

The CROSS

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PREPARATION FOR THE FAST

WHY FAST?

Fasting is a spiritual tool God uses to advance His kingdom, change the destiny of nations, spark revival, and bring victory in people's lives. At the start and middle of each year, we take time to pray and fast in order to humble ourselves before God, seek Him, consecrate ourselves to Him, and corporately agree for breakthroughs.

Jesus fasted.

¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **MATTHEW 4:1-2**

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. **LUKE 4:14**

Jesus knew He was going to need spiritual strength to fulfill His purposes. Fasting makes us spiritually strong and prepares us to do God's work.

Fasting is an act of humility and consecration.

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. **EZRA 8:21**

As we humble ourselves through prayer and fasting, we receive God's grace and have access to His heart.

Fasting helps us become sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." **ACTS 13:2**

When we deny ourselves of natural cravings and worldly distractions, we become more sensitive to God's voice. Then we are better able to focus on God and submit to His will.

Fasting brings revival.

“And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.” **ISAIAH 58:12**

Throughout history, God has brought revival and delivered nations from destruction in response to prayer and fasting. Fasting helps us prevail in prayer and intercession.

Fasting is healthy.

Fasting cleanses your digestive system from toxins. Doctors consider fasting a cure for certain allergies and diseases. The discipline of fasting helps break unhealthy addictions in our lives.

PLANNING YOUR FAST

Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.” **JOSHUA 3:5**

Pray—Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. In the succeeding pages, write down your faith goals and specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

Commit—Pray about the kind of fast you will undertake and commit to it ahead of time. Record your plan and ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decisions.

Act—Start eating smaller portions a few days before the fast. Avoid food high in sugar and fat. Plan to limit physical and social activities for the week of the fast. Ask someone to be your prayer partner throughout the fast and share your faith goals and answered prayers with him or her. Continually pray for each other even after the fast.

NOTE: Consult a physician, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, or taking medication. If your situation does not allow you to do a full fast, determine what will work best for you.

WHILE FASTING

[Jesus] answered, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” **MATTHEW 4:4**

Focus—Set aside time to work through the devotional. Be ready to respond to God’s word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Pray—Join at least one prayer meeting in your local church. Intercede for your family, church, pastors, nation, campuses, and missions throughout the week.

Replenish—During mealtime, read the Bible and pray. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Be ready for temporary bouts of physical weakness and mental annoyances like impatience and irritability.

BREAKING THE FAST

Eat—Reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day.

Pray—Don’t stop praying! Trust God’s faithfulness and timing. Carry your newfound passion for God throughout the year. Be in faith for God to answer your prayers.

¹⁴And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. **1 JOHN 5:14–15**

MY PLAN

DAY 1

- ☐ Water only
- ☐ Liquid only
- ☐ One meal only
- ☐ Other:

Prayer meeting(s) to attend:

DAY 2

- ☐ Water only
- ☐ Liquid only
- ☐ One meal only
- ☐ Other:

Prayer meeting(s) to attend:

DAY 3

- ☐ Water only
- ☐ Liquid only
- ☐ One meal only
- ☐ Other:

Prayer meeting(s) to attend:

“... if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.” **MATTHEW 18:19**

My Prayer Partner:

I AM THANKFUL TO GOD FOR...

Answered Prayers

List highlights, answered prayers, and lessons learned so far in 2025.

FOR THE REST OF 2025, I AM SEEKING GOD AND TRUSTING HIM IN THESE AREAS ...

Personal Life

Spiritual Revival • Physical Healing • Prosperity and Abundance • Rich Generosity ...

My Family

Restoration of Relationships • Household Salvation ...

My Education/Career

Excellence • Promotion ...

My Ministry

Small Group Growth • Salvation of Classmates and Colleagues ...

I AM COMMITTING TO PRAY FOR...

Name

Request(s)

I AM COMMITTING TO PRAY FOR...

My Church

Church Leadership • Provision • Discipleship Ministry ...

My Community

Campuses and Educational Institutions • Local Government • Outreach Opportunities ...

My Nation

Government Officials • Spiritual Revival • Economic Prosperity • Peace and Order ...



The King and Savior

The supreme King of all creation is also the humble Savior who calls us to Himself, offering us peace, purpose, and eternal hope.

Colossians 1:15–20

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the **head of the body, the church**. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace **by the blood of his cross**.

REFLECT

What would you do if a known, powerful king, dressed in splendor and majesty, suddenly knocked at your door? Would you let him in and give him your full attention? What if the same king appeared, but instead of being dressed as a powerful ruler looked like a humble servant? Would you recognize him and let him in?

Paul proclaims that the one who came to be with us is no ordinary king. He is *the image of the invisible God*, revealing the fullness of God's nature to humanity. He is the *firstborn of all creation*, not as one created but as the one who holds authority over all. Through Him, all things came into existence—whether in heaven or on earth, visible or invisible. *In Him all things hold together*. He reigns supreme over all other gods, philosophies, and rulers. His glory is unparalleled, His power infinite, and His rule absolute. His name is Jesus, and He is the sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords over all creation, over the physical and spiritual.

Paul gave a breathtaking picture of the majesty and supremacy of Jesus Christ not to overwhelm us with His power but to call us into a deeper understanding of the magnitude of His love for us. He explains that this majestic God—the Creator and sustainer of the universe—humbled Himself to live among men. He stepped into His creation, took on human flesh, and endured an excruciating death to pay for the sins of the very people who had rejected Him. His sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate demonstration of His love and grace. He gave His life to reconcile us to Himself, restoring the relationship broken by sin. The supreme King of all creation is also the humble Savior who calls us to Himself, offering us peace, purpose, and eternal hope.

To such overwhelming love, worship is the only appropriate response. He deserves nothing less than wholehearted surrender. It means setting aside everything else we look to for hope and security. Jesus is sufficient. We owe our complete devotion, trust, and allegiance to no one else but Him.

Whether dressed as a powerful King or a humble servant, Jesus holds all power and authority. When we let Him in and allow Him to have His way in us, we will experience His transforming power at work in our lives.



Song of the Day
CARRY MY CROSS
VICTORY WORSHIP

RESPOND

Jesus is the supreme Lord over all creation, yet often we are devoted to other things. Where is your devotion? How can you look to Jesus for hope, security, or purpose? What do you need to surrender to Him to give Him your full allegiance?

Jesus deserves our worship and adoration. What does worship look like in your daily life? As a response to His love, how can you be more intentional in worshiping Him every day?

In difficult moments, do you focus on your circumstances or do you fix your eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross for your sake? How can His sacrifice strengthen your resolve to press on, especially when you feel like giving up?





Lord Jesus,

You are the image of God, the King of all, yet You humbled Yourself to live among us and die for us. Forgive me for relying on the world's ways and placing my hope in things or people other than You. I surrender these things to You and give You my full allegiance. Help me remember who You are, no matter the circumstances, and show me what I need to lay down to follow You. In times of difficulty, help me keep my eyes on You, drawing strength from Your sacrifice. May my life reflect Your majesty, love, and grace as I worship and surrender to You.

Amen.

The Work

God could certainly accomplish this work without us, but He chooses to involve us, His children, in His mission. While the work is ultimately His, the privilege and joy in participating in it is ours.

Colossians 1:25–26

...²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,²⁶the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.

Read also:

Luke 24:13–27

REFLECT

There aren't many stories as radical as that of Paul's conversion. From being a zealous persecutor of the church to being one of the most powerful preachers of the gospel, Paul's life was completely transformed by the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The story didn't stop at Paul's conversion. He made it his life's work to become a minister of the gospel, *to make the word of God fully known*. While our stories may not be as radical, we are who we are today because the gospel has been made known to us.

From the very beginning, God's heart is for people to be saved. He entrusted the message of reconciliation to us so that more people will be restored to a loving relationship with Him. Following His resurrection, Jesus Himself set out to meet two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and there He explained what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself. Jesus wanted His disciples to have the right lens through which they would view all that the Messiah had suffered (Luke 24:26).

God is intentional in orchestrating encounters to open people's eyes to the truth. When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, his physical eyes became blind. But in that moment, his spiritual eyes were opened and he saw Jesus for who He truly is. From then on, Paul's life was radically changed. He became willing to forsake everything for the sake of knowing Christ and proclaiming His gospel at all costs.

God is calling us to do the same. He has placed us in our homes, campuses, workplaces, and communities, equipping us with skills, talents, and abilities—that we too may proclaim who Jesus is. We may have been given different tools and resources, but we share this in common: We all have encountered Jesus. And through our lives that are continually being shaped and transformed by the gospel, God is proclaiming His message.

God could certainly accomplish this work without us, but He chooses to involve us, His children, in His mission. While the work is ultimately His, the privilege and joy in participating in it is ours.

This work will undoubtedly come with challenges and difficulties. Yet we can remain stable and steadfast, knowing that our suffering is nothing compared to what Jesus had to endure on the cross. The message we carry is far too beautiful for us to abandon for lesser pursuits. In light of the gospel, of eternity, and of the Great Commission, we can be faithful stewards of this calling to be salt and light in our own little corners of the world.



Song of the Day
LORD OF ALL
VICTORY WORSHIP

RESPOND

What was your life like before you encountered Christ?
How has your life changed since then?

The lives we live are the very message we declare to the world. How can you remain steadfast in your relationship with God, knowing Him more and making Him known?

Who are the people in your community that do not know God yet? How can you journey with them and help them grow in God?





Heavenly Father,

*Thank You for Christ's finished work on the cross and
its many implications for our lives as believers. May
everything we do proclaim the gospel. We pray that
You would strengthen us and cause people to turn to
You. May people see Christ in us and declare that He
is Lord of all.*

In Jesus' name, amen.

The Message

When we focus our attention on what we have in Christ more than our present troubles and concerns, we will not be easily moved, continuously shaken, or blown away.

Colossians 1:27–28

²⁷To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are **the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.** ²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom ...

Read also:

Ephesians 1:7; 3:16; Philippians 4:19

REFLECT

As Paul continues to fulfill his calling in Christ to be a minister to the Gentiles, he describes *the riches of the glory of this mystery*. This mystery is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church and who is *the hope of glory*. This speaks of our future hope, our resurrection, and our glorification.

Phrases such as *the riches of the glory*, *riches in Christ*, and *riches of his grace* are mentioned several times in the New Testament. They refer to an abundance of what people—especially believers—can have in God. In Christ, we have redemption, forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7), strength (Ephesians 3:16), and supplication (Philippians 4:19). And there's so much more!

The hope we have in Christ and the riches of the glory of the gospel are in stark contrast to the despair and lack in our world today. We need only to look at our devices for a few minutes to be filled with hopelessness, disappointment, and anxiety. This can happen through learning about world events or even by the intense emotions we feel when we see what others are doing with their lives. But if we believe that we have *the hope of glory*, we have the answer to all this despair.

The biblical idea of glory has to do with the idea of one's weightiness. Having a deeper revelation of the glory of God means that God is weightier in us than our fleeting desires, our concerns, and the cares of the world. When we focus our attention on what we have in Christ more than our present troubles and concerns, we will not be easily moved, continuously shaken, or blown away. We will be anchored in Christ.

In this particular passage of Scripture, Paul says that God chose to *make known* to the saints *how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery*. Let us therefore also proclaim Him and make this message known to others. This message can be seen in the lives of those who believe—those whose hope is in Jesus.

As believers today, may our lives reflect the message that we proclaim. May the gospel be as true to us today and every day, and may we continually be changed by it. May Jesus Christ, *the hope of glory*, be seen in all we do and are. May we proclaim this hope with all our lives.



Song of the Day
FOR YOUR PURPOSE
VICTORY WORSHIP

RESPOND

When did you first hear the gospel? How did it change your life? Reflect on a change in your life that family members or friends would not be able to explain without undeniably pointing to the work of God.

How can the truth that Jesus is the hope of glory affect your life today and every day?

Is there anything that may be hindering you from being Christ's witness? Ask God for the courage and willingness to let Him change you and to proclaim the gospel to those around you.





Heavenly Father,

Thank You for choosing to make Christ known to us. He is our hope of glory. Thank You for the riches of His grace that we can experience every day. May we be anchored in Christ no matter what. May we proclaim Christ with our words and very life.

In Jesus' name, amen.

The Goal

As the Church becomes more and more mature in Jesus Christ, the gospel will have a greater impact among other people, on campuses, in communities, and in the rest of the world.

Colossians 1:28

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and **teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.**

Read also:

Colossians 2:7; 3:12–17

REFLECT

The apostle Paul explains who we proclaim—Christ and Christ alone.

This proclamation comes both as a *warning* and a *teaching*. Paul's letter to the Colossians was an exhortation to believers to stand their ground against deceptive and false philosophies that were influencing their church at that time.

That's why Paul wrote first to emphasize the preeminence of Christ, who alone is truly supreme and authoritative. He is over all created things, including spiritual strongholds and powers in their city and region. Paul gave this strong warning to the church so that they would not just believe anything or become deluded by false teachings. As Christ is continually taught, believers will have a strong foundation in Christ, *rooted and built up in him* (Colossians 2:7).

The goal is the maturity of all believers in Christ. We are conformed to His image and are to be more like Him every day. As those who have been saved by the gospel, we are also continually being sanctified by it. This lifelong process includes being careful with and responding to the warnings we receive, to turn away from who we were, to run from what is false, and to mature instead in the wisdom of God's ways.

This maturity does not merely apply to us as individual believers. The maturity we are working towards is that of the Church. When we look around at our state and the brokenness we still find ourselves in, it may seem impossible to imagine a mature Church that will be presented to Christ. Since the spiritual maturity of the believers is related to their being more and more Christlike, a mature Church is a Church where we see people loving one another deeply, demonstrating forgiveness, and having their hope fixed on Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:12–17). This is part of God's goal and plan for us, where we will fully see the fruit of Christ's finished work on the cross, and what we look forward to and proclaim. As the Church becomes more and more mature in Jesus Christ, the gospel will have a greater impact among other people, on campuses, in communities, and in the rest of the world.



Song of the Day

THIS IS YOUR CHURCH

VICTORY WORSHIP

RESPOND

As a follower of Christ, what are some things God may be warning you to turn away from? How can you be rooted in Him continually?

How can you reflect who Christ is in your families and communities?

Our goal is to proclaim Christ. Identify how you can accomplish this, and ask God for boldness, courage, and opportunities to minister.





Lord Jesus,

*We believe You are preeminent, supreme, and
authoritative. May our lives be built on this truth
and may we reflect You in all we do. May the Church
grow in maturity and may we proclaim You through
our words, actions, and life. May we become more
like You every day.*

Amen.



The Power

True success in life and ministry comes
not from our efforts but through God's
power working mightily within us.

Colossians 1:29

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that **he powerfully works within me.**

Read also:

Luke 5:5–11; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Colossians 1:3–14; 1 Timothy 1:12

REFLECT

In Colossians 1:29, the apostle Paul shows us the inner dynamics between divine power and human effort in the Christian life. Paul's life exemplifies the paradox of laboring in ministry: the harder he worked, the more reliant he became on God's supernatural strength.

Paul uses the word *struggling*, which conveys intensity, like an athlete competing in a race. This kind of effort is not passive; it requires focus, discipline, and perseverance. But Paul also clarifies that the energy behind his striving comes not from himself but from God's divine power that overcomes resistance.

Paul underscores that his success in preaching the gospel to unbelievers as well as presenting believers complete in Christ is not due to his talents, heritage, or sheer determination, but to God's supernatural enabling. This truth aligns with the reality that human strength, no matter how disciplined, is insufficient for the spiritual work of transformation. When believers attempt to serve God in their strength alone, they face inevitable frustration, exhaustion, and spiritual ineffectiveness.

An excellent illustration of this truth is found in Luke 5, with the disciples' encounter with Jesus. Peter, an experienced fisherman, had toiled all night without success. But when Jesus instructed him to cast his nets once more, Peter replied, "*Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.*" The result? A miraculous catch so abundant that their nets began to break!

The difference between Peter's failed efforts and his supernatural success lay in one key factor: obedience to Christ while relying on His power. Like Peter, we can easily fall into the trap of striving in our own strength, only to face exhaustion, frustration, and failure. Whether it's in our daily work, family life, or ministry, we may feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the task or discouraged by meager results. But as we labor and strive in the Lord, His divine power energizes us, enabling us to do what our human strength and effort could never achieve.

This teaches us a vital principle: God does not work instead of us but through us. His Spirit empowers our energy, guiding and sustaining us. When we align our efforts with His purposes, we experience His might in ways we never could on our own. True success in life and ministry comes not from our efforts but through God's power working mightily within us.



Song of the Day
BREATHE
AWAKE84

RESPOND

How can you rely on the power of God to fulfill the task He is expecting us to accomplish?

Identify personal challenges that may hinder or limit you from obeying the Great Commission. How can you rely on the power of God to overcome them?

List three people to whom you can share your testimony and the gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit to open their hearts and to give you boldness and wisdom in your conversations with them this week.





Heavenly Father,

Fill my heart and mind with spiritual wisdom and understanding so that I may know Your will. Enable me to live worthy of You as my Lord and to live pleasing before You. Holy Spirit, empower me to be fruitful in preaching the gospel and making disciples where You place and set me. Lord Jesus, You are preeminent in my life.

Amen.

