



This Guide Belongs To:

# Fasting and Prayer Guide



Daily Practice to Help You  
Grow Closer to God





## What's Inside?

This Fasting and Prayer Guide will help you learn about and practice the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, and reading the Bible.

The Guide begins with instructions on why and how you should fast.

Next is a section with three weeks of Read, Reflect, and Respond prompts to guide you in reading your Bible and prayer. You will read a scripture, reflect on what it means by thinking about a question, and respond by applying it to your life. Each week the prompts go through the Lord's Prayer as an example of how you can pray. Plus, you have a weekly activity and something to practice.

Remember to view the daily prompts as practice. Practice helps you get better at something, so don't stop, even if you get behind.

It would be great to Read, Reflect, and Respond to the daily prompts with your family each day. If that isn't possible then enjoy your time alone with God.

At the end of the Guide are Growth Challenges. Pick a few or all of them to work on. You can use them to keep track of the spiritual disciplines you are practicing.

## You can grow closer to God!



## Thinking about The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we pray that Your name will always be kept holy. We pray that Your kingdom will come, that what You want will be done here on Earth, the same as in Heaven.

Give us the food we need for today. Forgive our sins, just as we have forgiven those who did wrong to us. Don't let us be tempted, but save us from the evil one. For the kingdom and the power and the glory belong to You forever and ever. Amen.

*Matthew 6:9-13 from the Easy-to-Read Version*

### Write your response to each part of The Lord's Prayer:

I praise God for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I need to yield this to God \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I need to ask God for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I need to confess I've done this wrong \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I need to forgive this person because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I ask God to protect me when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I am thankful for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was your favorite scripture? Write it here.

How did fasting help you grow closer to God?

What did you learn that you want to remember?

## Fasting and Prayer

### Go Together Like Peanut Butter and Jelly

God asks you to fast to teach you to set aside something you want in order to focus on what God wants for you. To know what God wants for you, you need to spend time with Him. To get to know God better, you need to hang out with Him, just like you would spend time with a friend. That means you need to pray! Prayer is a special word that means you talk to God.



Jesus gave an example of how to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. It's called The Lord's Prayer. Each part of The Lord's Prayer shows different ways you can talk to God. It will be your guide for practicing prayer during the fast.

### Challenge yourself to memorize it!

**Praise God** = *Our Father in heaven, we pray that Your name will always be kept holy.*

**Yield to God** = *We pray that Your kingdom will come, that what You want will be done here on Earth, the same as in Heaven.*

**Make a Request** = *Give us the food we need for today.*

**Confess What You've Done Wrong** = *Forgive our sins,*  
**Forgive Others** = *just as we have forgiven those who did wrong to us.*

**Ask for Protection** = *Don't let us be tempted, but save us from the evil one.*

**Show Thankfulness** = *For the kingdom and the power and the glory belong to You forever and ever.*

*Matthew 6:9-13 from the Easy-to-Read Version*

## FASTING IS:

- Choosing not to do something you enjoy to give that time to God
- Setting aside distractions to focus on God
- For a limited amount of time
- Learning to depend on God's help to do hard things
- A good way to reset your routines and habits

## FASTING IS NOT:

- Punishment
- A way to make God love you more
- Necessary to stay on God's "good side"
- Showing off how good you are
- Hurting yourself

## Examples of Things You Can Fast:

- **Snacks** - Adults fast whole meals, but that isn't healthy for kids. Instead, you could fast a snack.
- **Sweets and Treats** - You can fast a food you don't need for nutrition such as candy, treats, or soda.
- **Technology** - Video games, TV, phones, or tablets
- **Activities** - Any activity you enjoy

## BALANCE: Trust God to find stability and peace

Choose to do less of an activity you do too often.



Give time you would spend on yourself to help someone else.



Choose a balancing pose to practice during the fast.



## STRETCH: Try new things even when it feels hard

Find a different place to pray today.



Choose a new way to treat someone who annoys you.



Choose a physical stretch to practice.



# Growth Challenges

Complete as many challenges as you can.  
Mark through the pictures to keep track of your progress.

## PRACTICE: Make faith a habit by applying it daily

Read the Scriptures in this Guide every day for a week.



Ask for help to learn something new then practice it.



Stop to pray when you feel scared, anxious, or angry.



## FOCUS: Don't let distractions control you

Be still and quiet in your mind and your body when you pray.



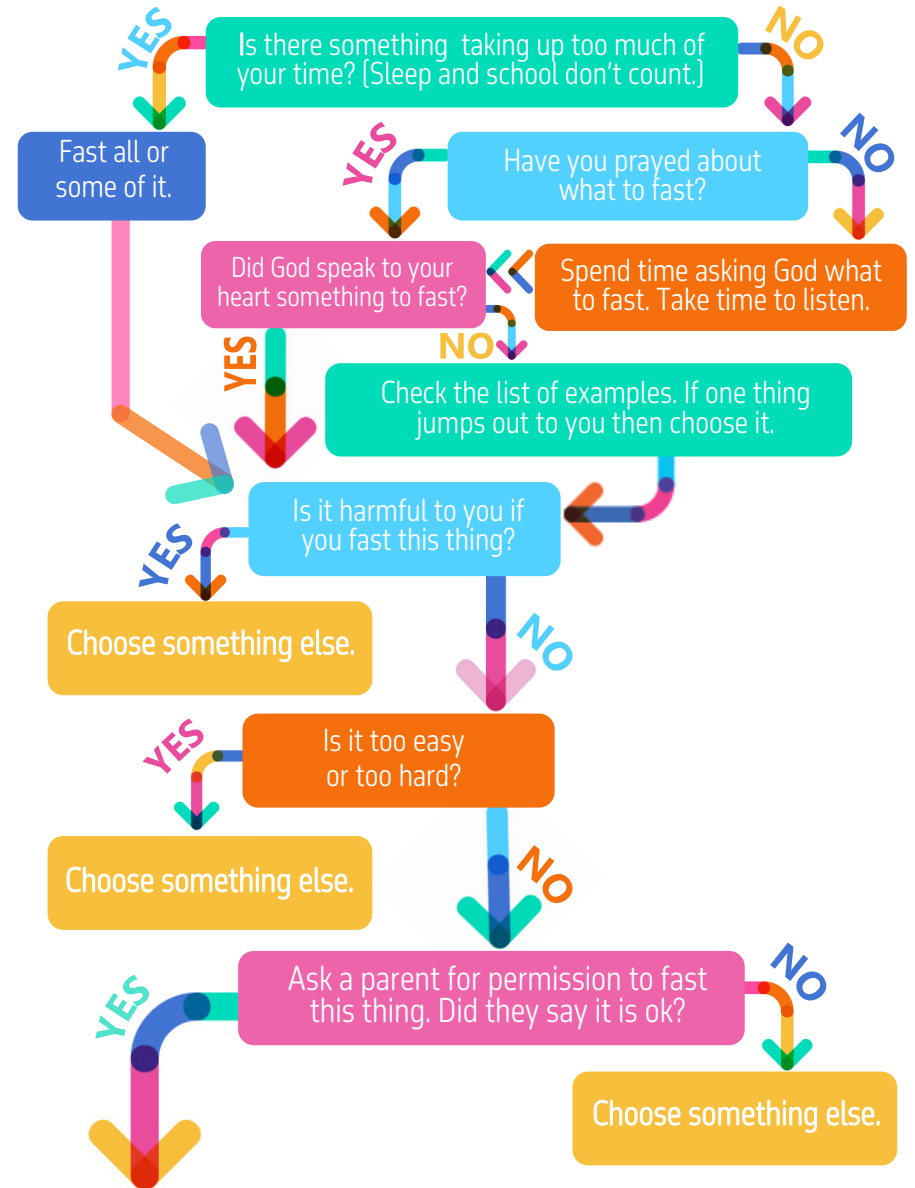
Listen carefully when someone talks to you.



Choose not to complain when you usually would.



# How to Pick What to Fast



**Write what you will fast & for how long:**

# WEEK ONE

## Let's Do This!

### DAY 1: Praise God

- ⇒ Read: Psalm 8:1-9
- ⇒ Reflect: How does looking at creation help you praise God?
- ⇒ Respond: Thank God for something He made.

### DAY 2: Yield to God

- ⇒ Read: John 15:9-16
- ⇒ Reflect: Which of God's commands do you need help with?
- ⇒ Respond: Show someone God's love by being kind today.

### DAY 3: Make a Request

- ⇒ Read: Matthew 7:7-11
- ⇒ Reflect: What are you asking God to do in you?
- ⇒ Respond: Ask God to do something for someone else too.

### DAY 4: Confess What You've Done Wrong

- ⇒ Read: 1 John 1:5-10
- ⇒ Reflect: What do you need to confess to God?
- ⇒ Respond: Pray for Jesus to forgive you then believe He will.

### DAY 5: Forgive Others

- ⇒ Read: Luke 6:37-38
- ⇒ Reflect: Who do you need to forgive?
- ⇒ Respond: Give forgiveness even when someone doesn't "deserve" it because that's what Jesus did for you.

### DAY 6: Ask for Protection

- ⇒ Read: Psalm 91:1-16
- ⇒ Reflect: When do you need God's protection?
- ⇒ Respond: Rest in God's presence. Enjoy His peace.

### DAY 7: Show Thankfulness

- ⇒ Read: Deuteronomy 4:5-9
- ⇒ Reflect: Would a new friend know that you love Jesus?
- ⇒ Respond: Practice talking about God's goodness so you will remember it and point others to God.

"Holy Spirit, help me learn to hear Your voice."

## ACTIVITY: Pouring Out

You need a pitcher filled with water and an empty glass. First, pour some water straight into the glass. Notice how easily the water pours and how quickly the glass fills. Now find some different items to use to block the water. Choose different types of material such as any kind of paper, coffee filter, sieve, plate, paper towel, piece of bread, or a cloth napkin. Test each item by setting it on top of the glass then slowly pouring water through the item and into the glass. Notice how much each item blocks the water. Rate them from most to least.

*"God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit." Romans 5:5*

God wants to pour out His love into your life. What things in your heart are blocking it? Ask the Holy Spirit to remove anything blocking you from hearing and obeying God.

## PRACTICE: Balance and Stretching

Choose a balance pose, such as standing on one foot, and a stretching pose, such as touching your toes. Practice these poses every day this week. Compare how long you balanced the first day and the last day. Compare how far you could stretch the first day and the last day. **How much did you improve with practice?**

As the fast is ending, talk as a family about what you've learned and how you take that forward. In what areas of your life do you need to have more balance so you aren't overwhelmed? How does God want to stretch what you know about Him? **Don't expect yourself to be perfect. Expect yourself to keep practicing.**

# WEEK THREE

## Finish Strong!

### DAY 15: Praise God

- ⇒ Read: Isaiah 45:22-25
- ⇒ Reflect: Can you say you get your strength from God?
- ⇒ Respond: Practice saying good God has done for you.

### DAY 16: Yield to God

- ⇒ Read: Matthew 5:3-10
- ⇒ Reflect: What does it look like to hunger and thirst for God?
- ⇒ Respond: Think about how God is blessing you today.

### DAY 17: Make a Request

- ⇒ Read: Philippians 4:4-9
- ⇒ Reflect: What things do you think about that steal your peace?
- ⇒ Respond: Picture peace standing like a guard in your heart.

### DAY 18: Confess What You've Done Wrong

- ⇒ Read: James 5:13-16
- ⇒ Reflect: Do believe your prayers are powerful?
- ⇒ Respond: Pray for someone who is sick or needs to know God.

### DAY 19: Forgive Others

- ⇒ Read: Ephesians 4:21-32
- ⇒ Reflect: How do you put on your new self in Jesus?
- ⇒ Respond: Work to get rid of bitterness, anger, and fighting.

### DAY 20: Ask for Protection

- ⇒ Read: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5
- ⇒ Reflect: How does God guard you from evil? What is your part?
- ⇒ Respond: Pray for missionaries to spread the Gospel like Paul.

### DAY 21: Show Thankfulness

- ⇒ Read: Romans 8:35-39
- ⇒ Reflect: Is there anything that can separate you from God's love?
- ⇒ Respond: Let the bigness of God's love surround you today.

"Father God, I give everyone and everything to You!"

## ACTIVITY: Breakthrough Banner

Tape together any kind of paper (construction paper, notebook paper, printer paper) to make a long banner. On the banner, write "This is the Year..." in big letters, then add things to finish that sentence. You want to add things that are important to you that you want God to help you with this year. You can include things from any part of your life including:

- Spiritual things - "This is the year I grow closer to God."
- Relationships - "This is the year I work on getting along with my brother."
- Something else - "This is the year I do my homework on time."

Ask two people to hold the banner. Declare "This is the Year!" and read the things you wrote. Then run through the banner as a symbol of your breakthrough.

## PRACTICE: Spiritual Muscle Memory

Have you ever heard an athlete, a dancer, or a musician say they practiced so much that their muscles automatically knew what to do? Those are great examples of how important it is to practice. Did you walk, talk, or ride a bike perfectly the first time you tried? No way! It took lots of practice.

**Living in connection and obedience to God takes practice too. In fact, you will work on it your entire life! But with practice, you will begin to automatically turn to God in hard situations. You will trust God more quickly because you already know how. Fasting is practice that builds your spiritual muscles.**

# WEEK TWO

## Grow in God!

### DAY 8: Praise God

- ⇒ Read: Isaiah 55:6-12
- ⇒ Reflect: Why is God's way so much better than what people do?
- ⇒ Respond: Choose to trust God with something because He is big.

### DAY 9: Yield to God

- ⇒ Read: Romans 12:1-2
- ⇒ Reflect: How do you offer your life as a sacrifice to God?
- ⇒ Respond: Ask God to change something specific in your heart.

### DAY 10: Make a Request

- ⇒ Read: Matthew 6:25-34
- ⇒ Reflect: If God knows everything, why is it important to pray?
- ⇒ Respond: Ask God to provide for a need. Choose not to worry.

### DAY 11: Confess What You've Done Wrong

- ⇒ Read: Hebrews 4:12-16
- ⇒ Reflect: When do you need to remember that nothing is hidden from God?
- ⇒ Respond: Choose to receive God's grace when you mess up.

### DAY 12: Forgive Others

- ⇒ Read: Colossians 3:12-17
- ⇒ Reflect: How will you put on kindness and patience?
- ⇒ Respond: Forgive someone who annoys you today.

### DAY 13: Ask for Protection

- ⇒ Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- ⇒ Reflect: How does love protect you?
- ⇒ Respond: Practice loving a specific person like God does.

### DAY 14: Show Thankfulness

- ⇒ Read: Psalm 139:1-18
- ⇒ Reflect: When do you need to remind yourself that you are wonderfully made?
- ⇒ Respond: Wherever you go today, picture God with you.

"Jesus, make my heart  
and my mind like Yours!"

## ACTIVITY: Make Room

Choose a room in your home that has your stuff, like your bedroom or playroom, then give it a deep clean. Offer to help someone with one of their chores if they will help you.

*Are there things in your space that don't belong there? Are there things you have outgrown or don't use? How can you make more room for the things you care about? Consider making a Prayer/Reading Spot.*

Talk about how cleaning your space is like doing the hard work to make God the most important thing in your life. What is taking up space that doesn't belong there? It might be something you are doing that isn't good for you.

**How can you make room for new routines and habits that will help you grow closer to God?**

## PRACTICE: Be Quiet

*"Be still and know that I am God!" Psalm 46:10*

God asks us to be still to get to know Him. Being still is more than not talking. God wants us to quiet in our minds and bodies to focus on Him. Think about how you can practice being quiet. It will take practice! Challenge yourself to put away distractions and devices to focus on God for 5 minutes each day. You can also try:

- Being quiet at a time you would normally be loud.
- Listening carefully to a friend when they talk instead of talking.

*What is the Holy Spirit saying to you about being still and quiet?*