



21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

How to Begin Start with a clear goal. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Pray daily and read the Bible.

Preparing Spiritually Confess your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness from those you may have offended ([Mark 11:25](#); [Luke 11:4](#); [17:3-4](#)). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that try to hinder you ([Romans 12:1-2](#)).

Deciding What to Fast The type of fast you go on is up to you. You could go on a full fast in which you only drink liquids, or you may desire to fast like Daniel, who abstained from sweets and meats, and the only liquid he drank was water.

Remember to replace that time with prayer and Bible study.

What to Expect When you fast your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains. Limit your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Fasting brings about miraculous results. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to praise and worship. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face.

How to End Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Sunday, January 15: 24-hour Liquid Fast

We will drink water, natural fruit juice and herbal caffeine-free tea.

Monday, January 16: Begin the “Daniel Fast” We begin to introduce meals with pure foods of fruits and vegetables. This plan will continue for the next 20 days.

Sunday, February 5 : Break the Fast

We will come together as a church and end the fast with communion.

MENU

The Daniel Fast is a partial fast, which means that we will eliminate some common things from our daily diet, but will have generous options available. We will focus on eating fruits and vegetables that are pure and simple. We have included a list of foods to eat and foods to avoid.

If you have any condition which would prohibit you from being a part of the Daniel Fast, there are other options. Choose something from your daily routine (i.e. specific foods or beverages, television, other technology, etc.) and fast in that manner for the next 21 days.

Remember, the details are not as important as the spirit in which you participate.

Daniel Chapter 1 & Isaiah 58:6-9

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

Isaiah 58:

6"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

7Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

9Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am...'

Q&A with JENTEZEN FRANKLIN

Here are some of the most-asked questions about fasting...

How do I begin? What can I do to prepare for my fast?

Before beginning a fast, think it through. Write down a plan so that you do not waiver or start justifying your appetite during the fast. Make a verbal commitment to the Lord. Start your fast with a committed heart.

Can I have salt, pepper, seasonings, milk, whole grains, soy products, eggs, protein drinks, vitamins or butter?

The general guidelines for each fast can be found in the “Types of Fasts” section. However, fasting is a private discipline. It is not something that is meant to be unattainable. Decide what is feasible for you to do and make the effort. If you are on a full fast and just cannot consume broth without salt and pepper, that’s OK. Do what you can and put it in God’s hands . . . just do your best.

What can children fast?

I’ve found the best way to show your children the power of fasting is to lead by example. If they want to participate in fasting or if you want to have a family fast, consider giving up desserts. Or soft drinks. Or one item of food that would be a sacrifice to each of you.

Now if they want to do without broccoli and they don’t even like broccoli - giving it up wouldn’t be a sacrifice for them. Just lead by example and they will understand. In addition to giving up an item of food, you could also give up television as a family and spend that time reading and discussing Bible stories.

What if I have a medical condition?

Consult your doctor before starting any fast. Decide together what is possible. If your health condition prohibits you from fasting food, try fasting something else that would be a sacrifice or distraction for you and replace that time concentrating on prayer and Bible study.

What if I start and can’t finish out my fast . . . have I fasted for nothing?

Seeking God through prayer and fasting is never a waste of time. When you make the effort, God takes notice. Just determine within your heart that you will make an even better effort next time. Or maybe you need to try finishing up with a partial fast.

I forgot and ate something; do I need to start again? No, think of fasting as a marathon, rather than a sprint. Don’t give up! If you fall down, get up and keep trying. Conquering “king stomach” is difficult, but you’ll make it.

What type of fast are you going on? Do I have to do the same fast?

Fasting is a private and personal discipline. Consider the types of fasts outlined in this publication and select one that works for you. You don’t have to go on the same type of fast as someone else to see God’s hand at work. Just do your best.

Do I have to fast food? What about TV, sports, etc.? Fasting food is the traditional type of fast that is outlined in Scripture. However, if you are unable to fast food for health reasons, feel free to give up something else that might have control in your life or be preventing you from experiencing spiritual growth. Replace that time with prayer and study of God’s word.

Do I continue to exercise while fasting?

Moderate exercise is good. But it is best to always consult a doctor about fasting and exercise. If you are on a complete fast, you may not have the energy needed to maintain a high level of exercise.

What if I have a manual labor job?

If you have a job that requires you to expend a lot of physical energy, you may want to consider a partial fast that allows you to receive enough nutrition to perform your job.

Can my husband and I be intimate during our fast? There is a scriptural reference for abstaining from sex during times of fasting in I Corinthians 7:2-5 and especially verse 5. Here is the breakdown: v.3- the husband is to "render" to his wife the affection (sexual relations) due her and likewise the wife also to her husband. V.4- The husband does not have authority over his body and neither does the wife, but rather the marriage partner has the authority over the partner. V.5 So do not deprive one another (of sexual relations) EXCEPT WITH CONSENT, for a time . . . that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer. So the answer is yes, scripture allows this and even provides for this depriving or going without for the purpose of fasting and prayer, BUT this is only to be done by mutual consent. Both have to be on board to fast from sexual relations . . . for fasting is to be honorable before the Lord.

Helpful websites

www.awake21.org

www.daniel-fast.com

www.freedomyou.com

www.edyoung.com/fast_details.php

www.jentezenfranklin.org/fasting

There are an unlimited number of sites which offer helpful suggestions and recipes; these can be accessed by searching: "Daniel Fast." Recipes can be found by searching the "Vegan" or "Vegetarian."

A Note from your Pastor...

Congratulations on your commitment to enter into the time of prayer and fasting.

I am truly excited about what will occur over these 21 days as we look forward to seeing God move in our lives, our families, and the life of this church. We know that He will work in ways we could never have imagined. Together, we will take this journey. Together, we will go the distance to discover God's plan.

I was reading about a missionary that God mightily used whose catch phrase was: — ***"We can do this if we will."*** I have no doubt that there will be times during these 21 days that will be difficult and challenging – but church - ***"We can do this if we will!"***

Why 21 Days?

There are many options on the lengths and kinds of fasts.

It takes 21 days to develop a habit, 40 days to solidify new behavior, and 90 days to change your life. This 21-day period will hopefully result in needed changes in our lives.

I've put some resources together to help you truly thrive during the fast, including some guidelines, recipes and a few websites.

Important reminder: Be sure to drink as much water as possible throughout the fast!

What about children?

One person who did the 21 Day Fast said this concerning how they accommodated their children. *“We have eliminated sugar, bread and most dairy from our children's diet. They are having whole wheat pasta and soy milk. Mostly, they eat what we eat, but we have included chicken for them in some meals. We have found that they have been more open to new foods. It has been exciting to see them help plan meals and enjoy more fruits and vegetables, some of which they have never tried before. We remind them that when they are hungry, they will try something new. Remember, all of us can change our palates in 10 days!”*

Parents likely will want to make special provisions for their children, especially those who are younger.

Do you have questions about specific foods?

The list of foods we've provided is merely a first step to get you thinking about making better food choices. Remember, this fast is about growing your relationship with God. And He's not as concerned about what is in your stomach as He is about what is in your heart.

Daniel's decision not to eat the king's food was an outward symbol of an inward commitment he had made to God. *Let your choices over the next three weeks*

reflect the hunger you have for God's presence in your life.

Since there is no definitive list of foods for the Daniel Diet, it is truly *the spirit of Daniel's decision* that we are imitating over the next 21 days. If there is something that is not specifically listed that you think still qualifies as a 'food of the king,' then ask God to reveal to you whether it should be part of your diet over the next few weeks. The details of the fast are between you and God — use this time to focus on Him.

God is certain to bless your life in new and exciting ways during the fast. We encourage you to write down your prayers and the many ways God reveals Himself to you. We can't wait to see what God is going to do in your life and in the life of our church!

Fasting Guidelines

FOCUS

The fast is a spiritual discipline designed to better connect us with God. As a church, we are fasting in order to deepen our relationship with God and to walk in step with His plan and purpose. The best way to do this is to redirect our food source. This is accomplished through substituting our regular food intake with Bible reading, praying and journaling.

The overall goal is to experience a genuine hunger for spending time with God.

****If you have any known medical conditions or suspect such conditions, consult your doctor before beginning the fast.***

GUIDELINES FOR DANIEL FAST

Note that these are recommendations.

(Foods We May Eat)

Whole Grains: Brown Rice, Oats, Barley

Legumes: Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black- Eyed Peas

Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon,

Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini

Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts

Liquids: Water (as much as possible), Unsweetened Soy Milk, Herbal (caffeine free) Tea, Natural Fruit Juice (no added sugar), Natural Vegetable Juices

Extra-Virgin Olive Oil (small quantities), Honey

(Foods to Avoid)

Meat

Dairy Products White Rice Fried Foods

Caffeine

Carbonated Beverages

Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives

Refined Sugar

Sugar Substitutes

White Flour and All Products Using It

Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products

Recipes

Thick & Creamy Corn – Potato Soup

6 ears corn (cut off cob)
6 red potatoes (chopped)
6 carrots (chopped)
1 onion (chopped)
2 green peppers finely chopped
2 bay leaves
3 tsp thyme
2 tsp marjoram
3 tsp cumin
2 tsp sea salt
2 tsp pepper
3 32oz boxes vegetable broth
Water

Put vegetables & spices in large pot. Cook on medium heat for 15 min, add broth & maintain a light boil. Cook 45 min. Remove from heat, blend $\frac{3}{4}$ of the soup mixture in a blender in several batches. Put blended soup in a large bowl until blending process is complete. Pour the blended soup back in with the other remaining soup. Add water to thin to your consistency. Heat through & serve.

Tomato Basil Soup

12 vine ripe tomatoes
1 pkg cherry tomatoes
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups fresh carrot juice or organic carrot juice

1 large ripe avocado
2 onions chopped
4 cloves garlic
5 stems fresh basil
2 TBS pure honey
1 bay leaf
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp sea salt
1 TBS red pepper flakes
2 TBS olive oil

Cook onion & garlic in oil until tender. Cut tomatoes & avocado in pieces and put in blender, blend on low for 1 min. then blend on high for 1 min or until creamy. Pour into large soup pot or crock & cook on medium for 2 to 3 hours. ENJOY

Grilled Vegetables

Toss yellow squash, zucchini & asparagus with olive oil salt & pepper to taste. Grill indoor or out until tender!

Baked Sweet Potatoes

Wash sweet potato, prick with fork several times and place in a 400 degree oven for 1 hour or until tender.

Guacamole

Blend avocados in blender with juice from 1 lime, 2 cloves garlic, 1 tomato & dash of salt, if you like spice you can add jalapenos.

Baked Apples or Pears

Slice a pear or apple in half. Place halves, skin side down, in a glass baking dish. Brush with 1 tsp pure maple syrup & sprinkle with cinnamon. Microwave for 10 min or until tender. Serve warm.

The Breakers Granola

5 cups raw oatmeal
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup slivered raw almonds
1 cup chopped cashews
1 cup sunflower seeds
½ cup flax seed
1 cup chopped dry figs
1 cup chopped apricots
¼ cup chopped coconut
2 cups raisins
2 TBS cinnamon

To serve cold, soak ½ cup granola in 1 cup soy milk or you can heat it in the microwave to serve it warm.

Cuban Black Beans & Rice with Tomato Salsa

1 pkg dried black beans
1 32oz box vegetable broth
Chili powder
Chipotle powder
2 cloves garlic
Soak beans overnight in water. Drain & rinse beans. Place beans in sauce pan & add vegetable broth. Add water to cover if needed. Add spices & boil for 1 hour & then simmer until tender. Prepare brown rice according to pkg directions.

Salsa

Roma tomatoes quartered
Lime
Cilantro
1 bunch green onion
Chili powder
Cumin
Garlic

In blender add all the above ingredients and blend to your desired consistency
Place rice on individual dishes top with beans & salsa.

Red Chowder Soup

½ onion chopped
2 carrots chopped
2 stalks celery chopped
1 large potato chopped
36 oz water
1 (14.5) can diced tomatoes drained
1 (15oz) can tomato sauce
¼ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp salt
½ tsp parsley
¼ tsp thyme
¼ tsp dry mustard
½ tsp Cajun seasoning
5 drops hot pepper sauce

Add all ingredients. Cook over medium heat & simmer until the potato is tender, about 20 min.

White Beans & Sautéed Vegetables

2 cans white beans drained
2 TBS olive oil
½ cup yellow onion
2 cloves garlic
½ cup celery
½ cup carrot
¼ cup virgin olive oil
Salt & pepper to taste

Drain beans, set aside. Heat olive oil & then the chopped vegetables to pan & sauté until tender. Add beans & heat thoroughly. Dish up on serving plates, drizzle with olive oil, salt & pepper to taste.

Vegetarian Chili

2 green peppers
1 onion
1 zucchini sliced
1 yellow squash sliced
2 TBS salad oil
2TBS chili powder
¾ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground red pepper
2 cups corn fresh or frozen
2(16oz) cans tomatoes
2(16oz) cans pinto beans
2(16oz) cans black beans
1(4oz) can mild green chilies
1(4oz) can tomato paste

Chop & sauté the peppers & onions. Add the sliced squashes, chili powder, salt, red pepper & corn. When all the vegetables are soft but still firm, add the tomatoes, beans, green chilies, & the tomato paste. Stir until blended. Bring to a boil then let simmer for 20 min. Be careful not to let it stick.

Devotions from Ed Young Jr.

Monday, January 16

Pray

Before you begin reading; take some time to ask God to open your eyes to what he wants for your life during this day of fasting. Don't focus so much on the next 21 days as you do on today.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-12

King Jehoshaphat and the nation of Judah were up against the wall. They were about to face a massive army that was bent on destroying them and they knew it was more than they could handle.

In desperation and as an act of faith, Jehoshaphat decided to fast and pray. Jehoshaphat led the nation in a prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer he said to God, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you."

Jehoshaphat knew that God's perspective on the situation was the same perspective he needed to have. And in the end, God gave them an overwhelming victory.

Journal/Meditate

When we are up against the wall, we tend to buckle

down and try to handle it ourselves. Or, we just roll up in a ball and give up. As Christ-followers, we have another option. We can stand firm—on our knees—and see things from a higher perspective. God is bigger than anything we will ever face.

Think about an area of your life where you need God to show up. Write down some different things that God is showing you about this situation. Now focus on seeing that situation from God's perspective.

Apply

1. As you come up against obstacles throughout your day-whether they are large or small-get in the habit of praying before you do anything else.
2. Thank God for the ways he is working in your life and how he is helping you see things from a new angle.

Wednesday, January 18

Pray

Take a moment today to thank God for all he is doing as you fast. Thank him for the options he has made available and the benefits that will come from sticking with your commitment.

Read Daniel 1:1-20

Daniel was in a foreign land with foreign rules. He was chosen out of the crowd and put on the fast track with all the perks. Daniel received special food from the

king's table that most people would love to have. Not only was it an honor, it helped him fit in to this foreign land with foreign rules and rulers.

Yet, in the midst of this, Daniel had a difficult decision. "When in Rome, do as the Romans..." was a real option and it had privileges. But, Daniel knew God had a better plan for his life. Daniel was left with the decision to pursue the privileges of the foreign land or make changes that aligned him with God's plan.

Journal/Meditate

Daniel put his faith into action and trusted God's plan. As a result, God blessed Daniel's life in ways the foreign rulers could not. And Daniel's decision also led to opportunities for others to experience God's blessings.

In what area of your life are you in a "foreign land"? Rather than giving up or giving in, use this time to reveal God's plan to others. Stay true to God's plan for your life and you will see blessings accrue. And not only that, you will allow other people the opportunity to experience the greatness of God's plan.

Apply

What changes do you need to make in order to follow God's plan in the "foreign land" of your life?

Use these opportunities to bless others by showing them God's plan.

Friday, January 20

Pray

Before you begin reading, ask God to reveal His plan and purpose for you during this day of fasting. Don't focus so much on the diet and discipline, but on what He wants to reveal to you today.

Read Matthew 4:1-11

Prior to embarking on His public ministry, Jesus was led into the desert and fasted for 40 days. At the end of the 40 days, He went toe-to-toe with Satan and faced some serious temptation. Satan knew Christ was vulnerable and he did his best to cause Jesus to sin. Jesus, though, stood firm and refused to give in to the temptation.

After 40 days of fasting and solitude before God, Jesus was intently focused on God and His plan. Not even the most devious scheme Satan could devise would knock Jesus off focus. Jesus' purpose to redeem the world would not be compromised!

Journal/Meditate

The temptation of Jesus in the desert reveals a lot about Satan and his deceitful ways. He will often attack us when we are at our weakest point, when our cravings are at their all-time high. Satan's only goal is to keep us from fulfilling our God-given purpose.

But our mission in life to serve Christ and reflect Him in all we do supersedes any physical or emotional desire we may have. And the only way to maintain a proper understanding of our purpose in the face of temptation is to be focus on Christ.

Think about ways your vision becomes clouded by the evil one. What schemes has the evil one used to try and get you off purpose? Make a list of ways you can make sure your focus remains strong.

Apply

1. Take time today to refocus on God's purpose for your life. Thank Him for giving you the ability to be victorious in the face of temptation.
2. Whether it is your media intake, too much work, lack of a budget, missing church, or anything else, remove the stumbling blocks that keep you from maintaining your focus and purpose in life.

Monday, January 23

Pray

As you prepare to read God's word, take a moment to give Him glory for all that He has provided for you. And thank Him for the work that He is doing in your life.

Read Psalm 34:1-10

David was known as a man after God's own heart. Whether facing times of trial, desperation, boredom or victory, David always turned his face toward God. He

continually sought God's wisdom and direction for his life.

David knew that God was the only one who could truly satisfy and provide for all his needs. And he knew that God was the only one who could truly deliver him from his doubts and fears. And because he knew that, David continued to give God glory and praise through everything he faced.

Journal/Meditate

No matter what he was facing, good or bad, David always gave praise and glory to God. And he called those around him to do the same thing. He never took credit for his victories. He never blamed God when things got difficult. David knew that those who seek the Lord faithfully will find satisfaction and protection in His arms.

Are you turning to God in every situation you face? During this time of fasting, make a point of glorifying God continually. Praise Him for your victories and ask for His guidance during the more difficult times.

Apply

Each day thank God for at least one victory you had during the day. And ask Him to help you in any areas where you are struggling.

Make sure to use the victories and struggles as opportunities to point others to God.

Wednesday, January 25

Pray

Take a moment today to thank God for all he is doing as you fast. Thank him for the options he has made available and the benefits that will come from sticking with your commitment.

Read Exodus 16:1-12

Let's take a brief trek down memory lane. The Israelites had been in slavery for hundreds of years. God sent Moses, and through a series of miraculous plagues, Pharaoh was convinced to release them. Once the Israelites were released, though, Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his entire army to chase them down. But God miraculously parted the Red Sea: providing an escape route for the Israelites and a death trap for the army. They were finally free! If anyone had a reason to thank God, it was the Israelites. That act alone should have been enough to last them a lifetime.

But, a growling stomach can drown out even the loudest cries of victory. This newly-freed group of people was hungry and it changed their perspective on everything. Instead of focusing on what they had, they could only think about what they didn't have. Food became more important than freedom.

Journal/Meditate

Do you ever lose perspective? While you are

participating in this fast, are you focusing on what you can't have or on all that you already have? Take a few minutes today to make a list of the things you are thankful for-especially things that you may normally take for granted.

When we take time to express gratitude to God, it reminds us of the many ways he provides for us every day and it reaffirms that he is "the Lord your God."

Apply

Make a list of what you are thankful for. Try to think of things you may not have thought of before.

Look at everything in your life as a gift from God. Because when you do, you will gain a new perspective on all He has provided for you.

Friday, January 27

Pray

Take a moment before you read and ask God to open your heart to what He has to say. Listen closely to His still, small voice as you read the account of Adam and Eve.

Read Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

God gave Adam and Eve the freedom to experience nearly everything in the Garden. The blessings and opportunities were innumerable. They had free

reign, with only one exception. God instructed Adam and Eve not to touch the tree in the middle of the Garden. Yet, despite the countless blessings available to them, Adam and Eve chose to hang dangerously close to the one restriction.

Satan used that one restriction to manipulate and seduce Eve (and in turn, Adam) away from the will and blessing of God. He twisted God's words and caused them to focus on the one thing they were told they could not have. And the seduction was all about their appetite-both physical and spiritual. Satan distracted Eve from the blessing and shifted her focus to the one thing she could not have. And ultimately, they exchanged freedom for a taste of what was restricted.

Journal/Meditate

During this fast, have you focused on the freedom or restriction? We are free to eat of all the fruits and vegetables God has created. There is no way to count all the possibilities. Yet, with all the freedom we have been given, it is tempting to focus on the few restrictions.

Satan can manipulate the freedom God has given us in many areas of our lives. He can make God's freedoms feel restrictive. Don't let Satan manipulate you into giving up the freedom God has given.

Apply

Spend today focusing on the freedoms you have in this fast. Ask God to reveal areas of your life where you have been manipulated into trading in your freedom.

Monday, January 30

Pray

As you prepare to read God's word, take a moment to thank God for being your constant provider. And thank Him for giving you spiritual nourishment during this time of physical fasting.

Read Genesis 25: 24-34

As the eldest of two sons, Esau was in line to receive the family birthright-a privilege that included authority over the family's estate, control over the family's finances, and most importantly, God's blessing. The birthright was a tremendous honor; and to lose it, no small thing.

Journal/Meditate

In a world where self-discipline and restraint are quickly fading, Esau is a great example of how instant gratification can be costly. But before we rush to judge Esau, we must ask ourselves, "Am I willing to bargain away future blessings in order to have what I want right now? Do I ignore the long term consequences of my choices in order to experience momentary satisfaction?"

God doesn't want us to make poor choices. But when we make those choices, God often allows us to live-out and experience the consequences in order to help us mature.

Apply

Learn not to focus so much on "What I want now." Rather, focus on what God has in store for your life.

Before making any decisions, ask yourself, "Is what I'm choosing the best thing considering God's plan for my life? Is it His will? Is it in line with His desires?"

Wednesday, February 1

Pray

As you prepare to read God's word today, take a moment to think about prayer. Consider what you think prayer is, and isn't. And ask God to help you discover the revolutionary way prayer can change your life.

Read Matthew 6:5-8

In a world steeped with temple traditions, theological rituals and priestly routines, Jesus' instructions on prayer turned the religious world upside down. Many of the religions elite during the time viewed prayer as a means to elevate themselves and display their superiority when it came to the things of God. But Jesus saw through the hype of these hypocrites and taught otherwise.

People had never heard anyone speak about prayer the way Jesus did because He taught "as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." Jesus taught that prayer was alive, growing, and vibrant. Prayer was no longer something to be seen by men as a means to establish superiority. Jesus showed the world

how prayer is something that acts as a lifeline to connect us with God.

Journal/Meditate

One of the greatest lessons Jesus taught about prayer was the fact that God knows what we need before we ever ask it. And while some view that statement as an opportunity to duck out of prayer altogether, the real strength of that truth is that it frees us up to just pray. We no longer need to worry about what we say in prayer.

The words we use to talk with God are not as important as the fact that we are coming to God with our requests. God isn't concerned with whether or not we use the right pronouns, verbs, sentence structure or train of thought. All God is concerned about is that we come humbly to Him and talk about what is going on in our lives.

Don't get hung up on the semantics of prayer. Instead, focus on the amazing fact that God is waiting for you to come to Him and talk about what is going on in your life.

Apply

When you sit down (or stand up or lie down or kneel) to pray, simply open up your heart to God. Tell Him in plain language about your feelings, your

thoughts, and your desires. Don't worry about the words that come out of your mouth. Just start talking with God.

Friday, February 3

Pray

Ask God to reveal His truth to you during this time of prayer. Open your heart to receive His word, and listen to how God wants to use this time to lead you to a larger than life existence.

Read Numbers 11:10-15

Moses knew what it was like to be overwhelmed and overburdened. Though he loved the Israelites, they also drove him crazy at times! They always seemed to be complaining about something. Ironically, in this passage, they were complaining because they didn't have any meat to eat. Though God had miraculously delivered them from slavery and supernaturally met their every need, it wasn't enough for them! They wanted more.

But Moses was not afraid to take his feelings to God. And he went to God in times of frustration, irritation, and pure anger. But Moses also went to

God in times of joy and happiness. When it came to prayer, Moses held nothing back from God.

Journal/Meditate

Many of us have felt overwhelmed and

overburdened in the workplace, in our homes, or in our social circles. But so often we think we can't bring these issues to God. How did Moses do it day after day? How did he maintain his sanity?

The key was that he knew that God was ready to listen- no matter what. There were probably many occasions when Moses was hanging from his last thread and he unloaded on God. But that's what God wants. He wants you to come to Him when you are irritated, frustrated, or just plain angry-just as much as He wants you to come to Him when you are happy, joyous and victorious.

Don't hold anything back when it comes to communicating with God, because God is big enough to handle anything you bring to Him.

Apply

When you talk with God, find a quiet, solitary place and imagine that God is sitting next to you. Then, just start talking. Don't be afraid to share your frustrations. But don't just talk. Be ready to listen. You may find that the issue isn't with everyone else. He may want to use your situation to mold and shape you.

Saturday, February 4

Pray

Take a moment today to thank God for all he is doing as you fast. Thank him for the options he has made available and the benefits that will come from sticking with your commitment.

Read 2 Kings 2:23-25

Elisha was a man of God. Account after account throughout 2 Kings shows how God used Elisha in miraculous ways. Elisha purified poisoned water, miraculously fed a hundred people, blinded enemies of his people, prophesied military victories and famines, and even brought a young man back to life. Elisha is undoubtedly one of the heroes of the Old Testament.

Journal/Meditate

God invites us all to join him in a conversation known as prayer. He wants us to openly and honestly communicate-in good times and in bad. God wants us to come to him and express dreams that we have told no one else about. He knows that at times our communication will be selfish. There are times our communication will reveal dark things in our hearts like hurt, anger, bitterness and envy. And it can be scary to share those parts of our heart with God.

But like Elisha, we can express our deepest secrets to God without worrying that He is going to be

shocked and punish us. God will work through our honesty to align us with His will.

Apply

Search your heart for the deep secrets you have been hiding from God. Spend the next few minutes opening up and being honest with God. Don't worry about what you say. Simply go to God and begin to pray.

January Prayer Guide

January 9

Fresh Outpouring of His Spirit

January 10

A Love for God's Word

January 11

General Council of the Assemblies of God

January 12

Faith & Strength in the New Year

January 13

Salvations & Baptisms

January 14

General Superintendent of the A/G

January 15

Miracles & Wonders to take place

January 16

Music Ministry

January 17

Youth Ministry

January 18

Pastor & Family

January 19

Wisdom for our Pastor & Leadership

January 20

President Barack Obama & Family

January 21

Vision & Finances

January 22

Men & Women's Ministry

January 23

Our Community

January 24

District Leadership

January 25

Those Who Are Battling Sickness & Disease

January 26

Volunteer Ministry

January 27

Bible Fellowship & Children's Ministry

January 28

Pastor & Board

January 29

Salvations & Baptisms

January 30

State officials'