

# Parkway Bible Church - 24 Hours of Prayer and Fasting Guide

*\*This guide is designed to be a resource with a variety of options for you to use however much or little you desire and whatever is best for you to intentionally connect with God. We recommend doing your best to carve out some intentional times and create space to read, reflect, pray, and journal. Remember: The goal is not to complete all the options, but to have ideas of how you personally can connect your heart and mind to God.*

As we continue to carry out the mission and vision God has given us, we invite you to participate in a day of prayer and fasting as we declare our dependence on God. We recognize prayer is the fuel to accomplish all God has called us to. Our staff will be setting aside our task lists and calendars to disconnect so we can connect more deeply with God and seek Him.

## How To Participate

- Join us at the Multiply gathering to kick off our 24 hours of prayer and fasting
- Use the following prayer and fasting guide from your home or wherever you choose to seek God and spend time deepening your relationship with Him

## Fasting Overview

Biblical fasting is the practice of voluntarily abstaining from food for a limited time for the purpose of expressing to God one's desires, dependence, and/or dedication. Though Jesus never commanded his followers to fast, he himself fasted and assumed his followers would follow His example (Matthew 6:16, Mark 2:18-22). Two primary reasons for fasting include to petition God intensely and to pursue God intimately. During this time, we encourage you to prayerfully determine what level of fasting you believe God is calling you to and follow that plan. A common practice when fasting is to replace your mealtimes with extended time with God. In moments of feeling hungry, weak, or tired, pause and declare your dependence and need for God and for Him to satisfy you.

## Fasting Precautions

Before fasting, it is good to consult your physician where there may be implications for any existing health conditions. For example, those on prescription medicines or with chronic illnesses like diabetes should seek the advice of their doctor. However, everyone should expect some physical discomfort while fasting. Common sense and wisdom should also be exercised regarding how to break a fast, especially extended fasts. If fasting from food is not wise for you, we encourage you to engage with this practice by sacrificing something during these 24 hours. Identify something to go without that will free you from distraction and create more time in your day to pray and seek God.

## Tips

- **Embrace Discomfort** - This experience has a powerful potential for life-change, but it won't always be comfortable.
- **Start Small** - Start where you are, not where you feel like you "should" be. If a full day of fasting is too much for your body or soul, start smaller. Possibly try skipping breakfast and break the fast at lunch or 3 p.m. or skip a different meal. The smaller the start, the better your chance of sticking to it and growing over time.
- **Don't Beat Yourself Up** - If things don't go as planned or you give into a moment of weakness, don't beat yourself up. Romans 8:1 "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
- **For Families with Small Kids** - Yes, your kids will interrupt your time of reading and reflection. Just do what you can, as best you can. The idea is growth, not perfection, in your ability to listen to and hear from God.
- **For Families with Big Kids** - Let your kids know what you're doing and why. Consider inviting them into this process with you. Doing this as a couple or a family will have a powerful impact on the time you have to connect with one another.
- **Limit Distractions** - You might consider using a paper Bible, journal, and pen as well as finding a location where you can spend time with God alone and away from distractions. Print this guide out so you can disconnect from technology which can easily distract and detract us from our time of worship and conversation with God. Consider silencing your phone and electronics.

## PRAYER EXERCISE OPTIONS

### OPTION 1: Prayer and Reflection in Hebrews 11

Pray for God to speak to you and draw you closer to Him as you reflect on His Word.

#### Read V. 1-3

We will look at some examples of men and women in Scripture that were commended for their faith, but first let's start by giving praise and gratitude to God.

Take a moment and praise God for His creation, for being all powerful, creator and sustainer. Thank Him for being trustworthy, a promise keeper, assurance of true hope and these examples of faith.

**Read V.6**

Declare reasons why you have faith in God.

Pray and ask God to continue to strengthen your faith and ask for more of Him.

**Read V. 7-8**

Is there something God is asking you to do, or of you, but maybe you are hesitant (fear, doubt, anxious, believing lies).

If so, ask God to give you boldness, faith, and courage to trust Him.

If not sure, take this time to ask God to reveal if there is anything He is asking of you that maybe you are ignoring or missing.

**Read V. 11 also (V. 29 -30)**

Take time to praise/thank God for something(s) He did that only He could do.

Now, pray for God to do something only He can do....Maybe it is something you have been asking or feel led to ask God to do that only He could do, so cry out to Him with big, specific, bold prayers.

Is there someone you could share this prayer request with so they can pray alongside you?

**Read V. 16**

Spend time thanking God for the promise of our home in heaven AND pray to not lose hope and to focus on eternity.

**Read V. 17-19**

What is something God is asking you to sacrifice, give up, and surrender to Him? Possibly something that you are still holding on to and for some reason you don't want to let go. (could be a false idol, sin, habit)

- What is it?
- What is the reason you are holding on to it still?
- What would it take for you to surrender it to God?

If not aware of what this could be in your life, ask God to search your heart and reveal anything not pure or of Him.

Take some time to reflect, search, cry out to God, confess and ask for His power.

*Would you be willing to share with someone else and ask for prayer?*

**Read V. 24 - 25**

We all face temptations in this world and will continue. Ask God to help reveal the areas the enemy will tempt you and ask Him to give you strength to overcome.

**Read V. 27**

Moses endured/persevered despite trials. Perseverance is key to demonstrating/living out our faith. Also, all things are in His timing, and we may need to wait at times even though it is hard, and we feel like giving up. Maybe you are facing something now or most likely will in future; so pray and ask God for strength, support, to depend on Him, and hope to persevere.

**Read V. 29-30**

God delivers us when we are under attack...physically, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally. Take time to pray for yourself as well as others you may know that are going through spiritual attacks.

Closing: Thank God again for these examples and for who He is. Then ask God to give us a faith that is bold, courageous, dependent on Him and that would honor Him.

**OPTION 2: A.C.T.S. PRAYER**

God is transcendent and bigger than anything we can comprehend, yet He is also an intimate father and friend who knows us and loves us more than any one person has and could.

At times, we can believe and embrace that God is big and might feel unfit to be with Him. At other times, we make God small and come to Him like a vending machine who produces out solutions to our needs. The prayer method called ACTS helps us prioritize His bigness while allowing us to be deeply and intimately connected to Him in relationship and in bringing Him our requests.

*Adore – Praise God for all that He is*

*Confess – Confess your sins and ask to be forgiven*

*Thank – Thank Him for everything He has done, is doing and will do in your life*

*Seek – Present your requests to God*

Adore – Praise God for all that He is - your Creator, your Sustainer and your Redeemer. Put things into perspective - remember who you are and who God is.

- Read: Psalm 19
- Pray: Spend several minutes in praise as you thank Him for who He is, reflecting on His character and names

Confess – Confess your sins and ask to be forgiven

- Read: 1 John 2:5-2:2, Psalm 51
- Pray: Spend several minutes confessing your sins to your loving Father

Thank – Thank Him for everything He has done, is doing and will do in your life

- Read: Psalm 95:1-7
- Pray: Stay in a state of prayer as you share with God the gratitude you feel for Him, who He is and what He has done out of love for you. Thank Him for the gifts in your life, answered prayers, and for His unending grace.

Seek – Present your requests to God

- Read: Philippians 4:5-7
- Pray: Spend a few minutes in silence as you allow God to meet you in this state of closeness. Open your hands and mind to what He might say to you and share what you are seeking from Him as you walk with Him.
  - Ask Him to speak to you and that His voice would break through any barriers preventing you from hearing Him.
  - Consider closing this time with Psalm 19:14: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

### **OPTION 3: ABC’S of ADORATION**

***“The ABC’s of Adoration”, By Ron Parrish, Building Your Spiritual Core, page 56***

*Through Him then, let us continually offer up sacrifices of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.* (Hebrews 12:15 NASB).

Most of us need help in expressing adoration to God. If you don’t believe that, just try leading a prayer meeting in which the participants are asked, “Right now, let’s pray prayers of adoration.” See what happens. People will almost immediately jump into petition prayers or other kinds of prayers that express needs or longings. Why? Because few Christians have the vocabulary of adoration. That muscle is under-developed. This exercise is designed to increase our core spiritual strength through expressions of praise to the One who is so worthy.

Start with the letter ‘A’ and think of as many words as you can to describe God. Here are some that are on my list: awesome, Abba, affirming, always, alive, abundant, accepting, able, active, absolute, abiding, amazing... . Then continue on to letter ‘B’ and do the same.

When I first developed this list, I used a dictionary and a thesaurus as I worked through the alphabet. This was a profound devotional experience. My list has grown as I have come across new words to describe God and even new impressions (revelations) of what God is like. “Resplendent” is not part of my daily vocabulary but I now use it frequently when praying prayers of adoration.

When ready, you can pray your ABC list out loud. “God you are \_\_\_\_\_.” At the end of these prayers of adoration and praise, I often say: “God, you are all these things and *much more!*”

On a Personal Note – From Ron: I use this exercise in worshipping the Father in a myriad of ways. I set my mind on God this way as I swim or perform other mindless tasks throughout the day. Even at night when trying to go back to sleep, I start with letter ‘A’ and work my way through the alphabet. Rarely do I get to ‘E’ before I experience a significant sense of God’s presence. I’ve practiced it

when washing dishes, mowing the lawn, waiting in line, or stuck in traffic. I sense God's pleasure when I do it. I already have a long list of these traits and characteristics of God/Jesus, but new adjectives are still being added.

#### **OPTION 4: SCRIPTURE CONTEMPLATION - EXODUS 33-34**

Before you begin reading the passage for this session, take a few minutes to invite God to speak to you through His Word and to reveal who He is to you through it.

Read Exodus 33-34:16 twice. The first time, take in what's happening in this passage.

The second time you read the passage, take special notice of God and His character as well as how Moses is relating to God. Then answer any of the following questions you have time for:

1. Leading up to chapter 33 (*i.e. one chapter beforehand*), what important context has happened leading up to Moses' conversation with God?
2. Have you ever experienced betrayal by someone in your life? If so, what did that feel like? How did you respond to that betrayal?
3. What messages does our culture speak about how to respond to betrayal?
4. When looking at this passage, how does God respond initially to the people's unfaithfulness? Is God's response reasonable to you? If so, how?
5. What are Moses' requests of God throughout their conversation? He makes a few requests. List all of them below.
6. Describe Moses' relationship with God (keeping in mind he has just been on the mountain with God for 40 days as well as all he has gone through with God since the burning bush). What do you think caused Moses to be so bold in his requests of God?
7. Why do you think God changes His mind in His decision? What does this say about God? What does this say about Moses' relationship with God?
8. Describe the character attributes you see in God throughout the passage. How would you define His glory based upon 33:19-20 and 34:6-7?
9. In chapter 34:12-16, God makes it very clear to not worship other gods, but He also warns them to not immerse themselves in other cultures in such a way that they become influenced and tempted to begin worshiping other gods. With this in consideration, take a few minutes to ask the Lord if there are any idols in your own life that you need to repent of.
10. Ask the Lord if there are any practices or relationships in your life that seem to be influencing you to place other things or people before the Lord. Spend some time seeking the Lord about this in your own life.
11. With Moses's intimate relationship with God in mind, consider if there is anything that you want to change in your own relationship with the Lord to enhance intimacy with Him. This could look like confessing sin to Him; it could mean you need to add some spiritual practices into your time with Him. What is the Holy Spirit speaking to you?
12. Take some time to ask God to give you a deeper hunger and thirst for Him that could make you as bold with Him as Moses was.

#### **OPTION 5: PRAYER STATIONS (Imagine praying through physical spaces at our church building)**

Below are some of the areas you can join us in praying over. Pray over any other areas and requests as feel led.

### Front Lobby

Pray for new guests coming to Parkway, for people that don't know Jesus, for them to feel welcomed and at home. Pray that those walking through these doors would experience peace, love, joy, hospitality, and a sense of belonging. Pray that we could continue to extend our reach further out to invite people in.

### Worship Center

Pray for the proclamation of the gospel, for the teaching of God's Word, that people would be responsive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Pray for an ever-increasing sense of communal worship to glorify the Lord in this space. Pray for the ministry of prayer & intercession that happens here.

### Global Ministry

Pray for our global partners around the world, for continued provision, protection, and fruitful ministry in their cross-cultural contexts. Pray for a continued pipeline of raising up new global partners, and for the expansion of the team of senders, supporters, and prayer warriors from home that see & understand their place in global ministry.

### Kids Ministry

Pray for new families coming to Parkway, that they find this to be a safe & supportive place for their kids. Pray for hurting families, to be able to find help & biblical resources. Pray for discipleship that begins at home and continues with partnership with Parkway. Pray for the KM team and ongoing providence in this area of high personnel needs.

### Student Ministry

Pray for teenagers to continue to find a sense of belonging here, a welcoming family to come alongside them during these sensitive years. Pray that students would continue to respond to the gospel, and that they would allow the Lord to shape & form their identity before the world's influence. Pray for struggling students to look to the Lord first and foremost.

### Room 116

Pray for our elder leadership, for their ongoing commitment and faithfulness to give their time and investment so freely. Pray for unity across the team. Pray against spiritual attack for them, their marriages, and their families. Pray for the ongoing raising up of new elders and future leadership for Parkway.

### Discover Parkway

Pray for those who are making the decision to engage further in the church, for clarity of next steps. For finding community in groups, for finding a place to serve, for sacrificial giving, for engaging in discipleship. Pray for more people to partner with us as we lock arms as a church body.

### Studio

Pray for our "phygital" (physical + digital) ministry to continue strong. For innovative methods & embracing technology in ways that continue to enhance the spread of the gospel. Pray that our online & media ministry would create platforms for the Kingdom to advance further beyond our walls, to engage people before they attend in person and encourage them toward it.

## **OPTION 6: PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. What's one thing you can do this year to increase your enjoyment of God?
2. What is an impossible prayer you can pray? (Ephesians 2:1-7)
3. What's the most important thing you could do to improve your family life?
4. In which spiritual discipline do you most want to make progress this year? Once you decide, determine the next step to take and when you will take it.
5. What's the single biggest timewaster in your life, and how can you redeem the time?
6. What's the most helpful new way you could use your gifts to strengthen your ministry and the body of Parkway Bible Church?
7. For whose salvation will you intentionally pray most fervently for this year?
8. Ask God to reveal if there are any idols in your life that prevent you from fully worshiping Him above all others and all other things. By God's grace and strength, consider fully surrendering any idols to Him.
9. What one thing could you do to improve your prayer life this year?
10. What single thing can you plan to do this year that will matter most in ten years? In eternity?

## **OPTION 7: PRAYER WALK**

*Why do a prayer walk?*

- We want to learn how to pray in ways that shape us deeply and unleash the power of God's Spirit in our lives

- We want to connect with God’s heart for this mission field that is ripe for harvest

#### *Where do I do a prayer walk?*

- If you don’t have an immediate location in mind, pray that God would put a particular location on your heart. Likely, this will be your neighborhood or another place where you live, work, learn, or play.

#### *How do I prepare?*

- Pray through Psalm 24: *The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; <sup>2</sup>for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.<sup>3</sup> Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? <sup>4</sup>The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god. <sup>5</sup>They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior. <sup>6</sup>Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob. <sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>8</sup>Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. <sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>10</sup>Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty—he is the King of glory.*
- **Verses 1-2:** Spend time worshipping God and thanking Him for who He is
- **Verses 3-6:** Confess ways you relate with the author of the Psalm in these verses
- **Verses 7-10:** Intercede on behalf of the people who are where you are going to prayer walk
- Pray for...
  - Divine appointments with people you may encounter - that God will direct and guide your steps
  - For open eyes to see the spiritual needs of those around you

#### *How do I do it?*

- First, ask God to reveal Himself on your prayer walk
- Go for a walk (or drive) and as walking/driving pray, look, and listen to and for what God is doing and saying
- Ask God what He’s already doing there
  - “Lord, how do You want me to be praying for this area?”
  - “Who are You moving in here right now?”
  - “What are the barriers to Your work here?”
  - Spend time listening and write down anything you hear or feel
- Pray for renewal of your own faith
  - Pray for God to move deeply in your own heart. Ask Him to renew your faith of what He can do and what He wants to do.
- Pray that God would reveal Himself to the people surrounding you
  - Ask that God would use you or other believers to be a witness to them
- Pray and listen
  - Ask God to show you what it would look like if His power and presence were really moving in this place
- Pray for Christians
  - Pray that Christians already here would be bold, have faith, and be courageous

### **EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

- Listen to worship music for an extended period
- Listen to Scripture for an extended period as you let God’s Word wash over you
- Read a whole book of the Bible
- Sit in silence, with no distractions, for at least 15 minutes enjoying God’s presence
- Gratitude list...Try listing as many things as you can...big and small. Stretch yourself.
- Consider sacrificing from something significant to you (ex. certain foods/drinks, TV, News, Social Media) so that you can fully rely on God and connect to Him

### **WRAP-UP REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

Reflection is a crucial component in our spiritual formation. Here are some reflection questions to ponder:

- What was God saying to you through your time with Him?
- What was your experience like? Where did you feel resistance? Where did you feel delight?
- What are some potential next steps God may be asking you to consider?