

21 Day Prayer and Fast Guide

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Red Rocks Church

est. 2021

Red
Rocks
Church

Experience God. Find Family. Discover
Purpose. Make a Difference.

established

Welcome.

Welcome to Est. 2022. The Bible says, “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will **establish** your plans” (Proverbs 16:3). We believe this is the year God wants to reveal plans and *establish* purpose for your life.

What do you want to see God do in and through your life this year?

What do you want to see God do in and through our church this year?

For the next 21 days, we are going to lay the spiritual foundation for the rest of 2022 through prayer and fasting. Fasting disconnects us from the world, while prayer connects us to God. When we put the two together, we will see God do a tremendous work in our lives!

This guide will walk you through everything you need to know for the next three weeks. First, we'll pick your fast, then we'll set your strategy, and then you will be ready for Day One. Thank you for joining us on the journey. Let's get started!

Pick a Fast.

Fasting is withholding from something we want so we can set our minds and attention on God. Food is an important part of life, but Scripture is full of invitations to go without it for a period of time to connect with God and be more mindful of our reliance on him.

For more on why we fast, check out Doug's Sermon, *Five Reasons Fasting Will Change Your Life*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t75BfuDO6N8&t=1932s>

As we head into 21-Days of Prayer and Fasting, here are four different fasts to choose from. Read through the different fasts and decide which one is right for you this year. If for any reason, you don't feel comfortable fasting from food, the final option (the soul fast) is for you!

Complete Food Fast

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids. Drink a lot of water, and then add in juice and shakes as needed.

Partial Food Fast

This fast is sometimes called the "Jewish Fast" and involves abstaining from eating any type of food for a certain period of time each day. For example, you can choose to skip a certain meal or abstain from eating until sunset.

Selective Food Fast

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Soul Fast

If you don't have much experience fasting food, have health (or other) issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance, this is a great option for you. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

Set Your Strategy.

The next key to making these 21-days successful is *establishing* a prayer routine that works for your schedule. We are creatures of habit, and the goal for these next three weeks is to *establish* a healthy habit of prayer we can carry with us for the rest of the year.

Your strategy should consist of three things—a time, a spot, and a plan.

Pick a Time

What is a time that works for you every day? If you have young kids, there is a good chance it will either have to be before they wake up or after they go to bed. It doesn't matter when it is; just pick the time that is going to be easiest for you to stick to and put it in your calendar right now.

Pick a Spot

Your prayer times will be a lot more consistent if you designate a specific spot for them. Maybe it's a certain chair or closet. Or maybe it's your backyard or your car. Again, it doesn't matter what spot you choose; it only matters that you pick one and stick with it.

Pick a Plan

The best way to ensure you will have success during your prayer time is to go into it with a plan. There are many different models you can follow for this, and in week two, we will walk through one together (praying The Lord's Prayer). But go into your prayer time with a plan.

One option is to pray through the acronym: ACTS.

Adoration: Start your prayer by praising God for who he is.

Confession: Admit any sin in your life.

Thanksgiving: Next, express gratitude for a few things in your life.

Supplication: Finally, end your prayer by praying for one person.

What if today was the day you *established* a routine for your prayers. And what if next year at this time, you can look back and know that you've prayed every day for the last 365 days? Praying for one day may feel *underwhelming*, but if you pray every day for a year, the results will be *overwhelming*!

Week 1: Dreaming with God

Day 1: Dream Big for Your Life

What do you want to see God accomplish in your life this year?

Did you know God wants to help you answer that question? God wants to dream with you!

Matthew 7:7 says, “ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” So what are you asking God for this year? And are your goals God-sized?

The beauty of dreaming with God and having a God-sized goal for your year is that you won’t be tempted to take any credit; when it comes to pass, all the glory will go to God.

So, what do you want God to *establish* in your life in 2022? A new career? Healthier relationships? A fresh vision for your future? Spend the next few minutes inviting God into that question. Don’t let this be another year where you just try to make it through on your own. Decide right now to change your attitude and make this the year God *establishes* your plans.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for another day and another year. As we head into these 21 days of prayer and fasting, I pray that you would increase my faith. I want to be excited and expectant for what you are about to do in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

Day 2: Dream Big for Your Family

What Do You Want God to *Establish* in Your Family?

No matter what happens in the world, we get to decide the type of home we are going to have. We may not be able to control what happens around us, but we *can* decide to say, “*as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD*” (Joshua 24:15).

Do you have a dream for your family?

What do you want to see God do in your home?

What is one word you want people to use to describe your home?

Maybe this is the year you step up your hospitality and host more dinners. Maybe you want your house to be a place of peace where everyone can rest and recharge. Whatever it is, bring the people who live with you into the conversation. Ask them what their dream is for the space and invite them to join you in praying that God would *establish* himself in your family.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for my home and my family. This year, we pray that you will establish your presence in our house/apartment. When people come over, we pray they will feel loved and accepted. We pray that our home would be a place where people are encouraged and reminded that they matter and that God has a plan and a purpose for their life in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

Day 3: Dream Big for Our Church

What do you want to see God do in our church this year?

God has done so many amazing things through Red Rocks Church over the years. And while we love to stop and celebrate those stories, we also believe God is just getting started.

We believe 2022 will be a year where heaven gets more crowded! We believe people who are far from God will flock to our church and feel comfortable being another imperfect person pursuing a perfect God, with like-minded people. We also believe it will be a year where all sorts of people put their faith in Jesus, get baptized, and allow the Spirit to completely transform their life.

Today, join us as we all pray for Red Rocks Church.

Weekend Services: Pray that God would bring the right people to our weekend services and that they'd feel welcome and loved no matter how far from God they may have strayed.

Groups: Pray that people would have the courage to jump into a Group this year and *establish* some lifelong friendships.

God Behind Bars: Pray that God would move powerfully at all our God Behind Bars Campuses. Pray that the people watching would be reminded that they are loved and that God has a plan and a purpose for their future.

Prayer: *Lord, thank you for Red Rocks Church. Thank you that you are just getting started. We pray that Red Rocks would be a place that people who are far from God would flock to. And we pray that it would be a place where they encounter you in a life-changing way. We also pray that it would be a place where people would join Groups, find community, and establish some lifelong friendships. Would heaven get more crowded this year, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 4: Dream Big for Those Far from God

Who is one person you want God to reach this year?

Do you have someone in your life who is far from God? Maybe it's your spouse, child, or parent. Maybe it's a friend, roommate, or coworker. Or maybe it's a celebrity, athlete, or politician. Whoever it is, there is a reason they are on your heart.

If you feel like they are too far gone for God to save, remember Paul's story in the Bible. Before Paul was the church planting Apostle who wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament, his name was Saul, and he was persecuting the church. He was beating, stoning, and killing Christians left and right. Saul was doing everything he could to stomp out the Christian movement. But then God got ahold of him on the road to Damascus and completely transformed his life.

If Paul wasn't too far gone for God to save, neither is the person on your heart. We need to stop playing small and praying timid prayers.

Today, unapologetically ask God to save that person. And if there is a tangible way for you to reach out and encourage them, do it. If nothing else, send them a quick text and let them know how much you care about them!

Prayer: *Father, today I pray for _____. Would they come to have a relationship with you in Jesus' name. Wherever they are right now, I pray that you will show them how much you love them. Thank you for dying for their sins, even if they can't see it or believe it yet. Lord, would you show them that love today in a really tangible way and give me a creative way that I can help in the process. Thank you that no one is too far gone for your love to reach in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 5: Dream with Someone Else

Who is one other person you'd like to go through this 21-day journey with?

How have these first few days of this journey been going? At this point, you may be feeling tired or ready to give up on your fast. Day five is the perfect time to invite someone else in on the process to keep you accountable.

Dreaming with God is one thing, but something powerful also happens when we invite someone else in on the process. It forces us to say our prayers and dreams out loud, and it puts someone in our corner who can cheer us on and keep us accountable. As the writer of Hebrews says, *"let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds"* (Hebrews 10:24).

Who is one person you want to dream with this year? It doesn't matter if it is your spouse, roommate, parent, friend, or coworker; it just matters that they are someone you trust. Once you decide on a person, reach out to them and invite them to pray and fast with you. Spend a few minutes telling them about all the ways you are dreaming with God this year, and then give them space to do the same thing.

Prayer: *Lord, thank you for creating me for community. As I continue to go through these 21-days of fasting and prayer with _____, I pray that you would strengthen our relationship and teach us how to push one another closer to you. Thank you for giving me someone I can trust to dream with in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 6: Establish a Firm Foundation

What is one thing holding you back from the full life God intends for you?

As you continue to pray for God to move in your life, family, and church, it's important to remember that you have a part to play. God isn't a magic genie who gives you whatever you ask. Instead, he is a loving Father who invites you on the journey with him.

At the end of his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave this call:

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash (Matthew 7:24-27).

To see these dreams come to pass, you need to be persistent in prayer and fasting, but you also need to step back, evaluate your life, and get rid of anything that isn't a part of God's firm foundation.

What is one thing in your life that is currently keeping you from experiencing God's best? What is one thing that is keeping your foundation shaky? Maybe it's a relationship you know isn't good for you. Maybe it's an addiction or a habit you know you need to eliminate from your life. Maybe it's a lie or a mindset you need to stop believing.

Whatever it is, these three weeks of prayer and fasting are the perfect time to eliminate the bad to make room for more good.

Prayer: *Father, I want to build my life on your firm foundation. Today, I confess this area of my life where I have strayed from living out the life you have for me. I don't want that thing in my life anymore, so today, I pray that you would empower me to take the necessary steps to make this change. Thank you that it's in my weakness that you are strong, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 7: Now Dream Even Bigger

Do You *Really* Believe God Can Do It?

If we're honest, one of the reasons we don't pray as much as we should is because sometimes we don't believe God is going to answer our prayers.

In the beginning, most Christians believe God can do anything. But along the way, it can be easy to lose that faith. If you've been let down or experienced some tough times, it can be difficult to still dream with God.

But that's what we're called to do!

What if 2022 was the year we got our hopes up again? What if this was the year we started believing that God can actually heal, move, and change our lives? And most importantly, what if we started fasting and praying like that was true?

In Ephesians 3, Paul drops to his knees and prays for his friends. Watch how he ends the prayer: "Now to him who is able to do *immeasurably more* than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20, emphasis added).

Paul went through a lot of trials and a ton of hardships. However, along the way, he never stopped believing that God could do *immeasurably more* than he could even imagine. Let's join Paul and get our hopes up for what God can do during these 21 days and this entire year.

Prayer: *Father, would you increase my faith? I want to believe that you really can do immeasurably more than anything I could think or imagine. I want to believe that you are big enough. Would you show me just how loving you are this year, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Week 2:

Teach Us How to Pray

Day 8: Gratitude

What Are You Thankful For?

When Jesus's disciples asked him to teach them how to pray, he gave them a model that we call the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). This week, we are going to use this prayer as our guide by praying through it one line at a time.

Jesus begins the prayer with: *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name"* (Matthew 6:9).

He starts his prayer by looking up and acknowledging that God is our Father in heaven, which means every good thing we have on this earth is a gift from God. You may have worked really hard to get to where you are today, but the Bible says even the breath you had in your lungs along the way came from God (Isaiah 42:5).

Life is a gift from God. The question is: *are you thankful for it?* Before we start asking God for what we don't have, let's spend an entire day saying thank you for what we do have.

Just start thanking God for everything you can think of: your home, your family, your job, your car, your clothes, your food, your friends, your health, your life.

Once you get going, you'll begin to realize just how many things you have to be thankful for. You may not feel thankful at first, but when you start saying thank you, you'll realize just how much you have to be thankful for. Soon enough, you'll feel like the luckiest person on earth.

Prayer: *Father, thank you. Thank you for my life. Thank you for all the things you are doing in and through me this year. Thank you for my family and friends and all the people you put in my life to keep me going. Your mercies are made new every morning, so today, I thank you that I have a fresh start, a second chance. Would you show me just how much I have to be thankful for today, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 9: Intercession

What do you want to see God do in your life?

The next line in the Lord's Prayer is only three words long, but they are three incredibly important words. He says, *"Your kingdom come"* (Matthew 6:10a).

Jesus is inviting us to pray that the Kingdom of Heaven would be present in our world. In heaven, there is no division, so God is inviting us to pray for peace in our nation. In heaven, there is no fighting, so God is inviting us to pray for unity in our church. In heaven, there is no sickness, so God is inviting us to pray for health and healing in our family.

These three words are an invitation to intercede on behalf of our loved ones. Today, we are going to take him up on the offer.

What do you want to see God do in the lives of the people you love?

What do you want to see God do in Red Rocks Church?

One of the most practical ways we can work to make heaven more crowded is to pray this prayer: Would your kingdom come in Denver, Austin, Brussels, and whatever city you are in as it is in heaven.

Prayer: *Father, I know that prayer is powerful. When I pray, you listen. And so I boldly ask that your kingdom come in my home. Would you bless my spouse and kids (parents, roommates, etc.)? I pray that our home will be unified and full of joy and laughter. God, would your kingdom come in our church. Would Red Rocks be a place where everyone feels welcome and where more and more prodigals continue to come home, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 10: Surrender

Do you truly trust that God's way is better?

The next part of the prayer is surrender. Jesus prays, *"your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"* (Matthew 6:10).

After you spend some time thanking God for everything in your life and interceding for your friends and family, it's time to open your hands and trust God with your day. Do you believe that God has a plan and a purpose for your life? Do you believe that his plan is better than anything you could ever dream up?

The easy answer to those questions is yes. But if we are being honest, truly believing this can be challenging, especially when you are going through a difficult season. God's way doesn't always make sense to us. He even tells us in his Word:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Our job is not to try to figure God out; it's to trust that he really is our loving Father who wants what is best for us. Today, practice opening up your hands in surrender by praying this prayer.

Prayer: *Father, I trust you. Thank you for being a loving God who wants what is best for me. It doesn't always make sense to me, but I know your ways are higher than mine, and you know what is best for me. And so, I surrender today to you. I'm ready for you to lead, because I know you will get me where I need to go. Thank you for being a good God in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 11: Provision

What do you need God to do in your life today?

The next line Jesus prays is, “*Give us today our daily bread*” (Matthew 6:11).

It’s time to ask God for the things we need. First off, notice that Jesus prays for his *daily* bread. How often do we need to pray for *daily* bread? That’s not a trick question. The answer is every day. Some of us would love to be able to pray for our *weekly* bread or *monthly* bread and cover our bases, but that’s not how prayer works. Prayer is an invitation to talk to God *daily*.

God knows what we need before we ask, but did you know he loves it when we talk to him about the things we need? Every good parent understands this principle. You know what your kids need, but there is something amazing about the moment they stop and ask for it.

What is the daily bread you need from God today?

Do you need a door to open up at work?

Do you need a promotion?

Do you need patience for someone in your life?

Do you need a relationship mended?

There is nothing too big or too small to ask God for today, so ask him!

Prayer: *Father, thank you for being a good God who promises to provide. You know what I need, but you love when I ask, so today, I pray that you would give me favor at work. Would you continue to open the right doors for me to walk through? Lord, I ask for some good quality time to spend with my family or friends. And I pray that you would keep me and everyone in my family healthy, in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

Day 12: Repentance

What is something in your life you need to turn from?

Repentance is a word we try to ignore, but in the next line, Jesus prayed, *“Forgive us our debt” (Matthew 6:12a).*

To repent means to turn. To turn from the way you shouldn’t have gone and get back on the right path. This invitation is all throughout Scripture, and it may sound scary at first, but remember, Jesus already paid the price for all our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

Jesus went to the cross to pay the price for our sins, so we don’t have to be afraid to talk to God about our shortcomings. Instead, as the writer of Hebrews says, *“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).*

What do you need to confess? Where have you been falling short? Spend today’s prayer time talking to God about that area of your life. Confess it, turn from it, and take some tangible steps to make sure you don’t go back to it.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for being such a patient God. I know I fall short all the time, but I thank you that you aren’t done with me yet. Today, I want to repent. I want to confess all the places in my life where I’ve strayed from the path you have for me. I don’t want those things in my life anymore, so I thank you that you are giving me a fresh start today. Let’s move forward together in Jesus’ name, Amen.*

Day 13: Forgive

Is there anyone in your life you need to forgive?

Repentance is just the first half of the equation. Jesus goes on to say, *“Forgive us our debt as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).*

Asking God to forgive us is the easy part; turning around and offering that same forgiveness to other people is the tough part. Especially when someone really hurts or offends us. Forgiveness is counterintuitive. It’s a lot easier to stay bitter, but if we want to get better, we have to follow the example of Jesus and forgive.

Forgiveness isn’t easy, but it is one of the most freeing things you could ever do. Forgiveness is like breath. We inhale God’s grace and forgiveness for our life, and then we exhale that same forgiveness to others.

Who is one person you need to forgive today? Take a moment to pray for that person. Pray that God would bless them and provide for them. And then, if it’s safe to do so, take one action step to help fix that relationship in your life. Send them a text, give them a call, or come up with some creative way to let them know you forgive them.

Prayer: *Father, forgiveness isn’t easy. I pray that you would remind me of the great lengths you went to and the things you went through to offer me forgiveness. Would that truth empower and embolden me to turn around and forgive this person in my life, in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

Day 14: Protection

What temptations are you most prone to give into?

Jesus ends his prayer by praying for protection: *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”* (Matthew 6:13).

We all need God to protect us. It doesn't matter how long you have been a Christian or how strong you think your faith may be; if Jesus had to pray for protection, we need to do the same.

Perhaps the most powerful story of fasting in Scripture is when Jesus went out into the wilderness and abstained from food and water for forty days. At the end of the forty days, Satan met him in the wilderness to tempt him.

It's easy to read that and think how scary it must've been for Jesus to be tempted while he was so weak, but the opposite is actually true. After forty days of fasting, Jesus was physically weak, but he was spiritually strong. Although it may not feel like it at the moment, fasting increases our ability to fight off temptation and be the men and women God wants us to be.

As you may have noticed, Jesus's ministry began right after he got back from the wilderness. This is a very common pattern. As we approach our third and final week of fasting, be encouraged that God may have called you to do this fast because he has a big next step coming for you.

That should excite you, but it should also give you all the more reason to pray that God would protect you in the process. Spend a couple of minutes calling out the things that tempt you by name. Get specific. Is it greed? Lust? Power? Fame? Don't be embarrassed. God knows you better than you know yourself. Call it out and then ask God to protect you by praying this prayer:

Prayer: *Father, I feel good right now, but you know how quickly that can turn. As I go throughout my day, I pray that you would lead me down a path of righteousness. I know the enemy is trying to take me down. So, Lord, protect me from any temptations that may come my way and deliver me from the evil one, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Week 3:

Pray Without Ceasing

Day 15: Pray for Those Who Are Hurting

As you fast, are you remembering those who go without food every day?

We've reached our third and final week of this journey. For the next seven days, we are going to turn our attention outward and pray for specific groups of people.

There are several reasons why we fast; one of them is to stand in solidarity with those who don't have food. Last week, we talked about the Lord's Prayer where Jesus encourages us to ask God to "give us today our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). For most of us, we don't have to take that verse literally, but some people do. There are people all around the world and even in our own city who are hungry and don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Let's make today's fast about standing in solidarity with anyone who is worried about how they are going to get their next meal. Keep them at the forefront of your mind, and anytime you start to feel hungry, stop and pray for them. Ask God to bless them and provide for them.

Finally, let's use the money we would've used on our food for the day and help someone who needs it. You can go buy lunch for someone you see on the street or give \$20 (or whatever amount feels right to you) to one of our local partners who is helping feed the hungry.

Denver

Kitchen One for One

Too many of our neighbors go to bed hungry and lack access to healthy, nutritious food. *Kitchen One for One* is a non-profit food truck delivering hope, connection, and restaurant-quality meals to those who need it most.

Learn More: <https://www.kitchenoneforone.com>

Donate: kitchenoneforone.networkforgood.com

Austin

Mobile Loaves & Fishes

Mobile Loaves and Fishes is a social outreach ministry that has been empowering communities into a lifestyle of service with the homeless since 1998. They currently serve hundreds of homeless each day with their mobile food truck and 51 acres Community First Village that provides affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for the disabled, chronically homeless in Central Texas.

Learn More: <https://mlf.org>

Donate: give.mlf.org/give/138838/#!/donation/checkout

Brussels

Frigo Solidaire

Frigo Solidaire is a food bank in Waterloo, Belgium. They provide basic food necessities in order to help those on the outskirts of Brussels get back on their feet.

Learn More: www.facebook.com/FrigoSolidaireWaterloo/

Donate: pushpay.com/g/redrockschurchbrussels?fnd=outreach%2Fspecial%20offering%20&r=no

Prayer: *Father, today, I pray for those who are hungry. Would you provide for their most basic needs? Bring the right people into their lives who can make sure they are well fed. And help me see any tangible needs that I can help meet, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Day 16: Pray for our Local Outreach Partners

Do you remember to pray for our outreach partners?

At Red Rocks Church, we have an amazing Outreach Program that partners with organizations that are making a difference on the front lines. They are the ones doing the hard work day in and day out to help us love our neighbors in tangible and intangible ways.

Today, we are going to pray for three of our Outreach Partners. As you get ready to pray, take a moment to learn more about each one:

Denver

Hope House

Hope House is metro-Denver's only resource providing free self-sufficiency program to parenting teen moms. This includes Residential, High School & GED, and College & Career Programs.

Learn More: www.hopehousecolorado.org

Austin

The Refuge Ranch

The Refuge Ranch is a long-term, residential, therapeutic community for minor girls through age 19 who have been recovered from sex traffickers. The Refuge Ranch is the largest long-term, live-in rehabilitation facility for child survivors of sex trafficking in the United States.

Learn More: therefugedmst.org

Brussels

A5 Refugee Ministry

A5's vision is to see refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants living a successful and hope-filled life with the ability to transfer that hope to a future generation. They do this by providing community and resources to the refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants.

Learn More: www.facebook.com/A5ministries

Prayer: *Father, thank you for Hope House, The Refuge Ranch, and A5 Refugee Ministry. I thank you for all the amazing work they are doing in our cities. Today, I pray that you would bless each of them with the strength that they need to continue being lights in a dark place. Provide for them financially and continue to give them wisdom for ways to help those who need it most. Please show me any tangible ways that I can help them to continue doing what they do, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 17: Pray for our Pastors

Are you in the habit of praying for our Pastors?

Today, we are going to pray for our leaders. Pastors Shawn and Jill have to carry a weight for us that we can't quite understand. But what we can do is come alongside them and lift them up in prayer. As Paul writes to the Church in Galatia, we can *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ"* (Galatians 6:2).

Pray for Protection

Ask God to protect Shawn and Jill, and their entire family from any schemes of the devil.

Pray for Provision

Ask God to provide them with everything they need to continue to lead with love. Pray that God would bless them with great quality time to spend together, energy to continue to lead, and opportunities to rest along the way.

Pray for Wisdom

Ask God to continue to give them the wisdom and discernment they need to lead Red Rocks Church. Pray that God would speak loud and clear to them and give them the confidence they need to continue taking our church where God wants it to go.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for Pastor Shawn and Pastor Jill. Thank you for their heart for this church and for all the hard work and dedication they've given to leading our church over the years. Today, I pray that you would bless them and protect them. Surround them with protection as they continue to try to pastor us well, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Day 18: Pray for the Government

When was the last time you prayed for politicians?

Few things are as polarizing of a subject as politics. We all have our thoughts and opinions about how things should and should not be run. It's good to think critically, but the Bible also encourages us to pray for our leaders. Watch what Paul tells his disciple Timothy:

The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live (1 Timothy 2:1-3, Message).

Notice he didn't tell Timothy to only pray for the government leaders he agrees with; he told him to pray for all of them regardless of his opinions.

What if today, you took one day to fast from your political opinions in order to pray for leaders? What if today, we took a break from disagreeing about politics to agree with God in prayer? What if we simply asked God to give our political leaders wisdom and discernment to lead us?

Tomorrow, you can get back to having your opinions. But as we continue to let God cleanse our souls, you'll find that this is a really freeing exercise.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for the political leaders who are working to make this country run. Today, I put aside my thoughts and opinions and pray that you would give them all wisdom. Would you speak to them and give them divine insight into what you want to see happen in our land in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Day 19: Pray for Those Who Persecute You

Are you willing to pray for the people you don't get along with?

It's easy to pray for the people you love, but what about the ones who are tough to love? In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"* (Matthew 5:43-44).

Today, we are going to practice doing exactly what Jesus said to do; we are going to pray for the people we don't get along with.

Who is one person in your life you are angry with?

Take some time and ask that God would bless them. It is going to feel counterintuitive at first, but it is one of the best things you can do for your soul. Press through the discomfort and watch how much better you feel afterward.

Prayer: *Father, thank you for _____. Even though I don't always see eye to eye with them or get along with them, they are a human being made in your image. I pray that you will bless them today. Provide for them. Be with their family and continue to protect them in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Day 20: Pray for Everyone You See

What if you prayed for everyone you interacted with today?

We love to tell people that we are praying for them, but what if we became people who actually prayed for each person we interacted with? Not out loud or in a way we'll ever get credit for, but just silently to ourselves, as we talk to them.

In Numbers 6, God gave Moses a blessing and directed him to pray it over the Israelites. Let's read it together:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26).

What if you prayed that blessing for every person you saw today? You can pray for them silently while you talk to them or spend ten seconds praying after the conversation is over. Obviously, you may not get to everyone, but that's not the point. The goal is to simply see interactions as opportunities to bless people.

If you pray for everyone you see today, it will be one of the most productive days you've had in a long time.

Prayer: *Lord, thank you for another day. Would you help me see every person I interact with today as an opportunity to bless? Remind me throughout the day, no matter how busy I get, that each person is an individual human being who deserves my love and respect. Give me the right perspective today. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Day 21: Just Getting Started

Do you believe God is just getting started in your life?

Congratulations on making it to Day 21! That is a huge accomplishment, and you should be really proud of yourself. By now, you've realized just how powerful prayer and fasting can be.

As we reach the end of our journey, it's important to remember that the goal of these three weeks has been to set a firm foundation for the rest of your year. Paul doesn't tell us to just pray for 21 days every year; he tells us to "*pray without ceasing*" (1 Thessalonians 5:17, ESV).

As you get ready to break your fast, take a moment and think about the rest of 2022.

What is one way you can continue to fast for the rest of the year?

How can you continue to make prayer a priority in your life?

Let's finish where we started, with the same verse that began this entire journey:

"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans" (Proverbs 16:3). We believe 2022 can be the year where everything changes in your life for the better. Commit to keeping up these habits for the rest of your year, and watch what God does!

Prayer: *Father, thank you for all the amazing things you've done in my life over the last 21 days. Thank you for this fresh start, and thank you that you are just getting started. Would you help me continue to make prayer my priority this year? I commit all my plans to you and am excited to see how you are going to establish yourself in my life.*