



**ONE
FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH**

FASTING AND PRAYER GUIDE



MESSAGE FROM PASTOR T.C.

Brothers & Sisters,

As we embark on a new year with all of the desires that we have for new beginnings and new things, my hope for myself and for you is that we would grow in godliness. One of the ways to godliness is dependence on God in prayer. What a wonderful weapon that God has given us in prayer. We are told in the book of James that **the prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect** (James 5:16b). With this reality, we want to spend the month of January with an intentional focused time on prayer and fasting. During this month, we will pray and fast for our personal relationships with the Lord, unity in our church, the leadership of our church, and our missions and outreach.

To help us with this focused month of prayer and fasting, we have created this guide to help you in your participation in this church-wide initiative. In this guide you will be given information on fasting and holiness, you will be given a weekly summary for the prayer focus of the week as well as something to pray for daily along with a verse to assist you.

I hope that God will use this month in your life personally as well as in the life of our congregation as we continue to pursue growth in loving God, loving people, and sharing Jesus.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T.C. Taylor', written in a cursive style.

T.C. Taylor
Lead Pastor

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What is Fasting?

What is Holiness?

How are Holiness and Fasting Related?

We can become so desensitized by the world that God's Word has little to no effect on us. The cares of this world can choke out the hope that is within us. Fasting and prayer are a way to reignite a passion for holiness in His people. Through fasting and prayer, we can humble our hearts, clear our minds, and open up space for the Holy Spirit to work.

How to Fast Properly

Attitude

God judges the motives behind fasting. In Isaiah 58:3-8, the people asked God, “Why have we fasted, but you have not seen? We have denied ourselves, but you haven’t noticed!” God responded that He was not pleased with their fast because their hearts were not right. They were loud and obvious about their “sacrifice” in fasting and yet held contention, strife, oppression, and anger in their hearts. Those who would make fasting about themselves do not impress God. (Isa 58, Jer 14:12, Zech 7:5, Matt 6:16-18).

- Humble your heart. Ask Him to help you approach this fasting with the right attitude. God blesses those who sincerely seek His face.
- Prepare yourself spiritually. You may need to confess sin and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas to focus on. (James 4:3)
- Surrender this time to Him and ask for His guidance in rejecting worldly desires that try to hinder you. (Rom 12:1-2).

From What and for How Long

Fasting may look a little different for each person. You could choose to do a full fast in which you drink only liquids. Another option is a partial fast from morning to dinner or from sun up to sundown. You also could choose a Daniel like fast and eat no meat, no sweets, no bread, drink water and juice, and eat fruits and vegetables (Dan 10:3). Or, consider a non-food related fast in which you refrain from some daily activity to focus that time on prayer.

We will be praying and fasting together as a corporate body during the month of January. Each week will have a different area of focus.

- Week 1, Jan 3rd – 9th: Personal Godliness
- Week 2, Jan 10th – 16th: Corporate Unity
- Week 3, Jan 17th – 23rd: One Fellowship Leadership
- Week 4, Jan 24th – 30th: Mission and Outreach

Health

Fasting can bring about life changing moments with God. However, it is important to ensure you fast in a way that will not physically harm you. Beginners should start small or fast from some food but not all food. If you plan to do a more aggressive fast, use wisdom and planning. You may also consider contacting your healthcare professional. If you have any metabolic condition that would negatively be affected by fasting, such as diabetes, then you should choose a non-food fast. When you end your fast, do not over eat. Begin eating solid food gradually; eat small portions or snacks.

Commitment and Consistency

In the book of Daniel, it says he “purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself” (Dan 1:8). He determined, decided, made up his mind, set his mind on denying himself. Daniel made both a head and heart commitment. Denying yourself is not easy. Your body likes consistency and when you deprive it, you can experience mild discomfort. You will naturally have hunger pains. But you could also experience headaches, fatigue, and irritability. Since you will be under some stress, you should consider limiting things that could cause your body additional stress. You might consider reducing your activity and exercise moderately. Take time to rest. Remember to replace time in meals with prayer and a focus on Scripture. If you commit to fasting for a period, try to keep it. Step away from the typical distractions of the day as much as possible and pray as often as you can. Keep your heart and mind set on seeking God’s face.

Where do you Want God to Move

If you need some direction on what to pray for, we have provided a guiding verse or verses for each day of the week. If there is something in your life, where you are seeking His guidance, deliverance, or want Him to move in someone else’s life, write that down. Then pray for that each week.

He knows what you and I need. Yet He wants to hear from us.

WEEK 1: JAN 3RD – 9TH

PERSONAL GODLINESS

When I heard these words, I sat down and wept. I mourned for a number of days, fasting and praying before the God of the heavens. (Neh 1:4)

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature;
the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Cor 5:17)*

Prayer Focus

Have you ever compared a caterpillar to a butterfly? They look and act like two very different creatures. Yet, we know that butterflies start out as caterpillars. How does that happen? It happens through a radical transformation.

At a divinely designed time in its development, a trigger inside the caterpillar prompts it to attach itself to a leaf. It then exudes a chrysalis or cocoon. Did you catch that? It does not weave or construct a chrysalis. The cocoon comes from within the caterpillar and diffuses outward. From that point, it gets even more amazing. The caterpillar then dissolves. It is deconstructed. It is undone. It ceases to be what it was. Only then, can it be re-made. After several days, it emerges from the chrysalis. However, what emerges is something new. This new creature looks different, acts different, and has a different purpose. Experiments have shown that although the process destroys the old caterpillar, the new butterfly retains its caterpillar memory.

The Christian life calls for the same kind of transformation. We cannot attach Jesus to our lives any more than a caterpillar can put on a butterfly suit or attach wings. We must submit to the Holy Spirit grabbing our soul from within and let Him destroy – dissolve – undo us in order for Christ to re-assemble us into a new creature. Once He does that, we have a new and different purpose. Our purpose is no longer living for ourselves but glorifying Christ and pursuing godly living.

Although we are new in Him, we retain knowledge of our old self. We remember how we used to live. Just as it makes no sense for a butterfly to behave like a caterpillar, we cannot follow our old way of life. That is not who we are now. We are new creatures with a new mission.

Key Verses

Day 1 – Pray that OFC would recognize and cherish the Word of God as our guide to holy living. “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.” (Ps 119:9)

Day 2 – Pray the God would reveal to us that which is displeasing to Him so that we can repent. Pray that we would desire God from our inner being “Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way” (Ps 139:23-24)

Day 3 – Pray that we would see that holiness in our physical body is just as important as our heart. “Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.” (Rom 12:1)

Day 4 – Pray that holiness would not be a seasonal challenge, but a lifelong pursuit of Jesus. “We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Cor 3:18)

Day 5 – Pray that we recognize that as we say NO to a small number of things, we say YES to so much more. “So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1)

Day 6 – Pray that we would pursue holiness as a command from our King vs a suggestion. “For God has not called us to impurity, but to live in holiness.” (1 Thess 4:7)

Day 7 – Pray that we would desire holiness not for personal gain but for use in His kingdom work. “So if anyone purifies himself from anything dishonorable, he will be a special instrument, set apart, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.” (2 Tim 2:21)

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*Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received,
with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,
making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope at your calling
– one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,
who is above all and through all and in all. (Eph 4:1-6)*

Prayer Focus

The Trinity created unity in diversity. God is three distinct persons and yet He is one. Similarly, we are all individual church members but one unified body in Christ. The letter to the Ephesians helps us understand how God, through the person and work of Jesus, created a unified church out of a very diverse people. The church should be a glorious mosaic. When you look closely, you see vastly different individual pieces. However, when you pull back, you should see one beautiful body. I say, “should” because we do not always operate as the unified body that Christ died for. He emptied Himself in order to present the church holy and blameless without spot or wrinkle. (Eph 5:27)

God created this unity. However, He calls us to diligently keep and preserve it. Just as God calls each person individually to be holy, He calls the church collective body to holiness. We have to live (or walk) in a unified way. We are unified when we show love for each other. Love for the brothers and sisters in Christ is the evidence of new life in us. It is a basic sign of being born again. (1 John 4:20) It can be difficult to love others in the little, day-to-day, petty things of life. It takes effort. Accepting one another in love, bearing with one another, forgiving one another, and working diligently to restore unity in the church is huge to God. Seek meekness and esteeming others better than you do yourself. When we show this kind of love, we model something completely different to a world that celebrates division.

The unity of the church is His mystery and manifold wisdom revealed to the universe. The church body is all the more beautiful because we are diverse with different backgrounds, opinions, skills, ways of thinking, etc. "No other human community resembles it. Its diversity and harmony are unique." (Stott)

Key Verses

Day 1 – Pray that OFC would take corporate unity as serious as God does. “The Lord hates six things; in fact, seven are detestable to him: arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, a lying witness who gives false testimony, and one who stirs up trouble among brothers.” (Prov 6:16-19)

Day 2 – Pray that we would assume the best of others first and value the differences that each person can bring to the church. “Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. (Rom 12:4-5)

Day 3 – Pray that we would all strive to outdo each other in genuinely showing love. “And may the Lord cause you to increase and overflow with love for one another and for everyone, just as we do for you. May he make your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.” (1 Thess 3:12-13)

Day 4 – Pray where there is misunderstanding or tension, each member would strive to restore unity. Where there is need for confession and repentance, pray that we would be obedient. “Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, that there be no divisions among you, and that you be united with the same understanding and the same conviction.” (1 Cor 1:10) “Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Become mature, be encouraged, be of the same mind, be at peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.” (2 Cor 13:11)

Day 5 – Pray that our love for each other will be so evident that others will be curious about God. “I am in them and you are in me, so that they may be made completely one, that the world may know you have sent me and have love them as you have loved me. (John 17:23) “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35)

Day 6 – Pray that each of us would see people the way that God sees them – as fearfully and wonderfully made image bearers in need of salvation. “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:28) “Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.” (Rom 6:4)

Day 7 – Pray for discernment in OFC; that we would be able to protect our unity. “Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create divisions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned. Avoid them.” (Rom 16:17)

WEEK 3: JAN 17TH – 23RD
ONE FELLOWSHIP LEADERSHIP

When they had appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:23)

Prayer Focus

In his book, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons*, Thabiti M. Anyabwile says, “The joy, peace, unity, and fruitfulness of the local church depends in part on having a (crew) of faithful table servants who are present when needed, eager to serve without being intrusive. [It is] a spiritual office. Its discharge is a spiritual work.”

The unredeemed world reveres leaders more than it does servants. God reveals a different approach to leadership. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. (Mark 10:45) We should all aspire to serve others in the church, possibly even as leaders (Heb 6:10, 1 Tim 3:1)

Servants of the church choose to dedicate their time and energy in building up the spiritual and physical wellbeing of the members. Elders, deacons, and staff attend to the cares of the church, distribute blessings, pray, teach, and work to keep the day-to-day activities of the body running as smooth as possible.

They must seek holiness themselves if they are to help the body do the same. It is amazing that God assigns fallen but redeemed persons to act as His servants and under shepherds to His flock. Serving the church in this role brings a heightened awareness of the ripple effects of sin as well. All sin is grievous to the Lord. How much more does he grieve the sins of those in church leadership?

Serving the church is good and often inspiring, but the weight and accountability of church leaders and staff is heavy. The staff, deacons, and elders (and their families) need your prayers – prayers for perception, passion, patience, persistence, peace, and protection.

Pray that they would humbly strive to advance the gospel of Christ in the church, for the administration, finances, and facilities of the OFC ministry. Finally, pray that God would raise up future leaders from among us.

Key Verses

Day 1 – Pray that OFC leaders will desire and discipline themselves in personal holiness. They would pursue holiness as they exhort the church to do the same; fleeing temptation and making no provision for sin “Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.” (2 Cor 5:9) “I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you.” (Ps 119:11)

Day 2 – Pray that OFC leaders would seek wisdom before making decisions. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” (Prov 3:5-6) “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach.” (Jam 1: 5)

Day 3 – Ever since the Fall authority has often been abused. Pray that OFC leaders and servants would guard their hearts against pride, improper use of power, and self-sufficiency. “Jesus called them over and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. It must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave;” (Matt 20:25-27)

Day 4 – Pray that OFC leaders will have boldness in the face of greater opposition from the devil. “Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness” (2 Cor 3:12) “For those who have served well as deacons acquire a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim 3:13)

Day 5 – Pray for the families of OFC leaders. Pray that they keep watch over their marriages and kids. They would not neglect their families in service to the church. “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand. Be sure that all who are enraged against you will be ashamed and disgraced; those who contend with you will become as nothing and will perish. You will look for those who contend with you, but you will not find them. Those who war against you will become absolutely nothing.” (Isa 41:10-12)

Day 6 – Pray that OFC leaders would be long suffering but also that the members of the church will respect their leadership. “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Gal 6:9) “Obey your leaders and submit to them, since they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they can do this with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” (Heb 13:17)

Day 7 – Pray that OFC leaders would resist the temptations of distractions and remain focused on the mission and vision of Christ for His church. “And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” (1 Cor 2:1-2)

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Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matt 28:18-20)

Pray that we would be an active force for love in the Pike community. Pray that OFC would gain a reputation for how it loves people not just on “decision day” but also in the day-to-day.

Key Verses

Day 1 – Pray that God would open doors, open our mouths and open hearts. “For this is what the Lord has commanded us: I have made you a light for the Gentiles to bring salvation to the ends of the earth. (Acts 13:47) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.” (Rom 1:16)

Day 2 – Pray for 3 people you know who need salvation. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel. “The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.” (2 Pet 3:9) “This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim 2:3-4)

Day 3 – Pray that OFC would be so filled with thanksgiving at what the Lord has done that we will make it known in our community. “In that day you will say: “Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.” (Isaiah 12:4) “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the herald, who proclaims peace, who brings news of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!” (Isa 52:7)

Day 4 – Pray that OFC would seek opportunities to show compassion in the community. “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me.” “And the King will answer them, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. (Matt 25:35-36, 40)

Day 5 – Pray for the governmental leaders, teachers, first responders, and protectors our city. “A king’s heart is like channeled water in the Lord’s hand: He directs it wherever he chooses.” (Prov 21:1) “First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.(1 Tim 2:1-2)

Day 6 – Pray that we would be bold in sharing the love of Christ, that He would be a beacon of hope in the community. “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matt 5:14-16)

Day 7 – Pray that OFC would eventually send missionaries of His love to other parts of the city, the state, and the world. “I will display my greatness and holiness, and will reveal myself in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord. (Ezek 38:23) “How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?” (Rom 10:14) “So faith comes from what is heard through the message about Christ.” (Rom 10:17)