

2021

# PRAYER & FASTING

*journal*



# Hello & Welcome

Wonderful Church Family,

It is hard to believe that we are entering 2021, and we know that 2020 will not soon be forgotten — WHAT A YEAR. The loss, uncertainty, fatigue, and discouragement, along with the gratitude, compassion, beauty, and solidarity have been breath-taking.

As a church family, the scattering has been so challenging, and many times we have yearned and wept for 'what used to be'. That said, we have also seen the undeniable hand of God in our midst. His constant provision, His Presence in our homes, and when we have been able to gather, a new appreciation for community in its various forms have been gifts to us all. We have been amazed by the richness of His Word, the comfort of His family, and the deep work of maturing and growth in our lives. Most of all, we celebrate the advancement of the Kingdom as SO many have come to know Jesus as their Lord!

As we enter this new year, like you, we have NO IDEA all that lies ahead! We have vision and expectations, but like you, we are walking in surrendered hope. We are believing for supernatural strength, provision, and healing. We are believing for breakthrough and blessing in the Church and in each of your lives! We are believing for greater depth in each relationship with the Lord, greater connectivity with the family of God, and of course for an unprecedented amount of souls to come to Jesus. We say AMEN to all that the Lord has in store and are committed to moving forward this year with you, as together we love and trust Him more.

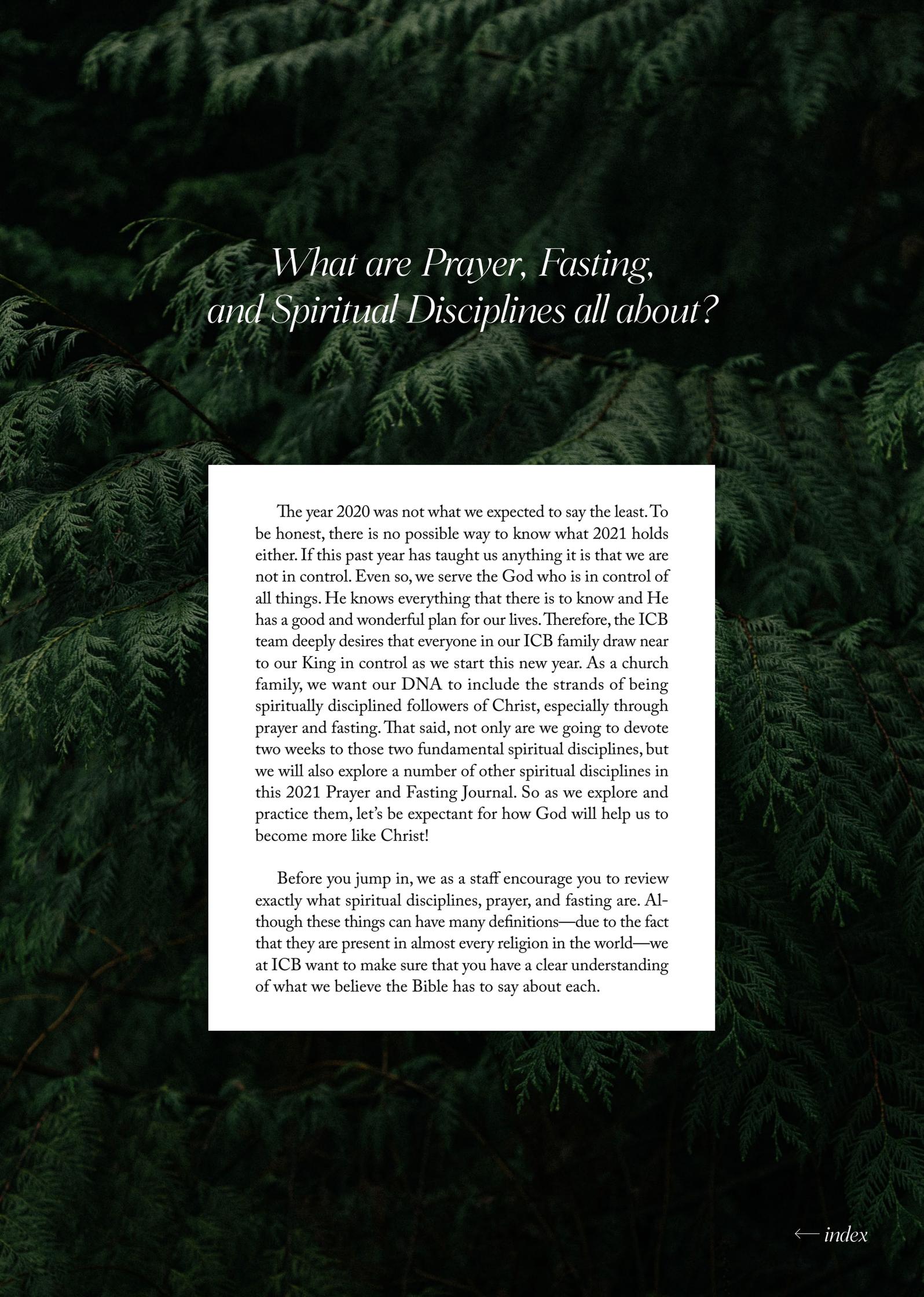


Every year we dedicate two weeks to Fasting & Prayer. Last year we did this twice. This year, more than EVER, we need to be united in prayer as we lift up our own needs along with the needs of our community and world. We are expectant that He will meet us in a special way and we want you to be a part of this journey! This journal is intended to assist us all in growth, focus, and unity as we seek the Lord. We pray it's a blessing to you, and that you USE IT to start this year off where we belong - on our knees.

With all of our love,  
John & Brandi

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## *What are Prayer, Fasting, and Spiritual Disciplines all about?*

The year 2020 was not what we expected to say the least. To be honest, there is no possible way to know what 2021 holds either. If this past year has taught us anything it is that we are not in control. Even so, we serve the God who is in control of all things. He knows everything that there is to know and He has a good and wonderful plan for our lives. Therefore, the ICB team deeply desires that everyone in our ICB family draw near to our King in control as we start this new year. As a church family, we want our DNA to include the strands of being spiritually disciplined followers of Christ, especially through prayer and fasting. That said, not only are we going to devote two weeks to those two fundamental spiritual disciplines, but we will also explore a number of other spiritual disciplines in this 2021 Prayer and Fasting Journal. So as we explore and practice them, let's be expectant for how God will help us to become more like Christ!

Before you jump in, we as a staff encourage you to review exactly what spiritual disciplines, prayer, and fasting are. Although these things can have many definitions—due to the fact that they are present in almost every religion in the world—we at ICB want to make sure that you have a clear understanding of what we believe the Bible has to say about each.

# Spiritual Disciplines

*Spiritual Disciplines are habits or practices that we place in our lives to open ourselves up to spiritual growth in Christ.*

Although the Bible never mentions “spiritual disciplines” in the Scriptures, they are found all over the place, both explicitly and implicitly. Following these introductory remarks you will be exposed to a number of them, but there are even more than just these. Beyond the above definition, the best way to describe spiritual disciplines is by using two analogies.

First, practicing spiritual disciplines is like putting up your sails on a boat in the ocean in order to catch the wind. At any given moment sailors can put up their sails in order to have power to move the boat where they want to go, but sometimes there just isn’t any wind and therefore they go nowhere and have to try again the next day. But, if they put the sails up and there is wind, they have the power to move. However, if a sailor never puts their sails up, they will never go anywhere and will be tossed back and forth based on whatever the ocean is doing that day. It is the same with spiritual disciplines. In the same way a sailor puts up their sails to draw closer to their destination, so we too open ourselves up to

God by using spiritual disciplines so that if God, the Spirit (i.e., the wind) wants to push us in one direction or the other, He can do that with our participation. Spiritual disciplines may not take us to the place where we thought we were going (the wind/Spirit decides that), but opening up our spiritual sails can help us draw nearer to our destination—a more intimate relationship with God.

Second, spiritual disciplines are like going to the gym. Why? Because both require discipline. Spiritual disciplines are called disciplines for a reason, namely because they don’t come naturally. Contrary to popular belief, “natural” doesn’t always mean “good” or “Christ-like.” In fact, what comes naturally is usually what gets us into trouble according to the Bible. So, it can be hard work to practice these forms of spirituality over and over again. But! If we do, the Scriptures promise us that God works through them in powerful and significant ways over time. He promises us that through these disciplines we can draw closer to God. And, in turn, this closeness can have the potential of transforming us more and more into the image of Jesus (which is basically the goal of life according to the Bible). Above all spiritual disciplines, prayer must be the most critical.

# Prayer

*Prayer is not only genuine communication with God through words or thoughts, but also a spiritual encounter with Him.*

Depending on your background in religious and spiritual life, prayer may come with many different connotations. However, here at ICB we believe that prayer is at least three things. First, prayer is talking to the Creator God who made you and loves you. There are a vast number of examples of people who pray in the Scriptures, including Jesus, therefore we, too, practice this spiritual discipline. Second, prayers should be genuine. God wants to know your heart and when you share even the deepest and darkest parts of who you are with Him, it demonstrates that you love Him and trust Him. Prayer can be done anywhere, at any time, and in any physical position (even though you may notice in the Bible that certain positions tend to be used more often than others, such as standing or kneeling instead of sitting). But! make sure it is sincere. Third, prayer is more than communication...it is spiritual connection. Although we can't put the experience into words perfectly for you here, trust us that there is something spiritually special which occurs when you speak to God. We encourage you to come to God not just as the One

who can give you what you want, but rather to open yourself up to Him as your Heavenly Father. He desires to embrace you as you spiritually communicate/connect with Him.

If you feel lost regarding how to pray, feel free to ask a staff member for advice. You may also like to look at the prayer that Jesus told us to pray (Matthew 6:9-13) to discover, not only an example for us to follow or memorize, but also the key principles of prayer. These principles, outlined below, can be included any time you pray.

**Declare His greatness and holiness**  
("Our Father...")

**Declare His agenda**  
("Your kingdom come...")

**Declare your needs**  
("Give us this day...")

**Declare His forgiveness and your own**  
("...and forgive us...")

**Declare your weakness**  
("And lead us not into...")



# Fasting

**Fasting:** *to take a break from everyday consumption in order to connect with God more intentionally.*

Although fasting is mentioned less than prayer in the Scriptures, this doesn't mean that it isn't a significant part of the biblical narrative. Many people believe that fasting is an excuse to diet, a way to manipulate God into doing what you want, or a way to earn approval from God. However, fasting is none of those things. Rather, characters in the Scriptures fast to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

## **Seek Forgiveness**

Many in the Bible repent using fasting as a means to seek forgiveness. Fasting may also be used to help you discover if there is an "idol" in your life (i.e., something you value or worship above God).

## **Seek Direction**

A number of characters in the Scriptures don't know what to do next and so they decide to fast. So, if you are wondering if you should take this job or that, whether you should marry this person, or if you should move to this country, then fasting is an excellent way to bring those questions to God.

## **Seek Strength**

Some fast to receive strength to fight off temptation and the things in their lives that they know God does not want them to do.

## **Seek Blessing/Favor/Empowerment**

There are various characters in the Bible who know what God wants them to do, but it is scary. Thus, they turn to God in fasting and prayer to present their request to God so that they may have the courage and strength to actually do it.

## **Seek Breakthrough**

Still other characters in the Bible use fasting as a way to overcome an obstacle or to discover the way in which a problem can be solved. This purpose is similar to seeking direction, but it is more than that. If there is a spiritual blockade in your life and you don't know how to even approach it, fasting is a way we can give that obstacle over to God for Him to take care of it.

If you are still a bit confused about how to actually fast there are three concrete examples on the following page!

# Types of fasting in the Bible

## *Absolute Fast*

Traditionally, to fast meant to abstain from all food and drink for an extended period of time. Although this is the classic example of a fast, many people today will still drink water or juice during an absolute fast.

Disclaimer: if you are ill, pregnant, or have a medical condition, we at ICB advise that you do not attempt this type of fast. If you choose to do so, know that it is at your own risk.



## *Partial Fast*

This refers to restricting yourself to eating only certain types of food or drink for an extended period of time. This could include omitting a meal during each day, omitting a type of food (e.g., sugar, coffee, meat), only drinking liquids, the Daniel fast (Dan 1:12) and so on. Again, remember that this is not a diet, but rather an opportunity to choose to abstain from something that isn't necessarily bad so that you have time to commune and seek after God more frequently and/or with less distraction.

## *Fasting from Worldly Desires*

Over the years, some people have been unable to fast from food or they have realized that they were more dependent on and distracted by the things of this world than by food. So, during times of prayer and fasting they chose to take a break from those things instead. Examples include: cell phone, social media, music, movies/television, video games, weekends out, shopping, sex (if married—1 Cor 7:5), etc. Notice that these things are not inherently evil. We choose to "fast" from such things in our lives, not only to have more time in the day, but also to replace those things with God-centered activities (praying, meditating, silence, Scripture memorization, evangelism, service, reading & studying the Scriptures, etc.)



# DAY ONE

## *Unplugging*



### Read

Psalm 46:10; Ephesians 3:14-20; (See John 15 also)

### Reflect

I have a love/hate relationship with screens and social media. On one hand, I would say some of my favorite hobbies involve a screen (e.g., watching movies and chatting with my friends on social media), but a few years ago I realized that social media and screens may have negative effects on our brains and lives. I remember doing a persuasive speech back in 2012 in which I urged listeners to delete their Facebook accounts because it increases narcissism, decreases life satisfaction, and increases likelihood of many psychological disorders such as body dysmorphia, cutting, anorexia, and bulimia. But everyone laughed at my speech back then and I guessed I was just wrong. It wasn't until more recently when I watched *The Social Dilemma* on Netflix that I reignited my beliefs about all of this. Not only did the documentary confirm many of the things that I had said years before, but it also said that screens and social media act like emotional pacifiers for younger generations and they have become addictive for most people who use them. It made me think that being so plugged in is like playing with fire...sometimes it warms us because it can be so useful, but if we aren't careful, it can burn us mentally, emotionally, or even spiritually. One good way to practice being careful is through the spiritual discipline of "unplugging."

Unplugging is the disconnection from all electronic distractions in order to clear mental, emotional, and spiritual space for God to work in your heart and mind. The more I reflect on it, the more it seems

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absolutely critical to spiritual success in our globalized and hyper-digitized world. Although spiritual things can and do happen digitally, there is something so spiritually significant about completely unplugging from time-to-time from unnecessary screens in order to *plug into* the Source that really gives us true life. In Ephesians 3 it says that we should be rooted and grounded in love in order that we may receive the fullness of God and the power that comes only from Him. When we read that we could easily interchange the words “rooted/grounded” for “plugged into” to apply to our modern lives. You see, people only have a certain bandwidth in life. So, if all that bandwidth is going to unnecessary screen time, then what bandwidth is left for God to infuse us with joy and peace and hope and power? Not much. Therefore, we must *abide* in Jesus (John 15) so that we may bear much fruit. But in order for us to do that we have to be brave enough to practice the spiritual discipline of unplugging, and there is no better day to start than today. Will you join me?

## Pray

- Pray for the courage to eliminate distractions in our life in order to become closer to God.
- Pray for those who are struggling with addiction in our church family, city, country, and around the globe. Ask for wisdom and guidance about how to help these people.
- Pray for our Pit Crew team who helps limit distractions through their setup and teardown. Pray also for the worship team as they plug us into the Presence of God.

## Respond

- Attempt to leave social media behind for an extended period of time (and if your job allows for it, you could even turn off notifications). Take a moment to reflect and note what happens when you abstain. How do you feel? What does it teach you about yourself?
- As you do your devotionals in the upcoming days, I dare you to turn your phone completely off. Note what happens.
- Set a night time limit for using your device and when you do, leave it in a room where you don't sleep. Use a watch or a clock (what are those?) for your alarm instead. Note what happens.

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# DAY TWO

## *Solitude*

### Read

Psalm 139:13-18

### Reflect

We often fight against solitude. We fill our days with meetings, social media, and streaming services online - anything we can do to distract us from the feeling of being alone. The word solitude conjures images of loneliness, boredom, and even depression. But as a spiritual discipline, solitude is actually a wonderfully intimate time that we can spend with God.

Psalm 139 talks about the time God spent creating us. It was in a secret and hidden place. When we spend time alone with God in solitude, it takes us back to a time when it was just us alone with our Creator. When we leave everything behind, we can clear our mind and take time to just *be* with the God of the universe who formed us in His perfect way. And it is in those moments that we can hear Him speak to us most clearly.



## Pray

— Pray for help to find time to get alone with God every day.

— Pray for those who are busy and ask that they can find rest in God.

— Pray for our media team. Much of what they do is done in solitude. Pray that they wouldn't feel lonely or burnt out, but rather that they would encounter God in their work and in the solitude.

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## Respond

— Turn off all distractions, get away from others, and take time to read through and meditate on Psalm 139. Then listen as the God who created you speaks to you.

# DAY THREE

## *Scripture Memorization*



### Read

Psalm 119:11

### Reflect

My children are memorizing their multiplication tables. It has been a struggle for one of them in particular. Committing things to memory often is. But now they are beginning to see the benefits of what they learned as they progress in math into areas such as division and fractions.

This principle holds true in our spiritual lives as well. In Psalm 119:11 David says, “I have **hidden** your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (NLT). The New American Standard Version says, “I have **treasured** your word in my heart, so that I might not sin against you” (emphasis mine). We hide or store our treasured things because we see the value in them. We think, “I may need that later.”

David writes that he hid or treasured God’s Word in his heart because he knew it would help him in his walk with God. When he needed it most the Scriptures that he had committed to memory would come to him. And when the Scriptures were on the forefront of his mind, the reminder would keep him from sinning against God. I have found this to be true in my life. Often when faced with a situation where I am not sure what to do or am tempted to sin, the Holy Spirit will gently remind me of what God’s Word says, especially the Scriptures I have memorized. I encourage you to practice this discipline of memorizing God’s Word. Store God’s Word in your heart so that you can follow Christ with your whole heart.

### Pray

— Ask God to show you a verse to memorize.

Perhaps Psalms 119:11

— Ask God to show you Bible verses you can share with others.

— Pray for our financial committee and our preaching team. Pray that they would steward both our souls and our money well this upcoming year.

### Respond

— Commit to memory Psalm 119:11

— If you find memorization difficult there are many great apps like Bible Memory that can help as well. The link below contains some practical tips, too.

<https://www.navigators.org/resource/how-to-memorize-scripture>



## Read

Ephesians 5:18-20; Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

## Reflect

In their letters to early Christians, the apostles frequently gave instructions to be grateful - to *give thanks* for everything (Ephesians 5:18-20), to let requests be made known to God *with thanksgiving* (Phil 4:6-7), and to *be grateful* in all circumstances (1 Thess 5:16-18)...just to name a few! Although gratitude may seem like a polite response to God for his gifts or a way to put a positive spin on a bad situation, it is more than that. Gratitude is the serious work of a heart that is being transformed by God.

Sometimes it can be challenging to find something to be grateful for. The truth is though, that no matter what I'm suffering and no matter what I've lost, if I were to endeavor to thank God for every gift he has given me, I would never cease to give thanks.

When I struggle to be grateful, the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, help me out. Whether I'm walking through seasons of great blessing or seasons of great loss, I can give thanks because I have been qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints of light (Col. 1:12), because the Kingdom of God cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28), because God is righteous (Ps. 7:17), because He is good and His love endures forever (Ps. 106:1, Ps. 118:1,29, Ps. 136:1), because of His steadfast love and His wondrous works to mankind (Ps. 107:21), and because the Lord my God is a great God, the great King above all gods (Ps. 95:2-3).

## Pray

- Give thanks to God for who He is.
- Give thanks to God for what He has done for you.
- Give thanks for someone in your life.

As you do, pray over two very big ministries at ICB — the men's and women's ministries.

## Respond

— The Bible teaches us to give thanks in **all** circumstances. This is the hardest when we are in irritating, challenging, or sad situations! It can be hard to give thanks for a boss who treats you with disrespect, or for traffic, or for your sore throat, or for a long line, or for the aging face looking back at you in the mirror. Today, give thanks to God for a situation like this: ask Him to help you see what you can be grateful for.

— If you can't see, offer up your prayer of thanks in faith that He will help you see it, trusting that He works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28).



# DAY FIVE

## *Contemplation*

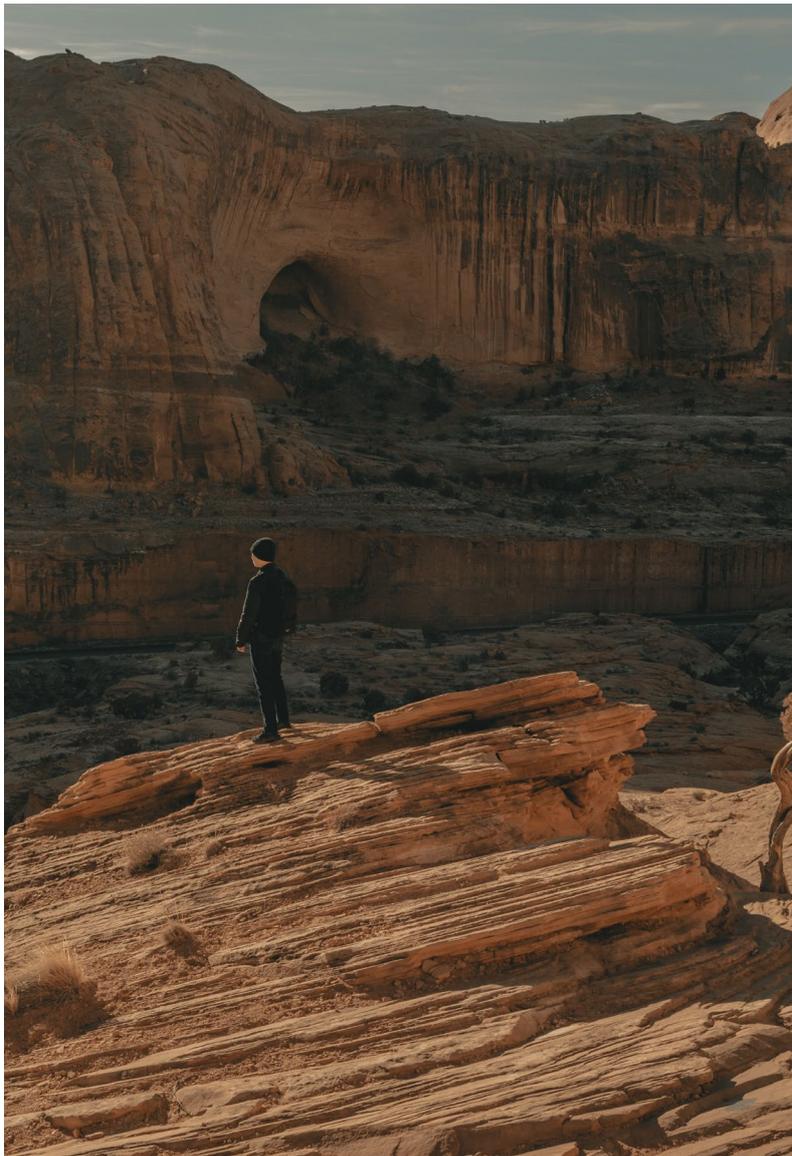
### Read

Psalm 27 (especially v. 4)

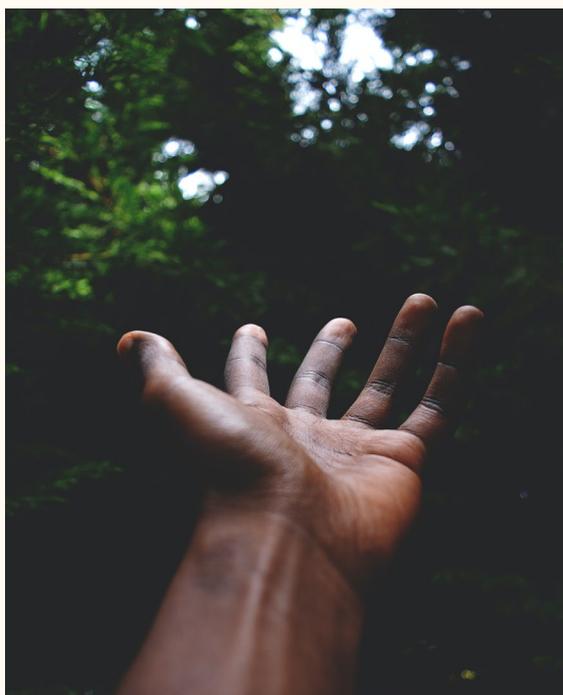
### Reflect

King David wrote these words and he had one request, one pursuit. He understood the importance of fixing his eyes on God amidst all the noise and voices which were surrounding him at the time.

Contemplation is about spending time before the Lord in silence, quieting the noise around us and instead choosing to focus on the attributes of the Lord, recognizing His sovereignty, authority, and greatness. When we practice this discipline, we can get rid of the heaviness of our daily routine and allow God's peace to fill us while He speaks to our hearts.



The more time we spend in His Presence meditating on Him and His beauty, the more insignificant everything else begins to seem in comparison. It is then that the issues and complications we are navigating through are exposed and we can submit them to God. This liberating exercise also allows us to know Him better. Just as we cannot stop thinking about those we are in love with, the more we contemplate God's beauty, attributes and goodness, the more we want to keep spending time in His Presence.



## Pray

— Praise God for His attributes, in spite of whatever circumstances may be going on around you (e.g., “even though many don't have jobs, you are the Great Provider and You always provide”).

— Praise God for how He has shown grace and mercy to us in the past.

— Pray for our missions teams and our worship team. May they desire to spend time contemplating God's goodness and grace, and continue encouraging people to know Him in deeper ways.

## Respond

— Ecclesiastes 5:2 says “God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.” So, let's spend some time meditating on His greatness. As uncertainties, anxious thoughts and worries come into your mind, tighten your hands as if you were physically holding onto them and then say “I give it to you God, because...” and then release your hands to the open position. Do this as many times as it is necessary.

— Remind yourself that contemplative prayer is not about changing our circumstances, but rather allowing God to work within us to transform us and give us His perspective!

# DAY SIX

## *Prayer of Examen*

### Read

Psalm 139:23

### Reflect

The Prayer of Examen, written by St. Ignatius Loyola, is a guideline for prayer which allows me to pause, look inside, and notice what God is doing. It is a spiritual discipline of prayer that includes gratitude, discernment, forgiveness, and petition.

The prayer begins with **Gratitude**, where I intentionally think through the last 24 hours with lenses of thanksgiving. Sometimes I list every remembered gift - a hug from my son, the beauty of the sunrise. Other times I pick just one or two things from the day and deeply savor them. Gratitude is beneficial whichever way it is practiced.

The second part is called **Discernment**. First, I ask myself “What are the strongest emotions that I felt during the day?” Identifying these strong emotions (whether anger, embarrassment or joy) is just the starting point. The main purpose is not the emotion itself, but rather asking if these emotions drew me *closer to or further from* God and people. Did I feel more connected to Him and those I love or more distant? Again, it’s not as much about the emotion itself as it is about our awareness of His Presence. For example, during moments of frustration, I don’t often notice the Presence of God. It became my prayer to notice Him while frustrated. One day it happened! After something dropped and shattered, I was able to pause. I felt Jesus there in the room with me as I picked up the pieces. What a difference!

Often discernment naturally leads to realizing our need for forgiveness. During the **Forgiveness** segment I confess to Him the ways I have hurt others or ask Him to heal my heart if someone has hurt me.

The **Petition** section is when I look ahead and ask Him for whatever is on my heart, for the people I love, or upcoming events and appointments.



## Pray

- I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_.
- I felt \_\_\_\_\_ (strong emotion)  
These emotions drew me closer to God and people. *or*  
These emotions led me away from God and people.
- Forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_.
- Today I ask you for \_\_\_\_\_.

## Respond

- I encourage you to pray through the parts of this prayer today.  
Sometimes writing in a journal is helpful.
- Join the Psalmist in asking God to search your heart.
- Focus on observing God's Presence in your life while thinking over the previous day.

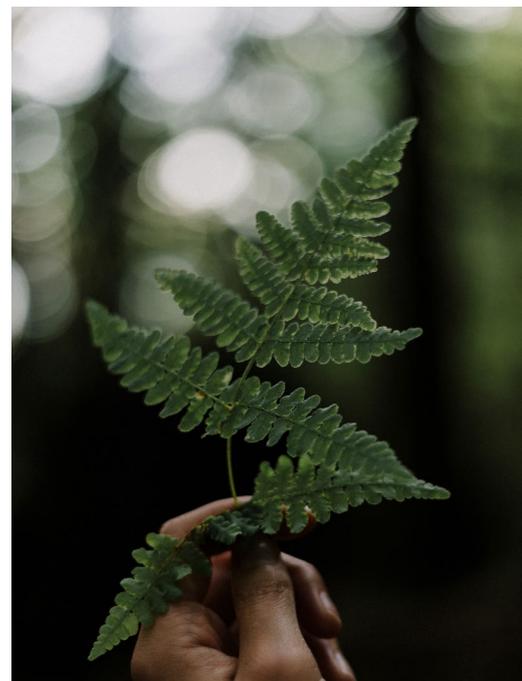


# DAY SEVEN

## *Listening/Silence*

### Read

John chapters 10, 14, and 16 (especially 10:27)



### Reflect

Listening is a skill. It takes quieting our minds to reflect on the words of the speaker. It requires patience and humility to ensure we have a clear understanding, not just of the words, but of the spirit of the words. In order to be a “good listener,” we must put aside our agendas, motives, and desires to commit ourselves to understanding the speaker. In friendships of intimacy, it requires a heart bent towards trusting the good intentions of the other. Listening to the Lord is no different and that’s why it is one of the great spiritual disciplines.

Before Jesus was about to be crucified and return to the Father, He told His disciples that He needed to leave in order for the Helper to come (John 14:16). The Lord Jesus instructs us in John 14:26 (KJB) that it is the Holy Spirit who lives within us who “will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” This means the Holy Spirit teaches us about Jesus and the Father through the Scriptures (John 16:13-14). Furthermore, He is called our spiritual ‘Helper’ in decision making, our “Comforter” in times of suffering, and His voice convicts us of sin (John 14-16). And arguably most important of all, He convinces us of our adoptive status with the Father as part of the family of God (Rom 8:15).

The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in our ability to listen and understand God, because the funny thing is, He is God. Rather than being a force or a part of God, He is a person of the Trinity—a person Who invites us into deep and intimate relationship. Speaking to Him in prayer is important, but it is also an essential discipline to sit in silence and listen for His voice. In this way, we can open ourselves up to His guidance and transformation into the image of Christ.

## Pray

— Pray that during this time of prayer and fasting we would pay attention to the time we spend listening as we ask God about His intentions for us.

— Pray that we would become more aware of God's will and heart for us, our families, church, city, nation and world at large.

— Pray for our counseling and hospital visitation team who are always such great listeners. Pray that they continue to bring healing through their work here at ICB.

## Respond

— Today, as you continue to pray and fast, instead of doing your normal devotional routine, sit in silence instead. You may pray at the beginning for God to speak to you and for you to have listening ears, but after a few moments of that, simply listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit.

— After you are done, reflect on the experience. It's okay if it is hard. It takes practice just like any discipline and you become more comfortable with it over time.



# DAY EIGHT

## *Practicing the Presence of God*

### Read

Exodus 33-35 and Hebrews 8:6, 13:12-13

### Reflect

The God of the Bible is relational. How is your relationship with Him? Have you ever experienced His Presence? There is a vast difference between hearing about the Lord and being in His Presence. We see here in these passages in Exodus, that Moses met with God in the tabernacle outside the camp. It was there that Moses experienced God's Presence.

Moses desired more of His Presence: he asked for more and received more. He climbed the mountain and God met with him. And in this moment Moses experienced God in a new way, and at a greater level of revelation. Moreover, the tablets which Moses had broken were replaced, God's covenant was renewed, and the Lord supernaturally sustained Moses during 40 days of fasting. The text even says that Moses' face was radiant from being in the Lord's Presence!

Even though this covenant was good and served a good purpose during Moses' day, in the book of Hebrews we see that Jesus is the Mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises (Hebrews 8:6). Therefore, because of what Jesus has done, you and I have access to the Presence of God in an even better way (John 14:6). Do you want His Presence? Have you asked Him? Are you willing to climb your mountain? If our answer is yes, let's seek to become a people focused on His Presence above all programs, traditions, and substitutes.



## Pray

- Pray for more of His Presence in your life today.
- Pray for the various mountains in our lives that we have to climb to practice the Presence of God.
- Pray for all our campuses Vilanova, El Vallès, and online campus to experience the Presence of God despite the mountains they have to climb.

## Respond

Apply these principles as you continue to seek His Presence more:

- Go to Him - It takes action on our part to get up and GO.
- Outside the Camp - We need to separate ourselves from sin and the crowd.
- Count the Cost - What will it cost us to practice His Presence. Rejection? Mocking? Scrutiny of our lives? Suffering? Being misunderstood?



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# DAY NINE

## *Service*

### Read

John 13:1-17 (especially v. 14-15)

### Reflect

The towel in Jesus' hands, kneeling at His disciples' dirty and smelly feet, is one of the most significant examples of service we have. Getting ready for the Passover meal, the disciples were aware that someone needed to wash their feet. However, nobody felt that it was their place to be in the very lowest position to do this. So Jesus took a towel and a basin and redefined greatness.

Jesus also calls us to a life of service (John 13:1-17). Not self-righteous service, but true service. While the first is more concerned with human applause, true service finds contentment in God's approval. Service is not primarily a list of things that we do, but rather a way of living. It is displayed by being the hands and feet of Jesus every day.

Out of the discipline of service, we are blessed with the wonderful gift of humility and God is truly glorified when we have a servant's heart.

What would happen, if we started our day by praying: "Lord Jesus, would you please bring someone to me whom I can serve today?"



## Pray

- Thank Jesus for His example of being our Servant King.
- Ask Him to help you to live the life of a servant and seek God's direction for whom you can serve today.
- Pray for our operations team and our volunteers. They serve so faithfully, humbly, and diligently. Pray that their work would continue with even more joy and passion than they already have. And as they work out the logistics of the various ministries, pray that their work would be a fragrant offering to the Servant King.

## Respond

- Think of one way you can serve someone today and do it!



# DAY TEN

## *Mentorship*



### Read

2 Kings 2:9-18

### Reflect

The Bible is full of examples of godly leaders taking the time to intentionally mentor a new generation of leaders. The story of Elisha and Elijah is an insightful example of the power and purpose of mentorship. Mentoring is not a walk in the park. As you challenge those you mentor, you will also be challenged with the same lessons and more. The young leaders of tomorrow need the mentors of today. Imagine how Israel might have been affected if Elisha had not been mentored by Elijah? Now think about our world. What ramifications might there be if younger generations miss out on wisdom and guidance because there are so few mentors embracing the conviction to lead and guide those who so greatly need and want their help?

## Pray

- Pray that God would help us be good mentors to others.
- Pray that God would give us a spirit of humility to seek wisdom and guidance as we engage in serving those He's placed around us.
- Pray for ICB Kids, Youth, and Awaken. Pray that mentors would rise up to help these young people grow in the Lord in mighty ways.
- Pray for Discipleship in general. Pray that the Discipleship team would be given wisdom to multiply that disciple-making mentality among everyone in the church family.

## Respond

- Pray about what it would look like for you to mentor someone younger than you in your ICB church family. And remember, younger doesn't always have to be physical age, but could be spiritual age as well.
- If you are fearful or feel that you aren't adequate but sense God leading you towards mentorship, contact us at [tae@icbspain.com](mailto:tae@icbspain.com) and we will connect you to someone who will help guide you.



# DAY ELEVEN

## *Self-assessment*

### Read

2 Corinthians 13:5

### Reflect

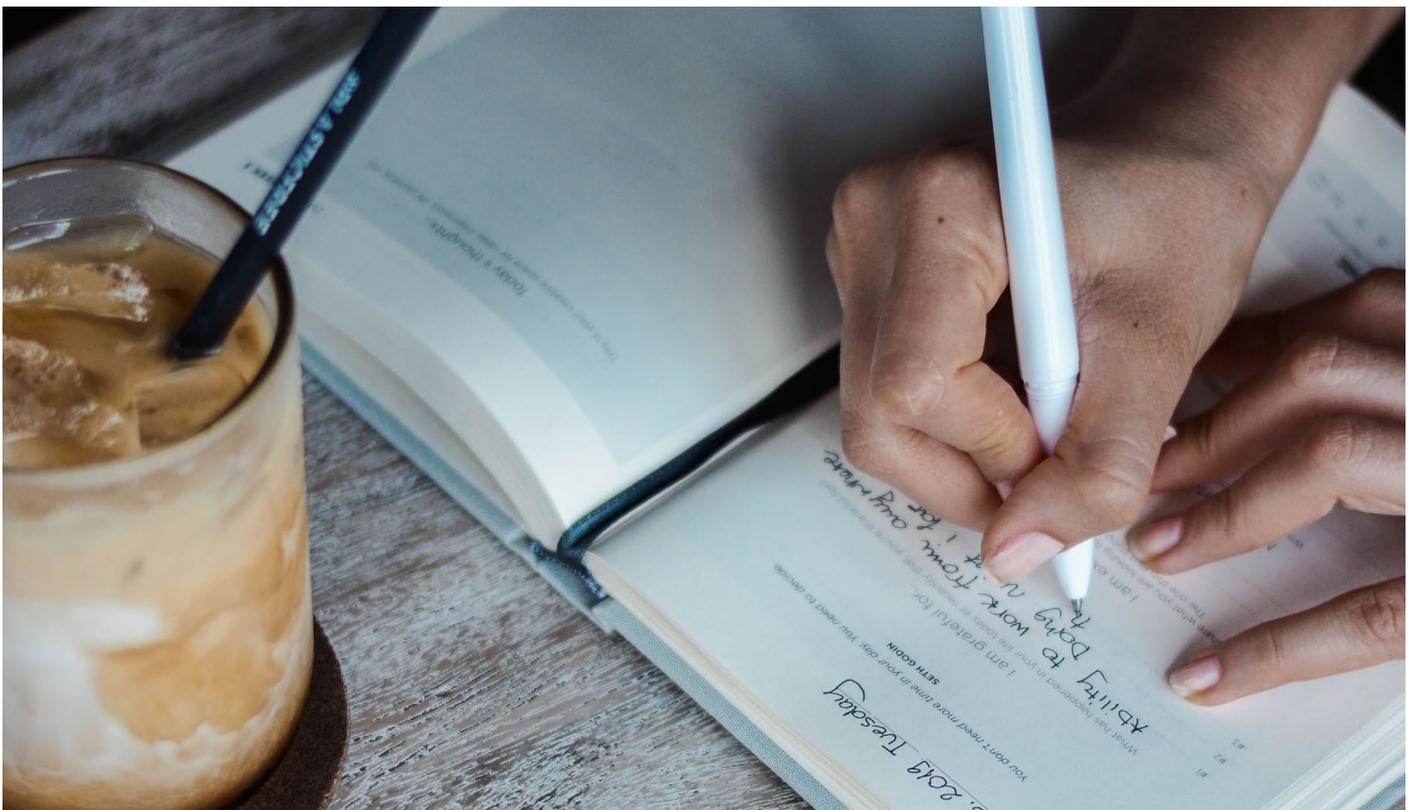
Whether you made it through primary school, university, or a certification program, we have all experienced some form of examination. These often intense moments throughout our education exist to gauge how much progress we've made on our learning journey. While I was quite the history fanatic during my studies, I required some serious adult supervision in the chemistry lab.

The process of continual assessment doesn't stop when we leave the classroom. We get annual check-ups on our eyes, ears, and teeth. Here in Spain, we even have frequent ITV inspections on our vehicles to make sure they can circulate safely on the street.

As Christ-followers, self-assessment becomes an important part of our faith as we mature spiritually. 2 Corinthians 13:5 encourages us to participate in regular self-reflection, looking inward to monitor our growth and identify areas of weakness so that we can address them. This is the equivalent of holding up a mirror to examine our souls.

How is your soul today?

Though challenging, this question helps us to become stronger spiritually and can enable us to tackle any issues before they get out of control.



## Pray

— Pray that we all receive help to implement the discipline of frequent spiritual self-assessment (weekly, monthly, quarterly).

— Pray as we are growing spiritually, that God's love would be contagious and that He would use us to be a light in our spheres of influence.

— Pray for our creative team. Pray that they would grow their talents and abilities in such a way that it pushes us all to self-examine and ponder the beauty of God more and more.

## Respond

— Read Galatians 5:22-23. I've found the fruit of the Spirit (described in this passage) to be a helpful measuring stick when assessing spiritual growth. If we are continually growing in love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, then we are on the right track. If not, ask for God's grace today to help you grow in these areas in order to represent Him well in the way you live.



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# DAY TWELVE

## *Daily Devotions*

### Read

Hebrews 4:12



### Reflect

What are some words that people have used to describe you? Are you kind? Are you generous? Maybe you are lazy? Or rude? Are you a hard worker? A joyful spirit? The author of Hebrews uses some strong words to describe the Word of God. He says it is alive, sharp, powerful!

In my walk with the Lord and my journey of faith I have always had one goal: I want to become more like Jesus. I have always been taught that the process of righteousness in our lives is to make us more like Him. The author of Hebrews writes that the Word of God is used to “expose our innermost thoughts and desires.” This may not be something we necessarily always want in our lives. Sometimes the words that define or describe us are not flattering; our innermost thoughts are not always centered on pure, lovely, and joyful things.

However, if we want to become more like Jesus, we have to allow Him (and His Word) to cut deep and expose. The only way we can really do this is to spend time with Him and in His Word. The Spiritual discipline of a daily devotional time and spending time in the Word of God is one vital spiritual discipline on our journey of becoming more like Christ. When we are open to His Word and His voice in our lives, we see His truth more clearly. As we dive into his Word we open ourselves up to His discipline, instruction, guidance, and wisdom. And as we do, we learn so much about His love and compassion for us and for those around us!

## Pray

— Pray that God would give us a hunger and thirst to spend time daily with Him, in His Word.

— Pray that God would reveal Himself to us in ways that transform time with Him from being a discipline to being a beautiful encounter.

— Pray for those who are in Next Steps, BASIC, and our future school of ministry. Pray that they, too, would never forget to go to God daily in some form of spiritual discipline and that they would have a hunger and thirst for God's word.

## Respond

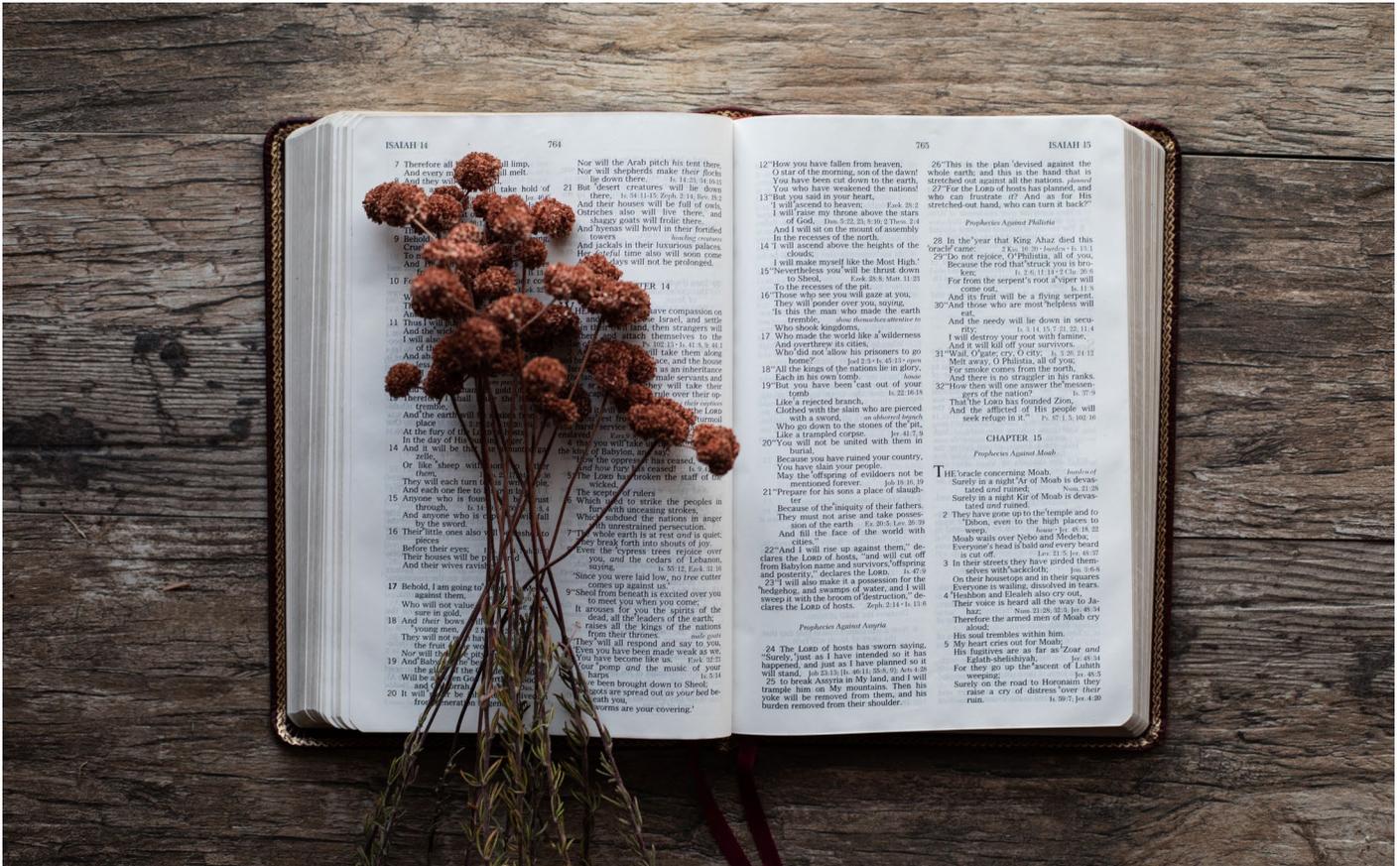
— Take some time today to evaluate your daily devotional time and the time you are spending in the Word of God. Are you allowing Him to speak to you? Are you striving to learn more about Christ and become more like Him? What changes do you need to make to your daily habits to allow for time with Him? Are you listening to His voice and the words He uses to describe you?



# DAY THIRTEEN

## Fasting

Read  
Isaiah 58:6-12



### Reflect

The Bible teaches us that fasting is a powerful tool in our armory, provided by God to help us be effective, Kingdom-minded Christians. Fasting drowns out the loud and dominant voice of our worldly nature as we set our face to hear from God. When we fast, our spirit is then sharpened and positioned to be in correct alignment to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit so that when life's unforeseen hurdles and diversions hit us, we can keep our eyes upon Jesus.

Isaiah 58 teaches us that fasting can bring freedom, healing, provision, generosity, direction, vision, satisfaction, growth, strength, guidance, fellowship, and protection. What a list of beautiful promises! Who doesn't need these things in their lives? We all do!

Let's not allow the circumstances of life to hinder us or become an excuse that keeps us from moving forward with Him. We must always remember that we are to use the full array of spiritual weaponry that God has given us, allowing Jesus to lead us into a place of victory and joy. So let's turn our eyes upon Jesus, fast, and listen in our spirits to what He would have us do and say in this generation.



## Pray

— Pray that your spiritual positioning would mirror that of Micah 7:7 (NKJV) “Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.”

— Ask the Lord to show you who to fast and pray for today. That the Lord may free them from heavy burdens and bring freedom and provision in their lives.

— Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring supernatural breakthrough for Frenesi and for all that our Strategic Development team is working on behind the scenes.

## Respond

— Allow God to work in your life by embracing fasting, not just during this time, but as a spiritual discipline you practise all throughout life.

# DAY FOURTEEN

## *Celebration*



### Read

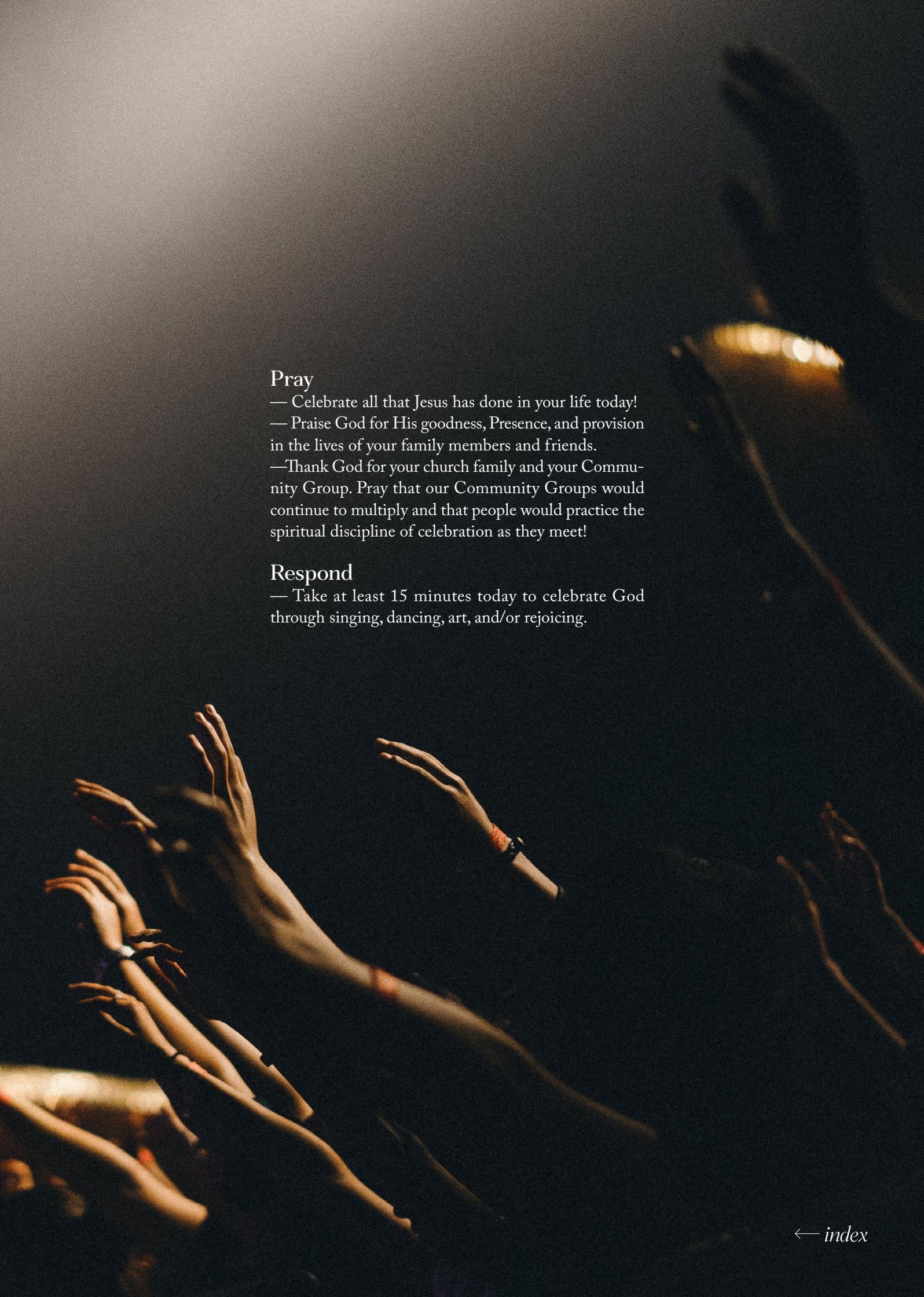
Nehemiah 8:10

### Reflect

The Bible is filled with celebrations, festivals, prayers of thanksgiving, and praise. However, we often neglect or overlook “celebration” as a spiritual discipline in our daily lives. Jody Slaughter, in her article “The Spiritual Discipline of Celebration”, defines celebration as “utter delight and joy in ourselves, our life, and our world, as a result of our faith and confidence in God’s greatness, beauty and goodness.”

Notice this definition says that our joy is a result of our faith and confidence in God, not a result of our circumstances. We practice the discipline of celebration because of God’s faithfulness and we recognize that every moment is a blessing from the Lord, because He is good. Even when we are discouraged, depressed or facing difficult challenges in our lives, we can cultivate the habit of joy and celebration and it will give us peace, hope, strength and a new perspective. And as the apostle Paul encourages us in Philippians 4:4 —

*“Rejoice in the Lord always.  
I will say it again: Rejoice!”*



## Pray

- Celebrate all that Jesus has done in your life today!
- Praise God for His goodness, Presence, and provision in the lives of your family members and friends.
- Thank God for your church family and your Community Group. Pray that our Community Groups would continue to multiply and that people would practice the spiritual discipline of celebration as they meet!

## Respond

- Take at least 15 minutes today to celebrate God through singing, dancing, art, and/or rejoicing.

2021 PRAYER & FASTING journal



INTERNATIONAL  
CHURCH  
OF BARCELONA

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