



The Power of Fasting and Prayer: A Spiritual Discipline Rooted in Faith

In the tapestry of our spiritual journey, fasting and prayer emerge as threads woven together to create a vibrant connection with God. This dynamic duo is not a mere religious ritual but a profound spiritual discipline that finds its roots in the pages of the Bible. As we embark on this journey of exploring the transformative power of fasting and prayer, let us anchor ourselves in the Word of God

The Bible is replete with instances where fasting and prayer played pivotal roles in the lives of individuals and communities. Jesus Himself set the precedent when He embarked on a forty-day fast in the wilderness, demonstrating the potency of fasting as a means of spiritual preparation and empowerment (Matthew 4:1-2). The disciples, too, engaged in fasting and prayer as they sought God's guidance for significant decisions (Acts 13:2-3).

Fasting is not about earning favor or manipulating God; rather, it is a physical and spiritual posture of humility. The psalmist David, in the midst of his repentance, proclaimed, "I humble myself with fasting" (Psalm 35:13b, NLT). Fasting invites us to lay aside our physical needs temporarily, acknowledging our dependence on God and surrendering our desires to His sovereign will.

Prayer is the heartbeat of our relationship with God. It is not a monologue but a dialogue where we commune with the Creator. Jesus emphasized the power of prayer in conjunction with fasting, stating, "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21, NKJV). Through prayer, we align our hearts with God's purposes and tap into His wisdom, strength, and grace.

Fasting is often likened to a spiritual detox, cleansing our hearts and minds. Isaiah 58 paints a vivid picture of the transformative impact of true fasting: breaking the chains of injustice, freeing the oppressed, and sharing with those in need. It's not merely abstaining from food but actively engaging in acts of compassion and justice.

James 4:8 encourages believers to "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you" (ESV). Fasting and prayer create a sacred space for us to draw near to the Almighty. As we set aside the distractions of this world, we make room for a deeper, more intimate connection with God. In the silence of fasting, we often find the voice of God speaking into the depths of our souls.

Fasting and prayer are not antiquated practices but timeless spiritual disciplines that propel us into the presence of God. They are instruments of transformation, forging a path toward spiritual maturity and a deeper understanding of God's will. As we embark on this journey of fasting and prayer, let us remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:18 (NLT), "Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you." May our fasting and prayers be a fragrant offering, drawing us closer to the heart of God.

Grover Duling, CBC Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Points

*"Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! **2** Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing. **3** Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.*

***4** Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. **5** For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations (**Psalm 100**).*

"Father, where do we begin in our efforts, though sincere they be, to worship, praise, and acknowledge You as the One, the True, the Only God? Our hearts are not able to contain the joy that overwhelms us being allowed, privileged entrance into Your "Holy Place" through Christ our Lord.

Our hand cannot write fast enough the blessings that You have given just this day. Our minds cannot begin to recall and number the untold blessings that have flowed from Your hands.

Heavenly Father you are the source of our worship and praise! Our souls are elevated and stirred by Your mercy, grace, love, and favor. We shout loudly the goodness and mercies of our God. **To you be honor and glory for ever and ever! Amen.**”

Please pray for these congregations and pastors.

- Shippensburg Congregation in Shippensburg, PA and Pastor Wayne Hall
- St Luke Congregation in Woodstock, VA and Pastor Shawn Graber

CBC Prayer Committee