

Days Prayer + Fasting Secret Cord = Open Reward

WHEN YOU PRAY, FAST AND GIVE, YOUR FATHER WHO SEES IN SECRET WILL REWARD YOU OPENLY MATTHEW 6:1-28 NKJV

PROMISE A CHURCH

21 DAY JOURNEY

We are thrilled to have you come along with us on this 21 Day journey at Promise Church! This is the best way to begin your year. These 21 days will set your spiritual compass and bring clarity in every area of our lives! We hope that these 21 days will rejuvenate you personally and our church as we pursue God together!

As you prepare for the next 21 days, think about why you are praying. Is it for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for healing, for the resolution of problems, for special grace to handle a difficult situation, or for a major decision? Ask the Lord to clarify His leading and objectives. Write these down in the space provided, and be open to hearing what God wants to show you in those areas.

The tools provided in this guide will help you navigate through your journey. We pray that you will experience the presence and power of God in extraordinary ways as you commit to the next 21 days. Remember some things will happen only by prayer and fasting. When you seek God in secret, He will reward openly. So dedicate these next 21 Days and see what God will do!

Pastor Ryan Loyd

Find more prayer and fasting resources available at www.mypromisechurch.com

I'M PRAYING & FASTING FOR:

PRAYER REQUEST	GOD'S ANSWER

[&]quot;Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." Matthew 5:6

I'M BELIEVING GOD FOR:

FAITH TARGET	GOD'S ANSWER

"However this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:21

ARE YOU READY?

Are you ready to begin? As you prepare for this incredible 21 day journey of prayer and fasting, there are a few things you will want to get ready for.

First, if you do not already have one, establish a place and time where you can pray. Prayer is critical during the fast for breakthrough and hearing what the Lord is saying to you. Use the fasting card and this guide to keep track of your journey. You will treasure them in the years to come when you look back at the amazing things God has done.

Next, how will you determine the level of fasting that you will do for 21 days? That is between you and God. We have a guideline for the church to follow but here are some things to consider.

For a portion of the time, you may feel led to go on a full fast in which you only drink water for a certain number of days. Or maybe you'll feel led to go on a liquid fast for a number of days. You will want to take in clear broth as well as pure juices. On either fast, you will want to drink plenty of water.

Of the many fasts mentioned in Scripture, another commonly practiced fast is the partial fast. A partial fast can be interpreted in many ways. It usually involves giving up particular foods and drinks for a period of time. The most frequently used example of a partial fast is found in the book of Daniel, chapters 1 and 10. At the beginning of his captivity in Babylon, Daniel and three companions refused to eat the choice meats and sweets from the king's table, asking instead to only have vegetables and water.

ARE YOU READY?

In chapter 1, Daniel and his companions did this for ten days to prove they would be just as healthy as the king's men who followed a diet that violated God's law.

Then in Daniel chapter 10, Daniel was grieved and burdened with the revelation he'd received for Israel. He decided he would not eat choice breads, meats and wouldn't drink or eat anything sweet for 21 days. Then he described the angel which was sent to him but had been delayed by the Prince of Persia for 21 days with the answers that he was seeking. Daniel's fast broke the power of the enemy and released the angels of God so that God's purposes could be revealed and delivered.

Although you will be staying away from food as your sacrifice on this fast, do not let a legalist mindset overtake the pursuit of God and His ways in your life. He knows your heart. Entering the Lord's presence is your goal and fasting is the method to reach that goal.

There are a few other things to focus on during this time that will help you in this journey. For example, consider limiting distractions to make room for spiritual things. Make an extra effort in your church attendance. Set a priority every morning and evening for time with the Lord in prayer and devotion. Take advantage of the Bible reading plans. Consider limiting TV intake, cell phone use, entertainment, and other distractions as much as possible. Your fast will be a time of sacrifice that puts God first in every way. The results will be amazing!

You will enjoy many rewards of fasting that are enhanced by limiting distractions. You'll hear the voice of God more clearly. You'll find the presence of God more easily. You'll find a stronger connection to the Lord in times of prayer and worship.

ARE YOU READY?

So ask yourself this question, what are you searching for on this journey? Be specific. Do you need direction, healing, blessing, restoration of marriage, family relationships, finances...?

Write it down on the pages of this guide. Keep this guide nearby at all times during these 21 days. Pray for these requests multiple times a day. Remind yourself why you are sacrificing. God will hear your prayers.

As we begin these 21 days, remember if the level of sacrifice doesn't mean anything to you, it won't mean anything to God. Make a commitment that matters. Make a sacrifice that matters.

Combine this fast with prayer and the Word. Without these spiritual disciplines in the mix, your fast will only be a diet. Remember something very important, fasting is a continual sacrifice that goes up before the Lord with each prayer your pray. There may be days when it seems as though heaven has opened up and you feel a strong sense of victory. But then there may be other days when your energy is sapped and you feel like you cannot focus in prayer at all. Keep pressing in these times because God sees your sacrifice.

Those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength;

They shall mount up with wings like eagles,

They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

-Isaiah 40:31

QUICK TIPS

Start with a Clear Goal: What do you want from these 21 days? What are you searching for on this journey? Be specific. Write it down. Keep it in front of you. Target this goal in your daily prayers and let it motivate your fasting efforts. Do you need direction, healing, blessing, restoration of marriage, family relationships, finances...? Ask the Lord for answers. Be open to His guidance, His ways, His will, and His word. Pray daily and read the Word.

Prepare Your Heart: Start with repentance. Confess your sins to God. Ask the Lord to reveal areas of weakness in your heart. Forgive all who have offended you and ask for forgiveness from those who you may have offended. Surrender your life to Jesus and reject the temptations and traps that hinder you.

Decide What You Will Fast: Be specific and write this down. Your flesh and the enemy will try to barter down your level of sacrifice. Whatever you choose, stick to it.

A Daniel's Fast is the most popular partial fast from the Bible. It is loosely defined as "no meats & no sweets." Eating fruits and vegetables.

Some will choose to do a progressive Daniel's fast, cutting out sweets on the first week, meats on the second week, and going to a liquid fast, taking in juices and broths, on the third week.

Others will need to choose a custom fast to navigate their own dietary needs. Fasting should always be entered into considering those needs.

There are many paths on this journey, these are merely a suggested few options to accomplish a 21 day fast. Of course, how you fast is ultimately up to you. Determine in your mind how you are going to fast and stick to it. You can finish this 21 day journey!

QUICK TIPS

How To Start: Step right into it. You can expect discomfort in the first few days but that will go away quickly. When you fast, your body detoxifies, eliminating toxins from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from sugars and caffeine. Naturally, you will have cravings. Depending on your type of fast, limit your activity and don't expel too much energy. Take time to rest. You are following Jesus' example when you fast. Spend time listening to praise and worship music. Pray as often as you can throughout the day. Get away from distractions as much as possible. Keep your focus on the target and keep your heart and mind on the things of the Lord!

How To Keep Going:

- 1. Make an extra effort in your church attendance. Each Sunday and everything in between at Promise will be focused during these 21 days on prayer and fasting.
- 2. Keep this guide and the prayer card with you at all times. It will keep you praying and motivate your fasting efforts.
- 3. There will be morning prayer and devotion every morning Monday thru Friday at Promise from 6:00 AM to 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM on Saturday. It will be a quick time of worship, devotion and prayer to keep you going each day.
- 4. Keep a prayer journal. Write down what you feel like God is saying to you. This is a great way to get the most out of these 21 days! (Promise notebooks are available in the lobby)

<u>How To Finish</u>: Don't overeat when the time comes to end your fast. Begin eating solid food gradually. Fasting brings about miraculous results but there are physical benefits too!

DAY 1: FASTING IS SACRIFICE

This is a fundamental understanding about fasting that we begin with every year. Fasting is one way you can offer your life as a sacrifice to God. You sacrifice food and drink as you pursue God and His ways. Giving of yourself is consistent in all our relationships. Friends give time, support, a listening ear, or a helping hand. Parents sacrifice time, money, and their own wants for their kids. A young man buys a ring as a token of his love to ask a young lady to marry him. If we love God more than anything in this world, what should we sacrifice for Him?

A regular fast is giving up food to seek God's will but you can drink water in that fast. An absolute fast is giving up both food and drink but you shouldn't do that for more than 3 days. Moses didn't eat or drink for 40 days but that was a supernatural event. Daniel went 10 days eating only vegetables (Daniel 1:8). Then later he extended his fast to 21 days, known as the Daniel Fast. He also gave up pleasurable things (Daniel 10:3). Today, some give up modern pleasures when they fast like social media, entertainment, etc. But the sacrifices of a fast are not complete without a dedication to prayer, worship, reading God's Word, and pursuing the Lord.

As you begin this 21 day fast, ask what sacrifice you will make to the Lord. Some will do a 21 Day Daniel Fast, some will do a progressive fast, some will give up pleasurable things. Whatever you choose to do, do it unto the Lord. He will see your sacrifice in secret and reward you openly.

"In view of God's mercy, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship." (Romans 12:1)

Begin your fast with a vow, use the commitment card to write it down, and sign it. Make that vow to the Lord, make these next 21 days an offering and see what God will do!

DAY 2: SECRET CORD = OPEN REWARD

Our theme for these 21 days at Promise is "Open Cord = Open Reward"! This is an exciting motivator for us because we see over and over again in Scripture how God honors the secret devotion of His people with an open reward.

This teaching is found in Matthew chapter 6 when Jesus is giving the Sermon on the Mount. He opens by saying, when you give, don't make a big display of it. He says, there are those who do this for others to see, and assuredly, that will be their reward. He says, but if you give so secretly that your left hand doesn't know what your right hand is doing, your Heavenly Father who saw it in secret, will reward you openly.

Further, when you pray, don't be like those who pray loud, flowery, eloquent prayers for others to hear and be impressed. If someone would do that, that in itself would be their reward. He says, but if you pray in your prayer closet, your Heavenly Father who heard in secret, will reward you openly.

Finally, when you fast, don't be like those who go around and say, they are weak, tired and hungry because of this sacrifice. Those that do that, will not receive a reward from God. But rather, wash your face, don't appear unto others like you are fasting. Do this in secret, and your Heavenly Father who sees all things, will assuredly reward you openly.

The Bible gives us something interesting in Ecclesiastes 4:12, it says that a three-fold cord is not easily broken. This verse is highlighting the strength found in binding things together. Knowing this, what a powerful cord we can weave into our lives when we combine prayer, fasting and giving. Jesus tells us that all three are noticed in Heaven and rewarded openly!

Decide now that you will sacrifice these 21 days to the Lord. Make up your mind and say, I'm going to pray and fast in secret and look for God's open reward!

DAY 3: FAST WITH A TARGET

If you want to be successful on this fast, you must find your purpose. Start with a clear goal. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Why have you made this vow to fast for 21 days?

Are you pursuing God on this fast through His Word and prayer to get closer to Him? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family relationships? Are you praying for friends and family? Are you facing financial challenges? Are you praying for God to bless and prosper you in some areas of your life? Write it down.

In 2 Kings chapter 13, the prophet Elisha told King Jehoash to take his bow and arrow and shoot out the window toward the enemy in faith for the victory God would give.

Every time we see people fast in the Bible, they had a purpose. There was something very specific they were targeting with their prayers and fasting. Ezra fasted for financial protection. Nineveh fasted for mercy, revival and deliverance. Samuel fasted for a revival of God's presence and favor on His people. Moses fasted to tune into God's voice and what He wanted to say to His people. Elijah fasted and was delivered from negative emotions. Esther went on a fast for God's protection. Daniel and his companions fasted for God's favor and deliverance in the time of captivity. Jesus fasted to prepare His flesh for public ministry. Paul went on a three day fast for clarity and direction at the time of his conversion. Cornelius was on a fast and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I don't know what you are seeking from God but target whatever it is with prayer and fasting!

Have your purpose in mind. Write it down. Hold to it. Pray for it. Carry it with you because when that candy bar, key lime pie or sizzling steak comes into your mind you'll need to remind yourself you're hungrier for the blessing than the temporary food!

DAY 4: BREAD IN THE WILDERNESS

Its Day 4, I bet you've experienced a few food cravings by now! You may feel physically hungry, but I'd also bet that you're feeling spiritually satisfied! On a fast, you're not eating a lot of physical food but you're feasting on spiritual food!

Jesus Himself experienced what you are experiencing right now. He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for a 40 day fast at the beginning of His earthly public ministry. The Bible tells us that Satan meets Jesus out in the wilderness and brings him 3 temptations. The first temptation Satan brought to the Lord targeted Jesus' physical hunger. He said, you could end this fast right now and turn those stones into bread. Jesus answered the temptation by quoting Scripture. He said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4) In other words, Jesus was saying physical food is not everything. Spiritual food is really what we live on. Specifically, the Word of God.

At another time, Jesus was hungry and thirsty from traveling. Some believe He was on another fast although we do not know for sure. The disciples said to Jesus, "Rabbi, eat. You need to eat." They talked among each other to bring Him food. Jesus told them, "I have bread to eat that you don't know about." (John 4:32)

On this fast, make sure you eat all the spiritual food you can! That's what will truly sustain you and satisfy your soul. Make an extra effort to gather for the morning prayer and devotion at Promise. Join one of the many fasting groups available that are doing Bible challenges, reading Fasting book by Jentezen Franklin and online meetup groups. Take time to listen to worship music. Spiritual food is really what we live on.

You might not be eating a lot of physical food but there is a spiritual all-you-can-eat buffet in front of you!

DAY 5: MISSING INGREDIENT

Have you ever cooked a meal, followed the recipe and then at the first bite thought, "something is missing?" Well, in the same way, fasting is often a missing ingredient in our lives.

Some things will only happen by prayer and fasting. There are things that we will never get through, maybe something that we won't break free from, or maybe something we will never attain until we pray and fast.

In the Gospels, we're told a story about a father who brings his son to Jesus' disciples. The boy is possessed by a spirit that vexes him severely. It has thrown him into a fire to burn him and into the water to drown him. The spirit convulses him, makes him gnash his teeth and foam at the mouth.

However, the disciples cannot cast the evil spirit out. The father takes his son to Jesus and prays for help. Jesus commands the evil spirit to leave and to never come back to him again. The spirit cried out, convulsed one more time and left the boy.

Later the disciples asked the Lord privately, "why could we not cast the evil spirit out?" Jesus answered, "this kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." (Mark 9:29)

When fasting is combined with prayer, we have a powerful weapon to defeat the enemy. The combination of prayer and fasting is so powerful because prayer gets God's attention and fasting gets our attention. Prayer releases power from Heaven and fasting breaks the power of the flesh and the enemy in our lives.

I believe there are miracles, answers to prayer, revival, passion, gifting, victories, and deliverance that will happen only by prayer and fasting.

DAY 6: SEEK FIRST

If you were at Promise for our 2020 fasting campaign, you'll remember our theme was "Seek First". It's a powerful insight into God's provision that's valuable enough to revisit.

There is a key to life that is found over and over again in the Bible and it's simply this... put God first and He takes care of the rest! That's it. Make God your first priority and He takes care of the rest.

Jesus said it this way, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) In other words, seek Jesus, His Kingdom, His ways, and the promise is He'll take care of the rest!

This principle of first is all through the Bible. God asks us to gather with other believers and worship in His house on the first day of the week. It's amazing how that sets the tone for the rest of your week! Your Monday, Wednesday, Friday will be blessed because Sunday was in God's House.

God asks us to give the first fruits of our harvest, also known as the tithe. This is the first 10 percent of our income and He will bless the rest. (Proverbs 3:9-10) If we'll do that, He promises to bless everything our hands find to do. He will even protect our businesses and finances from the "devourer". (Malachi 3:10)

This is why at Promise, we begin every year by giving God the first part, the first 21 days, of our year. It's still amazing to me every time I see it but it happens every year. We'll see God's hand in March, in June, in September working on things we prayed and fasted for back in January. The reason is that this principle holds true. Give God the first and the rest is blessed!

DAY 7: PRAY TO START THE DAY

Every morning of this 21 day journey, we will have an opportunity to gather for prayer. Monday thru Friday at Promise 6:00 AM to 6:30 AM, 9:00 AM on Saturday. It will be a quick time of worship, devotion and prayer to keep you going each day.

We see this example in the life of Jesus, "Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons...Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out & departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." (Mark 1:34-35). Jesus prioritized prayer to be the start of his day. He made time to pray, even if it required Him to wake up a long while before daylight. The start of His day was not for other important things like preaching, teaching, forgiving sin, healing sick, casting out devils, calling disciples or even performing miracles. As important as those things were He never prioritized those things above prayer. And the reason is because all those other things flow from prayer!

He understood, in His Flesh, that He must find a place of prayer. Notice verse 34 tells us that He healed the sick and cast out demons the day before. Then the very next verse says, He woke up early the next day to pray. He needed that reconnection and recharge that only prayer can give.

We have to remember that Jesus was fully man. He was also fully God too, but He was as much human as divine. We forget that sometimes. He experienced everything human; busy schedules, tired, sick, etc. He understood in His humanity, the need to pray to start the day! If Jesus needed to pray to start the day, how much more do you and I?

When you start your day in prayer, you are preparing yourself for anything that comes in that day. You can stand before a King when you've already knelt before the King of Kings! Let's pray to start each of these 21 days!

DAY 8: LET'S WORSHIP TOGETHER

Today is the second Sunday of our 21 Day journey! As we gather in God's House with God's people, let's worship Him together!

These 21 Days are more than just subtracting good food from our life. It's also about adding some things; prayer, the Word and surely gathering together for worship! There's something so powerful about worshipping the Lord together

David said this to God's people, "Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." (Psalm 34:3) He didn't want to do it all by himself. He knew there's so much power in the unity of praise and worship - together!

Notice two things about the Lord's Prayer. It begins with the words "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9), and ends with "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13). God wants you to begin and end your prayers magnifying Him. Why? Because it does you twice as much good to focus on God as it does to focus on anything else! When you magnify an object, you enlarge it so that you can see and understand it more. When we magnify God, we do the same thing. We enlarge our awareness of Him, so we can understand Him more. This is what happens when we worship Him—we take our minds off of our problems and set them on God. We put the emphasis on Him.

On this fast, I believe it's important to know this isn't a diet. This isn't just a ritual, but it's to bring us to God's heart. Seek after God's heart. Get into His presence every day. Make sure that you are praising and worshiping on this fast.

And let's do it together! Magnify the Lord with me! Let's exalt His name together!

DAY 9: NEW THING

At the beginning of a new year, often we are movitated by new things; new interests, new goals, new disciplines. As the saying goes, if you want something you've never had before, you have to do something you've never done before. Maybe you've never dedicated 21 Days to the Lord in this way, and if so, this is your opportunity for a new thing!

God told Joshua as they approached Jericho, I want to give you this new land but you have to go about this a new way. Last time you approached the Promised Land as spies and many came back with a faithless report. This time, I want you to go in boldly marching around the walls and blowing victory trumpets. "Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before" (Joshua 3:4) In other words, if you want something you've never had before, you have to do something you've never done before!

God told his prophet Isaiah, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." God says He's doing a new thing. The only question is do we see it? And can we perceive it? That's the question God is asking us.

God is a God of new things. He's springing up something new for you in this new year. He's asking if you can see it. He's asking, can you believe it? He's asking, can you perceive it? Respond to God's promise by praying a new prayer. Circle in faith believing for new territory. Sound the victory trumpets of praise before the victory even happens.

I can't wait to see what God is springing up for you and for Promise Church in 2024!

DAY 10: WAIT ON THE LORD

As we near the halfway point of this 21 day journey, it may seem like a long wait to the finish. But waiting on the Lord is one of the best things we can learn to do because while we wait, He works!

In the Old Testament, God gave His people an interesting command: "Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Sovereign Lord, the God of Israel. I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the Lord" (Exodus 34:23-24).

Imagine that! In addition to the weekly Sabbath day of worship, three times a year, they were to stop working and spend time with the Lord worshiping Him, seeking His guidance, and getting direction for the future. Can you imagine what would happen if we did that? Well, that's exactly what we are doing during these 21 days!

Note the words "I will enlarge your territory." Instead of losing while you wait, you'll gain! And instead of going backward—you'll go forward. Notice, "I will drive out the nations before you." While you worship God and wait on Him, He will fight your battles. And the difference between you and God is that you risk losing, but He's never lost a battle. Notice, "No one will covet your land." You don't have to worry about the competition getting ahead of you.

God used this 3 times a year to teach His people this principle: "If you wait on Me in worship, I will work on your behalf." His Word says, "Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). So here's the plan, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart." (Psalm 27:14)

DAY 11: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

As we open a new year, let be thankful that God has given us this time. He's given us this year. He's given us this opportunity of 21 Days to seek Him and see what He will do in our lives.

In the book of Esther, the Jews were on the verge of destruction because of the evil conspiracy of Haman, one of the king's advisors. Haman was "filled" with wrath against a Jew named Mordecai because he did not "bow or pay him homage" (Esther 3:5). "Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, the people of Mordecai" (Esther 3:6).

Mordecai sought help from Queen Esther, who was his niece. Mordecai's request meant Esther would have to literally risk her life for it was very dangerous for her to approach the king without being summoned first. He said to her, "If you remain silent at this time, deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14) He appealed to the fact that God had brought together time and opportunity for Esther. So, Esther decided to call a fast.

"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law, and if I perish, I perish!" (Esther 4:16).

Those 72 hours of fasting changed the history of the world. When Esther approached the king, they became a nation not of defeat, annihilation and suffering, but a nation of favor. They received honor and promotion, all because of three days of fasting and prayer! What will you pray and fast for as God has brought time and opportunity together in this 21 days?

DAY 12: HUNGRY FOR CRUMBS

Have you ever been so hungry that you'd eat something discarded from someone else's table? Maybe even something that fell onto the floor? Maybe you're that hungry for something now on Day 12 of this fast!

Matthew tells us about a woman with this level of hunger, "A Canaanite woman...came to him, crying out, 'Lord... My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession'... He answered, 'I was sent only to...Israel...It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.' 'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered, 'Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted'" (Matthew 15:22-28).

A Canaanite woman was an outsider, not part of Abraham's family. This meant she didn't have a right to be at the table. Yet her hunger for a miracle moved the heart of Jesus.

First, Jesus refused to answer her. Next, He said, "What I have is only for the Jews." Finally He said, "It wouldn't be right to give the children's bread to dogs." Most of us would have walked away offended. Not her! She cried, "Have mercy on me." She wasn't asking for what she deserved, she was crying out for what she needed! As a result, Jesus removed every obstacle and answered her prayer. And if you persist, He will do the same for you too. In reality, this woman told Jesus, "Let the children have the bread, all I need are the crumbs." Church folks become so complacent that they neglect the bread, waste the bread, complain about the bread, and sometimes don't even come to church to get the bread. But desperate people pick up the crumbs and find a miracle!

They know that if there's power in the loaf, there's power in the crumb. And when a crumb is all you can get, a crumb is all you need. What do you need from God today? How hungry are you? Are you hungry for a crumb from the Master's Table?

DAY 13: COME ALIVE

At this point, you are probably experiencing new spiritual life and new spiritual energy in a way that you haven't in awhile. Prayer, fasting and devoting these 21 days to God is a formula for resurrection and revival. You will come alive!

John chapter 11 tells us about a friend of Jesus named Lazarus. His sisters sent word to Jesus that he was sick and near death. Jesus arrived late and they informed Him that Lazarus had already died. Jesus said that He arrived late so that they could see His power to not to heal but to resurrect. He walked into the graveyard and said, "Lazarus, come alive."

First, whatever you have lost, God can restore. One of the great promises in Scripture is that God can "restore to you the years" that life has stolen (Joel 2:25). Claim that promise today. Maybe life has taken your joy, peace and hope. Ask God to replace, restore, and renew. He will do it.

Second, whatever you're bound by, Jesus can set you free. "He cried...'Lazarus, come out!' And he who was dead came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes... Jesus said... 'Loose him and let him go'" (John 11:43-44). God's power is greater than any habit, hang-up, or circumstance that has you bound.

Third, no matter how bad you feel, Jesus understands. At Lazarus' funeral, "Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!'" (John 11:35-36). This story proves we serve a God who cannot only give you back what you have lost but who cares about what you're going through. He is touched by what we are afflicted with. He feels what we feel. "We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15). So if you're hurting today, turn to Jesus and let Him restore you. You will come alive again!

DAY 14: HUNGER WILL BE FILLED

If you were at Promise for our 2022 fast, you'll remember our theme was "Hunger Filled". It's an exciting promise that's valuable enough to revisit. Maybe your stomach is growling right now with a certain appetite?

Fasting prioritizes our spiritual hunger over physical hunger. When you fast, you're saying "I'm hungrier for spiritual things than even physical things." When you fast, you are denying your physical appetite. While at the same time, showing God your spiritual appetite.

Jesus went on a fast to prepare Himself for His public ministry. It was a denial of His physical appetite because His spirit was hungry for effective ministry. Elijah went on a fast to revive himself when he was deflated from the ups and downs of his ministry. It was a denial of His physical appetite because His spirit was hungry for revival. Paul went on a fast after his Damascus road conversion. It was a denial of His physical appetite because His spirit was hungry for direction. Nineveh went on a fast for God's forgiveness and favor. It was a denial of their physical appetite because their spirit was hungry for salvation and blessing.

The promise of Jesus in his famous Sermon on the Mount is "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." What an amazing promise? When you are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, you'll be filled. When you are hungry and thirsty for God's ways, God's will, God's Word and God's favor in your life, you'll be filled. When you are hungry and thirsty for those things, your hunger will be satisfied and your thirst will be quenched!

Consider, what are you hungry and thirsty for? Maybe there are unrighteous appetites that need denying? Maybe other appetites that need replacing? Stir up a righteous hunger and thirst on this fast and you will be filled!

DAY 15: LET THE CHURCH GATHER

It's the third Sunday of our 21 Day journey! Today, as we gather in God's House with God's people, let's believe together!

Here's a snapshot of the early church in Acts 2, "They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved." (Acts 2:46-47)

The gathering of the Church was the root of the fruit. Without the gathering, those things don't happen. In Acts 2, they gathered in the upper prayer room and received the promise of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 3, the healing happened as they gathered in the Temple for prayer. In Acts 8, souls were saved as they gathered for revival in Samaria.

They were gathering together every day praising God for souls being saved, people being baptized in water and the Holy Spirit. They gathered to eat together, there was great joy and fellowship.

Let the same thing be said of Promise Church! Let's come expect those things to happen. Let's come to make those things happen! Let there always be joy and generosity in this House. Let's press into God's Presence. Let us lean into praise and worship and the Word!

Let that wonder and expectation be on you as you drive to church today. Anything can happen in God's House. Anything can happen in God's presence. And it probably will! Someone is going to be saved, water baptized, Spirit-baptized, healed, receive their miracle and blessing. Because one moment in God's House can change everything!

DAY 16: RIGHTEOUS RESISTANCE

At this point in the 21 day journey, you're hearing God's voice clearly but you are also likely hearing the enemy's voice. That is because you are taking ground from the enemy. Often the enemy's resistance is a sign you are on the right track. I believe there is such a thing as righteous resistance!

One thing I've noticed about life is with opportunity there is always opposition. This is true over and over in the Bible. There's this Promised Land in front of you but there's a fortified wall between us and the promise. There's an anointing on your life but you have to fight this giant before it comes to fruition.

You would think the open door means no more opposition but in reality the opposition is proof of the opportunity. Often times, you'll see the opposition with your eyes but the opportunity is felt somewhere in your spirit, by a dream, through a vision, or in prayer.

David knew in his spirit, that God would give the victory but he could very obviously see the 9 foot tall Giant with his eyes! "For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand." (1 Samuel 17:16) He could very obviously hear the threats! "Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, came out from the Philistine ranks. Then David heard him shout his usual taunt to the army of Israel. (1 Samuel 17:23)

Many times, we believe God is going to answer, bless, heal, save and deliver but then resistance causes us to doubt and flee. I want to tell you the opposition you feel right now is actually proof of what God is doing in your life.

It's only righteous resistance you feel as you are taking new ground from the Enemy!

DAY 17: U-TURNS ALLOWED

Have you ever been driving in the wrong direction, knowing you need to turn around? But each passing light has the U-Turn Not Allowed sign attached to it. Finally, you come to an intersection that allows a U-Turn.

When you find yourself on the wrong road, repentance allows you to make a U-turn and head back in the right direction. What a blessing that is. And yet somehow, repentance is a word we often flinch at.

Every Old Testament believer was commanded to observe the Day of Atonement and participate in the fast. (Leviticus 16:29). Fasting brings repentance and repentance brings atonement or at-one-ment with God. Without times of devotion, we might become so trapped in the dangerous mindsets that sin inevitably produces that we become callous, complacent, and simply unable to repent! However, fasting starves our flesh and feeds our spirit. As a result, we now have the strength to confront the errors of our flesh.

When David had Uriah killed after having taken his wife, he went a year without repenting. He had to force his mind not to think about it. What a miserable way to live. In his penitential prayer, he said, "My sin is always before me" (Psalm 51:3). Then he cried, "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow...Create in me a pure heart, O God...Restore to me the joy of your salvation... don't take your Holy Spirit away from me" (Psalm 51:7, 10, 12-13). As a result, God forgave him and wiped his slate clean, and David went on as Israel's greatest king.

Repentance is a blessing. In God's Kingdom, U-Turns are always allowed. Pray that Psalm 51 prayer with David today and say "Lord, search my heart. Lord, clean my heart. Restore the joy of my salvation."

DAY 18: DREAM AGAIN

At this point of the 21 day journey, you've probably experienced an increased sensitivity to God's Spirit. This is a time when you will see what He is showing you and hear what He is speaking to you.

Peter reminded the people of Joel's prophecy, "God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams." Peter looked around that prayer meeting in the Upper Room and says, we're living in the reality of the dream Joel had. We're seeing the prophecy that Joel had and its coming to pass. We're living in what used to be just a dream. We're seeing what used to be just a vision.

When the Holy Spirit is poured out, we will see visions. God will paint a picture for our lives. It's not something that we can see with natural eyes but its something that God showed us. It's something that may be so far down the road that you can't see it with natural eyes. But God gives a spiritual telescope to catch just a glimpse of what He wants to do in your life. It's a vision that can only be accomplished with Him. But the glimpse, the snap shot, the painted picture motivates you, drives you to your knees in prayer and moves you to serve Him.

When the Holy Spirit is poured out, we will dream dreams. If a vision is a picture, then a dream is a video. A dream is more than what you think about when you're asleep. Dreams aren't conjured up in your mind. They're deposited by God in your spirit. A God given dream doesn't come from falling asleep eating pizza, it comes from the Holy Spirit.

From this we see, dreams and visions are how the Holy Spirit speaks to us. But its more than a word, its a vision, its played out in a dream. Dreams and visions give us faith to believe for more. I'm passionate about these 21 days of prayer and I want to tell God's people, dream again!

DAY 19: YOU ARE LOOSED

One of the many rewards we can have from an extended time of prayer and fasting is freedom from things that we've been chained to for a long time.

Luke's Gospel tells us, "There was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, 'Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity'" (Luke 13:11-12).

From this we see there was a spirit this woman was bound to. This spirit caused infirmities in her life for 18 years. We don't know if it was one major infirmity or many illness issues that were binding her up. But we do know that she was bound so badly that she literally could not even raise her body up.

Maybe you're tied up with issues your parents and grandparents grappled with; things like addiction, marriage problems, anger, worry, and negative emotions.

Jesus wants to set you free! Use these 21 days to put time and distance between you and the bondage. After the Red Sea backfilled, drowning the Egyptian Army, God told Moses "You will see this enemy no more!" Israel had crossed over. They put distance between them. Egypt was behind them and in their past. Put distance between you and the vice. Burn the bridge that would lead you back over the water. Cut it off. It may take more than 21 days, maybe months, or even years but the more distance you put between you and those chains, the less power it has in your life.

Jesus said, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." By the Word of the Lord, you can be set free! I believe you can have total freedom in these 21 days!

DAY 20: GOD HEARD YOUR PRAYER

At this point of the 21 day journey, there's no doubt you've prayed the same prayer a few times. And that's a good thing! Jesus told us to ask, seek and knock. He even told a story about someone knocking on their neighbor's door at midnight to get what they needed! But I want you to know today that God heard your prayer.

Cornelius was completing a four-day fast for his family knowing God had more available for him when a knock came on his door. "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard..." (Acts 10:30-31)

Before raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus prayed, "Father, I thank You that You have heard me." When you know your prayer is in harmony with God's will, you can wrap it up with the same words: "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."

Understand this: After you've prayed, the Devil wants you to go away and wonder whether or not God heard you, or if He's willing to grant your request. But when you know God has heard your prayer, you have confidence. You think, act, and speak differently. Anxiety is replaced with peace.

Here is a Scripture to meditate on after you pray today:

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him" (1John 5:14-15).

Today begin to thank God that He has heard your prayer and that He will answer it in the way that's best for you.

DAY 21: ANGELS ARE HERE

You've arrived at Day 21 on this prayer and fasting journey! We see over and over again in Scripture how God honors the vows of his people to pray and fast.

First, we see how Daniel vowed to fast for 21 days. For those 21 days, the angel was withstood by a demonic power that ruled the country. But on the 21st day, there was a spiritual breakthrough as the angels of heaven won the victory over Babylon. Next, we know Jesus endured three temptations from Satan over His 40 day fast in the wilderness. After the 40 days, He was weak in body and the angels rushed to minister and strengthen Him. Then Cornelius was completing a four-day fast for his family knowing God had more available for him when a knock came on his door. "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard..." (Acts 10:30-31) This knock at the door was a divine appointment set by God for Peter to preach to Cornelius and his family. Before Peter left, Cornelius and his entire household were baptized in water and received the Holy Spirit.

You have been praying and fasting for the past 21 days. Maybe you received an answer in prayer, but there is a great chance that some prayers have not come to pass yet. Farmers sow in the spring, but they reap the harvest in fall. I believe that there have been many seeds sown in these last 21 days. They've been sown on your knees, sown with tears, sown in worship. And I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that these seeds will produce a great harvest in your life and our church!

And so, I want us to praise God today, both for what He has done and for what He is going to do. Praise him in advance for the divine appointments, the knock on your door that is on the way, and the miracles that have yet to come. Praise Him for the lost loved one that is coming home. Praise Him for the financial breakthrough. Praise Him for restored relationships. Praise Him for the miracles in our church. "For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised" (1 Chronicles 16:25).



WHEN YOU PRAY, FAST AND GIVE, YOUR FATHER WHO SEES IN SECRET WILL REWARD YOU OPENLY

> MATTHEW 6:1-28 NKJV

PROMISE A CHURCH