



# A DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that Christians have participated in for centuries. It is a subject Jesus spoke about, and the practice extends into Old Testament times. Like any spiritual discipline, fasting can become just another religious duty. But it can also be a powerful practice that draws us nearer to God.

## PRAYER GUIDE

### What is fasting?

The original practice of fasting involved abstaining from eating for a specific period of time. Both Moses and Jesus fasted for extended periods of time, living on water alone. This complete denial of food to the body is a living illustration that the soul needs God as much as the body needs food.

Another famous fast is that of Daniel - where he abstained from the luxurious food of the Babylonians in favour of a simple vegetarian diet. After ten days Daniel and his companions looked healthier and were better nourished than the other young men eating Babylonian delicacies. By fasting with a simple diet, Daniel showed that God is the source of human flourishing.

Of course, there are other types of fasting besides food. Sacrificing anything you value for the sake of knowing God better is a form of fasting. People have given up social media, TV, exercise, and many other things for a specified period as a fast.

One aspect of fasting is sacrificing something of value for God. Another aspect is dedicating time to God. Fasting involves taking whatever time you would have spent eating or on social media and using that time for prayer or bible reading to foster your relationship with God.

### Practical tips for food fasting

If you are abstaining from food, please take these points into consideration:

- If you have any medical conditions, you should check with your doctor before fasting.
- Ensure that you take in enough fluids during your fast. Consider drinking fruit juice during the day to keep your sugar levels up.
- Be aware that cutting caffeine out of your diet suddenly can have side effects, like headaches. Consider cutting back coffee consumption gradually when fasting.
- Tell someone that you are fasting and keep them informed about how you are feeling. Don't hesitate to ask for help or to eat something small if you feel dizzy or unwell.

### How are we fasting?

There are several options for fasting as part of the Redeemer Prayer Week.

1. You could fast on Thursday 15 Feb as a conclusion to the Prayer Week and then break your fast after the corporate prayer meeting that night.
2. You could fast for the week from Monday to Thursday by cutting out social media or some other equivalent.
3. You could fast for a few days in the week by abstaining from your normal diet. One common example is to drink only fruit juice during the day and then eat a bowl of soup at night. This fast is based on the Daniel method of dedicating yourself to God.