



Providence
Baptist Church

Reaching Our City for Christ Through His Word

7 Steps to *Fasting and Prayer*



If my people, who are called by my name,
will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways,
then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

"One Church, Two Locations"
Rev. Rodney Maiden, Senior Pastor

7 Steps to *Fasting and Prayer*

7 STEPS TO FASTING & PRAYER

I believe the power of fasting as it relates to prayer is the spiritual atomic bomb that our Lord has given us to destroy the strongholds of evil and usher in a great revival and spiritual harvest. Increasingly I have been gripped with a growing sense of urgency to call upon God to send revival to our church.

God is calling us to fast, and He would not make such a call without a specific reason or purpose. With this conviction, let's enter this fast with excitement and expectancy mounting in our hearts, praying, "Lord, what do you want me to do? What do you want us to do?"

I believe such a fast is a sovereign call of God because of the magnitude of the sins in the Church. The Lord impressed that upon my heart, as well as the urgent need to help accelerate the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation from our church.

When we fast and pray, the more we'll sense the presence of the Lord. The Holy Spirit will refresh our soul and spirit, and we will experience the joy of the Lord as seldom before.

We're at a pivotal point in our church history. Either we'll decline or stay stagnant because of our complacency or move ahead under the power of the Holy Spirit to continue to meander in uncharted waters of spiritual growth and development. I'm claiming 1200 plus new souls for Christ.

7 Steps to *Fasting* and *Prayer*

This year in 2023. I'm determined to give God all of me in 2023. As we wait upon the Lord, the Holy Spirit will give us the assurance that our church, before the end of the year 2023, will experience a great spiritual awakening. This divine visit from heaven will kindle the greatest spiritual harvest in the history of our Church. But before God comes in revival power, the Holy Spirit will call many of us, God's people to repent, fast, and pray in the spirit of *2 Chronicles 7:14*:

If my people, who are called by my name, (who belongs to Providence) will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

The scope of this revival will depend on how the believing members in Providence will respond to this call.

I would like to share with those who are going to labor with me in fasting and praying, this handy reference guide, Seven Steps to Fasting and Prayer, will help make your time with the Lord more spiritually rewarding. I encourage you to keep it with you during your fast and refer to it often because it gives easy-to-follow suggestions on how to begin your fast, what to do while you fast, and how to end your fast properly. I urge you to prayerfully consider this challenge.

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How you begin and conduct your fast will largely determine your success. By following these seven basic steps to fasting, you will make your time with the Lord more meaningful and spiritually rewarding.

STEP 1: SET YOUR OBJECTIVE

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically.

Through fasting and prayer, we humble ourselves before God so the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our churches, and heal our land according to *2 Chronicles 7:14*. Make this a priority in your fasting

STEP 2: MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT

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, one day, a week, several weeks, forty days (Beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts.)
- The type of fast God wants you to undertake (such as water only, or water and juices; what kinds of juices you will drink and how often)
- 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.

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STEP 3: PREPARE YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

- Ask God to help you make a comprehensive list of your sins.
- 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.
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in *Ephesians 5:18* and His promise in *1 John 5:14,15*.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; refuse to obey your worldly nature (*Romans 12:1, 2*).
- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others (*Psalms 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*).

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STEP 4: PREPARE YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

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.

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.

- Do not rush into your fast.
- Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods.
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting a fast.

Your time of fasting and prayer has come. You are abstaining from all solid foods and have begun to seek the Lord. Here are some helpful suggestions to consider:

- Avoid drugs, even natural herbal drugs and homeopathic remedies. Medication should be withdrawn only with your physician's supervision.
- Limit your activity.
- Exercise only moderately. Walk one to three miles each day if convenient and comfortable.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially on the second day. You may have fleeting hunger pains, dizziness, or the "blahs." Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.

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The first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will likely experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your liquid intake.

STEP 5: PUT YOURSELF ON A SCHEDULE

For maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen for His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Morning

- Begin your day in praise and worship.
- Read and meditate on God's Word, preferably on your knees.
- Pray for His vision for your life and empowerment to do His will.
- Invite God to use you. Ask Him to show you how to influence your world, your family, your church, your community, your country, and beyond.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to work in you to will and to do His good pleasure according to *Philippians 2:13*.

Noon

- Return to prayer and God's Word.
- Take a short prayer walk.
- Spend time in intercessory prayer for your church, leaders, members, ministries, goal to reach 500 new families and for your family or special needs.

Evening

- Get alone for an unhurried time of "seeking His face."
- If others are fasting with you, meet together for prayer.
- Avoid television programs and shows or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus.

When possible, begin and end each day on your knees with your spouse (if married) for a brief time of praise and thanksgiving to God. Longer periods of time with our Lord in prayer and study of His Word are often better spent alone.

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BREAKING YOUR FAST

When your designated time for fasting is finished, you will begin to eat normal again. But how you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being.

STEP 6: END YOUR FAST GRADUALLY

Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.



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STEP 7: EXPECT RESULTS

If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray, and seek God's face; if you consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence (*John 14:21*).

The Lord will give you fresh, new spiritual insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually, and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.

A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh in-filling of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. A 24 hour fast each week has been greatly rewarding to many Christians.

It takes time to build your spiritual fasting muscles. If you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time out, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honor you for your faithfulness.

I encourage you to join me in fasting and prayer again and again through this year, until we truly experience revival in our church, and in our home and community



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