

## Why Fast? What is Fasting?

As we approach the next step in our life together as a church, we want to acknowledge our dependence upon God and our confidence in His hearing prayer. Grace Church has been built by Jesus Christ and is sustained by Him.

The pastors have designated February 1 and February 15 as times when you may choose to fast and pray. Ask God to give us clarity in our participation in the mission of the gospel and for God to provide resources through the mission fund for the mission. We are asking only that you choose one date, but you may do both!

We also think it valuable to give some basic instruction on fasting. It is important to see this discipline biblically. Fasting is found in the Old Testament and New Testament as well.

1. Christians fast to express intense desire for God. (Matt 9:14-17) It is saying "I want God this much, I want God's work this much." Secular people fast all the time because they want something badly (for example, they skip dinner to finish a major work project).
2. Christians fast at special times to express desire for God. The early Christians fasted in the selection of elders. (Acts 14:23) They also fasted as part of seeking God. (Acts 13:1-3)
3. God is pleased with fasting that is focused on Him. (Matt 6:16-18) Fasting is not to gain a reputation for being godly. It is for God. Jesus does not condemn fasting but directs it.
4. God is pleased with fasting that is an expression of a life of repentance. (Isaiah 58:1-9) There is no value in fasting for God to provide us with resources for the church when we are simultaneously pursuing sin.

Fasting is doing without something you love for the sake of expressing a greater love to God. It can be many things. You may fast from one or more meals or from a comfort or pleasure (sleep, morning cup of coffee).

*Simply stated: Fasting is a God-appointed means of underscoring the sincerity and intensity of our prayers before God. It is an expression of desperation and hunger. Fasting tells God that what we are asking for is very important to us.*

Our goal for prayer and fasting is a unified expression of our desire for God's hand in our life as a church. Let us join together in seeking God's work for the Gospel among us.

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