Christlike mercy to our community.
2. Ask the Lord to show you how you can serve our community through this ministry.

#### **Action:**

Ask the Lord for clear opportunities to demonstrate Christian mercy towards people

#### **Further reading:**

Matthew 18:21-35

## DAY 6

### *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. (Matthew 5:8)*

The heart is the source of our thoughts and actions. Our physical heart pumps blood (life) through the body, so a pure spiritual heart pumps spiritual attributes through us. A defective human heart brings serious issues and in the same way a heart that is un-pure will bring attributes in our lives that are not of God. How can we make our hearts pure?

A pure heart stems from a deep love for God, the desire to please Him, know his precepts, deny the things that we selfishly desire. King David, after he had sinned prayed “create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51). King David knew that a pure heart could not be worked up or achieved by following rules. It’s the same for us, God alone can create a pure heart within us.

- A pure heart comes from a place where we allow the Holy Spirit (who loves this) to lead every aspect of our lives, including our thoughts and how we respond to others.
- A pure heart allows us to see God right now - His power at work and sensing God’s presence every day.

#### **Prayer points:**

1. Forgiveness from putting our human desires before the desire for a pure heart
2. or more of God and less of me - a heart that is pure
3. For the Holy Spirit to create a pure heart within us this day, that our spirits be renewed daily
4. Ask God to show us Himself

#### **Action:**

Ask God where your daily actions derive from; is it from a pure heart?

#### **Further reading:**

1 Timothy 1: 5-7; consider the devastation caused following departure from the place of a pure heart.

## DAY 7

***Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.  
(Matthew 5:9)***

You have heard the saying I'm sure, "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." Which means that it is noticeable, that a particular child has characteristics or giftings similar to that of their parent. I am sure also, that you have noticed that the beatitudes home in on characteristics of our Lord. Indeed, our compliance to the beatitudes results in our becoming more like Him. Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

When Jesus was born, the angels proclaimed "peace on earth..." The war between sinful man and the Holy God of heaven was addressed in full. The time had come for the redemption and reconciliation of humankind to God, but to achieve any kind of satisfactory peace with the Father, Jesus the Son of God would be sacrificed on the cross on our behalf and instead of us. Furthermore, the bible states in Ephesians 2:14 For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us (NLT).

Notice how God takes the initiative to extinguish various forms of conflict. He deals with the vertical conflict between ourselves and Him, and the horizontal conflicts within His universal church.

Since He is the initiator and God of peace (1 Thessalonians 5:23) As Children of God, we must seek to be at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18). We have to be intentional in seizing the initiative, (Colossians 3:15; Ephesians 4:3). At the same time, we should bear in mind that peace and reconciliation is a very costly but rewarding matter.

### **Prayer point:**

1. Ask the Lord to give you courage to cross the lines of conflict. And patience, wisdom, and diligence in navigating the course for reconciliation. Rejoice in the fact that you will be known as God's child.

### **Action:**

Read and re-read James 3:13-18 using various translations. What do you think the meaning of verse 18 is?

### **Further reading:**

Philippians 4:7

## DAY 8

***Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:10)***

To be persecuted means Subject (someone) to hostility and ill treatment, especially because of their race, political or religious beliefs. Righteousness means right standing with God which comes through Jesus Christ.

We read about Stephen who was stoned for his religious beliefs and standing for what was right, he did not retract or give up, but he held on to his faith to the very end. Acts 7: 59-60. As we are called to serve the Lord, we too must have this kind of unshakeable Faith

We read in Rev 6: 9-12 about the souls of those who had been slain (like Stephen) because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They asked the Sovereign Lord “how long until you avenge our blood?” Then each of them were given a white robe and told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been. God has a marvellous plan and a promise to us that even when we are prosecuted for standing for what is right in the sight of God, he has prepared a place for us with him in Glory, Hallelujah!

1 Pet 3 v 14 says ‘But even if you suffer for what is right (for righteousness sake) you are blessed. So, let us be encouraged today by this.

### **Prayer points:**

1. To pray for the persecuted church
2. To pray that we will have unshakeable faith even in the face of adversity

### **Action:**

To give God thanks for the promise that we have in Jesus that when we are being persecuted the kingdom of heaven is ours Mt. 5:10

## DAY 9

***Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12)***

At times Believers and Followers of Jesus Christ are reviled (criticised) and persecuted (treated badly) because they stand for truth and righteousness. Jesus is encouraging His followers to be happy when these things happen. I guess our first thoughts at times is easier to give up than to tolerate abuse. Jesus is saying when these people are saying evil against you falsely, do not be offended. This is how they persecuted the prophets in times past.

In 2 Timothy 3: 10-17 Timothy was encouraged by Paul to not give up. Paul had been through much persecutions, beatings, false imprisonments and was now letting Timothy know, as a servant of God he will have to go through tough times, but the Lord will deliver him. Jesus said to His Disciples in Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven.

Please read John's revelation of Jesus Christ in Revelation 7:13-17 when one of the Elders asked, who are these, clothed in white robes and from where have they come? The reply, these are the ones coming out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

### **Prayer points:**

1. To be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Ephesians 6:10
2. Keep my mind stayed on Christ. Isaiah 26:3-4
3. Pray knowing that the Lord my God is with me wherever I may go.  
Joshua 1:9

## DAY 10

### *Pray then like this – like Jesus prayed (Matthew 6:9a)*

Dr Nissan Mindel informs us in his book 'The Three Daily Prayers' that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob introduced these prayers, one for the morning, one for the afternoon and the other for the night, respectively. He explains that each of them represented a particular quality which they introduced into the service of God; Abraham, (love), Isaac (awe), and Jacob (mercy). As we know, Jesus possessed all these qualities in abundance, for 'Jesus is love'. Therefore, he knew just how we should pray, with humility, faith, and an understanding of who we are praying to, Abba Father.

When we pray our prayers become intercessory, because there is no 'me' in the Lord's prayer, but 'us' and 'our', one family of brothers and sisters in Christ. Even today, Christ still intercedes on our behalf. (Rom 8:34) We also see through the text that Jesus often retreated to a quiet place to commune with His Father on an intimate level, He tells His hearers that they were not to pray as members of the synagogue did. (Matt 6:5-8)

Humility is key to our approaching the Father in our quiet time. Alan Redpath writes, "Before we can pray words such as 'Thy kingdom come' we must be willing to pray 'my kingdom go'. This lends to the attitude of putting God first and trusting in Him at His word. In that, YHWH is always glorified.

Pray then like this, from a heart of worship, with repentance, and requests for both spiritual and physical needs.

#### **Prayer point:**

1. Heavenly Father help us to pray as your Son prayed, in the knowledge that you have our best interest at heart. In Jesus name we ask it. Amen.

#### **Further reading:**

- Hebrews 11:6
- John 4:24
- Luke 6:12
- Matthew 6:25-33

## **DAY 11**

### **Our Father in Heaven (Matthew. 6.9b)**

Sadly, we live in a society where so many fathers are absent from their children, leaving mothers to raise up their family alone. Equally worst is when we have fathers who are present in the home, but rarely, do they engage with their children.

It is so easy upon becoming a believer to think our heavenly Father is just like our earthly father. Thankfully, this is so far from the truth.

In this passage of scripture, we see Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray to God. What is interesting is that Jesus tells His disciples to call God 'Father', which was so countercultural, and at the time others would say bordering blasphemy.

The fact that our Sovereign Father is introduced as someone with a heavenly address does not mean He is absent. Actually, because of His omnipresent nature, He is always with us, and this truth is so important to accept.

Heaven is described as God's dwelling place where everything operates according to His will. Heaven is a place of peace, love, community, and worship, where God is surrounded by a heavenly court and other heavenly beings.

As a believer, knowing heaven is where God resides is awesome, knowing He is the creator of heaven and earth is double awesome, and knowing that we can call Him Father just blows my mind.

#### **Prayer Points:**

1. For believers to always know that Father God loves, cares and is always for them.
2. For others to know our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ.
3. For God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

#### **Action:**

Take the opportunity to engage with our heavenly Father, to discuss all matters of the heart, because He has given us the platform and position (as His children) to do so.

## DAY 12

### ***Hallowed be your name (Matthew 6:9c)***

*Hallowed means to keep holy and set apart, to sanctify*

At the very start of this model prayer, Jesus removes the focus from us and turns our attention to God. It is important to note that “hallowed be thy name” is not a declaration but a request. It is a request that God would see to it that his own name be hallowed. It is the first request in The Lord’s Prayer and one that we have said many, many times but what does it really mean? How do we pray that God’s name be made holy? How do we make it holy?

It is about Him, His holiness, and His work in the world. Our God exists for all eternity, He is omnipotent, He is the Alpha & Omega, He is Holy, and He is jealous for our undivided attention.

#### **What happens as a result of God’s name being hallowed?**

- That He would cause people to believe in Him - Numbers 20:12, 1 John 5:10
- That His name would be feared - Isaiah 8:12 -13
- His commandments are obeyed - Leviticus 22:31-32

A family name has a lot of meaning. At school, if you had older brothers or sisters, there was already a reputation that had been set. Good or bad, your family name was known based on what had gone on before and therefore there was an expectation. We are children of God and as children of the Most High, we must pray that His name be hallowed in our lives and through our lives. There must be an expectation that through our words, thoughts, and actions that His name is set apart. When we pray “hallowed be Thy name” we are asking God to make His name holy and pledging ourselves not to misuse God’s name. It is a reminder that we are not on our own, because we belong not to ourselves, but to God

#### **Prayer points:**

1. As you think about the above, pray that God will reveal to you how you can treat His name as sacred, as Holy.
2. Pray that God’s name will continually be hallowed through you.

#### **Action:**

- Today, think about how you may have misused God’s name in the past
- Reflect on what it means to be a child of a King

## DAY 13

### Your kingdom come (Matthew 6:10a)

'Your', 'Kingdom' and 'Come'. Three simple words, but when put together as a proclamation, creates a mentality and attitude that deals with our propensity to put our demands and interests first. In fact, it challenges us head on about what we prioritise.

There are some who hold to a belief that Gods kingdom has yet to be established here on earth. That the "dispensation" of His kingdom is tied to a period of time where He will reign throughout the world. Matthew would have gone to great lengths to make sure this mindset was challenged through his recounting of Jesus' sermon.

It was the thought at that time that the 'Messiah' would come and deliver them (the Jews) from the Roman Empire's oppression and establish an earthly kingdom, where he would reign, bringing them peace & prosperity. The kingdom to them was a physical and materialistic one.

This was incorrect! Gods kingdom was and is here right now, and it resides within us! And continues to be established the moment we profess Jesus as Lord of our lives and relinquish the mindset that we are masters of our own destiny!

The kingdom of God is wherever He reigns! We acknowledge this as Spirit filled followers of Jesus Christ, when we proclaim this three-word statement: "Your kingdom come", in other words; "God, have authority and control over my life."

#### **Prayer Point:**

1. That God will continue to have authority and dominion over every aspect of our lives.

#### **Action:**

- Remind yourself periodically throughout today that God reigns over your life.
- Petition – on the behalf of an unbelieving friend, family member or colleague, that God will be the authority over their lives.

## **DAY 14**

### ***Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10b)***

Paul says that we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10) I believe it is His will to have sovereign governance over His children, as well as the earth, so that we might execute His plan, which started with God sending His son to spread the good news of salvation, and in turn Jesus sent His disciples to do the same by the power of the Holy Spirit. And, so it is down the ages, we have been called to do what Christ had done, and as we obey His call, we have the liberty to ask anything in His name, knowing full well that our prayers will be answered. (John 14:12-14) So, we fast and pray with confidence, for His word says; 'The prayer of a righteous man avails much. (Jas 5:16b)

The writer of Revelation gives us a glimpse of how it is done in heaven; when worshipping the LORD, the hosts worship Him with reverence, humility, love, and perseverance, singing, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD God Almighty who was and is and is to come'. (Rev 4:8) The same writer shows us the Lord speaking to the Samaritan woman saying, "The hour is coming, and is here now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people. (John 4:23) As we worship our Father in Spirit and in truth, we find that we are doing as it is done in heaven.

#### **Prayer point:**

1. Holy Spirit guide us in seeking the Lord's will in these uncertain times.

#### **Further Reading:**

Matt 5:14-16.

Ps 37:3-4

## DAY 15

### *Give us this day our daily bread (Matthew 6:11)*

We pray the Lord's Prayer because of the assurance it brings that Jesus Himself has instructed us to pray and use these words to our heavenly Father. Therefore, as we look at this line for today's focus, we know there is much significance here.

When Jesus says "give us this day" what follows will be something specific for today. So, what about tomorrow? Surely, we should be thinking ahead about what we need for the future. This question leads us nicely to the second half of this line "... our daily bread". This prayer puts God in the driving seat, allowing Him to decide what we need today. In a world where everyone likes the comfort blanket of 'surplus', here we are taught by Jesus to ask God to provide for us what we need for today. Even so far as not to specify what we believe this to be, we are taught to ask our Father in Heaven, who knows more than ourselves about what we need, to provide for us today.

In this season of great uncertainty, tomorrow's plans are not promised to us; reflecting on 2020 is proof of this.

Response: This season requires us to pray more than ever before. At the very heart of our daily request to God, will you in faith allow God to decide what you need for this day? This truly is a place of submission to God and where He wants us to be.

#### **Prayer points:**

1. Ask for God to show you what you need and let that be your prayer for the day
2. Thank God for Jesus' straight-talk teaching that has led us to this point of understanding

#### **Further reading:**

Matthew 6: 33-34

## DAY 16

***And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. (Matthew 6:12)***

This is the only petition in the Lord's prayer with a condition attached. It highlights that forgiveness is a promise from God and reminds us that **if we forgive others, God will forgive us**. Thus, **our relationship with God is tied to our relationship with each other**, making it impossible to have a righteous relationship with God in isolation of relationships with others. 1 John 4:20.

In Ephesians 4:32 the apostle Paul said that we are to forgive "as" God in Christ forgave us. The word "as" points to two things. We are to forgive because God forgave us. But we are also to forgive in the same manner that He forgave us.

The law for believers is simply this - **where we have been forgiven, we must forgive**.

To pray this portion of the Lord's prayer while abhorring grudges, bitterness, malice, resentment, and jealousy is literally asking God not to forgive our debts. Forgiveness is not just the absence of the negative i.e., not doing any harm to someone, but it is the positive - going to them and re-establishing relationships.

In Colossians 2:14 we are reminded that God has forgiven our debts by paying them on our behalf. Every act of forgiveness is written in the blood of Jesus.

There is nothing like the joy of forgiveness, knowing that it is over and done with, that the person who has forgiven you will never mention it again, they love you, and will guide you home.

Remember, even when we have done our best, we still remain unprofitable servants of God, because He has still done more for us than we can ever do for Him.

### **Prayer points:**

1. Help us to forgive each other as Christ has forgiven us
2. Help us to get the debts cleared every day before going to bed

### **Action:**

- Choose to forgive those who have hurt or offended us, also praise, and thank God for forgiving us when we did not deserve it.
- Learn to relate with others in the same way God relates to us – based on complete forgiveness and acceptance.

## **DAY 17**

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:13)**

Let us start with a couple of definitions: (1) Temptation – in this context it is the testing of our faith. (2) Evil – to cause misfortune.

When we say these words as part of this prayer, we are asking our Father in Heaven not to lead us into situations that will test our faith to such an extent that we fall away from faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Corinthians 10 v 13)

We are also asking God to limit our interactions with the “Evil one” (the one that causes misfortune). The Devil (adversary) tries to inveigle (have you ever come across that word from the older generation? It has the same meaning as the word entice.) us to sin against our Father by testing our faith in Jesus Christ, this can happen via situations in life, philosophical/theological misunderstandings, schisms between us as brothers and sisters in Christ and so on. If we fail these tests Satan (accuser) then takes this information back to God who either forgives us after repentance or condemns us on the day of judgement (this being the ultimate misfortune).

We are tempted by our own desires (led astray) so in this prayer we are asking God to make us so strong in faith that when the tempter comes, we will not yield to our worldly desires but hold fast to the unshakable promises of God to become people who respond only to the perfect will of God.

### **Prayer Points:**

1. Lord give me the right kind of faith, the mustard seed faith you spoke about in your word.
2. Lord help me to remember the ultimate promise of living with you in eternity if I endure to the end.

### **Action:**

Find an encouraging brother or sister to confide in, someone who will pray with you and advise you in your walk with the Lord no matter what.

## DAY 18

### ***Do not try to Impress people by your spirituality/relationship with God (Matthew 6:16)***

Jesus here takes up on the topic of fasting. He says “when you fast...” implying that fasting is something Jesus expects His followers to do.

Fasting is about being humble before the Lord and seeking His face. Humility is the opposite to pride. Pride says, “I am all this,” humility says, “I am in need of your help oh God, I can do nothing without you.”

In today’s passage, Jesus condemns the practice of being a spiritual show-off. Instead, He encourages His followers to develop a healthy private relationship with the Father. Our Christianity must never be about trying to impress others. If we try to impress people, it takes our focus and attention off the Lord and places it on man. It is not worth trying to live up to the expectation of others, it’s an unnecessary distraction. Each one of us has their own areas of weakness and vulnerability.

Questions: Do you try to live up to what you assume are other people’s expectations of you are? Do you feel like some church folk watch you? Do you think that you respond to this assumption? And finally, how do you feel about praying publicly, do you compare yourself with others?

Your task today is to be really honest with yourself and the Lord. Think about anyone, whom you try to give a good Christian impression to. Repent and ask the Lord to help you to stop trying to impress them.

#### **Prayer point:**

1. Pray concerning your self-esteem and self-confidence, pray for deliverance in this area and for your fellow brethren in Christ who struggle with this.

## DAY 19

### *Seek to impress the Lord in your personal devotion to Him (Matthew 6:17-18)*

Yesterday's devotional focused on the importance of being free from the internal desire of impressing people with how spiritual we are. Today we focus on the importance and blessing, of developing an intimate and meaningful relationship with the Lord.

If we focus on impressing people, we shall be rewarded, but we shall receive our reward here and now by people. If our devotion to the Lord is intimate and honest - and even though people may not know how long we pray each day, or how often we fast or how deep or bible study is - our Heavenly Father see's and knows and He will reward this type of believer. This believer is not putting on a performance for man but for God, and God knows everything.

Even if our reward is received in glory, it will far outshine any acts of praise and respect and accolade that man might possibly give to us Matthew 6:2-4. The fact that God will reward us should be our motivation for fasting and spiritual activity. Ultimately, we want His will to be done and His kingdom to come, and so we discipline ourselves and humble our souls before the Lord in deep prayer and fasting for this to happen even through us.

#### **Prayer points:**

1. Let us pray that the Lord would help us to find pleasure in our personal daily devotions and that we might be encouraged by the thought of His reward.
2. Pray also that we see clear development in our relationship with Him.

## DAY 20

***Do not be anxious about the things you need; your Father in Heaven knows that you need them, and you are His child (Matthew 6:30-32)***

We have to imagine here that a vast multitude of people have either been healed or have seen healings take place by Jesus. Matt 4:25 tells us that great multitudes had followed Jesus from city to city – they knew this man was special and wanted to be around Him. With the revelation of who they were, who He is, and the requirements of serving God, they were posed with the challenge of being single minded and totally devoted to God. Their faith needed to increase to understand that the God of the miraculous, is also the God who can take care of daily needs.

God is deeply concerned about you and you are His child. He already knows your tomorrow, He knows your monetary, food and clothing needs. God is saying change your standpoint, change your gaze, and seek after Him. God is omniscient, He knows everything that we need but more importantly, He is everything that we need

The Israelites complained to Moses and Aaron when they were stuck in the wilderness (Exodus 16). They were only focused on the natural. Despite seeing the miracles that God had performed through Moses, they still doubted who this God was. Today, God does not want you to doubt. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. God will bring you through your exodus and always has your best interests at heart

### **Prayer points**

1. Lord, what areas of my life do I need to stop worrying about and simply trust you
2. Lord, whether I have, or do not have, my focus must be on doing your will
3. Lord, help me to increase my faith in you

### **Action:**

What have you been anxious about recently? God already knows the situation, your needs, and the outcome. Hand it over to God

## DAY 21

***Christian Focus – Before seeking after your personal needs, seek after the Kingdom of God and His standard of what is right.***

St Matthew 6:33 – But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

This verse starts with the word BUT. It connects us to the previous verses where Jesus reminds us not to worry about what we shall eat or what we shall drink or even what we shall wear. Our Heavenly Father knows we have need of these things. The Gentiles who do not know and recognise God as their Father seek after these things. BUT those who know God and have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour of their lives need not worry about these things as our Father knows and promises to supply our need according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19).

Luke 17:20-21 (NKJV) the Pharisees asked Jesus when would the Kingdom of God come, Jesus answered them saying, “The Kingdom of God is not something that can be observed..... for indeed, the Kingdom of God is within you.”

In today's Devotion we are encouraged to seek (aim at, strive after) His Kingdom and His righteousness. As we acknowledge that the Kingdom of God is within us/in our midst, we need to put Him first. God must always be our number one source of contact. We often forget to talk to God about our plans until our plans start going wrong. We sometimes fail to read God's word for direction and we even forget to spend time with Him telling Him how much we love and adore Him.

**Our Prayer from now should be to put God first in all our plans and decisions that we have to make.**













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