
TEACH
us to PRAY

21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

INTRODUCTION

As we kick off 2025, our leadership is praying that we would see God do something unexplainable, yet undeniable, in the lives of everyone that calls Rush Creek home and at each of our campuses. We invite each of you to join us in praying for the unexplainable yet undeniable power of God to show up in our lives, our marriages, our families, and each of our campuses through these 21 days of Prayer and Fasting and the remainder of the year.

At Rush Creek we are utterly convinced of our powerlessness to accomplish anything on our own. Our only hope for transformation, influence, positive impact, and life change begins and ends with our Heavenly Father. But if we're honest, prayer can be challenging and confusing. When it comes to prayer, we are all learning how to pray and we are always growing when we pray. To start 2025, we are asking God to Teach Us To Pray.

For the next twenty-one days you are invited to encounter God through prayer and fasting.

THE GUIDE

There are 5 small daily devotional writings each week, followed by a day to reflect or catch up. Slow down, sit, think, listen, and encounter God. If you miss a day, don't give up, just pick up where you left off!

SHOULD I FAST FOR THE NEXT 21 DAYS?

What a great idea! When you fast, you deliberately replace food (or a distraction) with prayer and Bible study. You purposefully eliminate things you desire or are dependent on in order to find satisfaction and enjoyment in God alone. Fasting cuts out the noise of life and amplifies the voice of God. As we make room for His presence over the next twenty-one days, this discipline compliments prayer to prioritize time for holy reflection. If you have special dietary needs or medical history, be sure to check with your doctor before fasting.

FASTING TIPS

1. PICK YOUR FAST

Full Fast: Drink liquids only. Please consult your doctor first.

Daniel Fast: Eat only vegetables, fruit, water & juice (minimal amount of carbohydrates).

Partial Fast: Not eating one or two meals on a specific day or abstaining from certain kinds of food.

All-day Food Fast: Abstaining from food 1 day or multiple days per week.

Activity/Media Fast: Forgoing a time-consuming activity such as entertainment, hobbies, television, internet, sports, etc.

2. SET GOALS & WRITE THEM DOWN

Begin with clear personal goals. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of your marriage or resolution of family issues? Are you facing difficulties? Pray and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Write these requests in a journal or a notebook, or create a digital journal using your favorite notetaking program or app. Keeping a journal throughout your fast is a great way to track and remember all God does during your fast.

3. FEAST ON THE WORD OF GOD

Fasting is ultimately an expression of humility and dependence on God. It is about replacing the daily intake of food, entertainment, and human contact with focused times of prayer, spending large amounts of time “feeding” on the Word of God.

4. OPEN YOUR LIFE BEFORE GOD

One of the great benefits of spiritual fasting is a heightened awareness of God’s presence and power in our lives. Jesus teaches that fasting shifts us toward a deeper spiritual dependency on our generous Heavenly Father (Matthew 6:16-18). Ask for God to examine your heart’s cravings and to lead you to desire greater things. We ask that you fast for God to do the unexplainable and undeniable in your life, family, and church.

5. EXPECT GOD TO MOVE

Start your fast trusting in God’s goodness and faithfulness. Hebrews 11:6 says, “And without faith it is impossible to please God, for anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” Spiritual fasting is a supernatural endeavor that has shaped and transformed God’s people for centuries. If you have doubt, ask God to meet you in your doubts and lead you in overcoming them, just as Jesus’ followers prayed, “Increase our faith!” (Luke 17:5).

Day 1: What God Really Thinks

PSALM 8:1-4

This passage opens with a declaration of God's majesty: "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" The psalmist marvels at the grandeur of creation and the God who set the stars in place. Yet, amidst this vastness, God is mindful of us. This awareness of God's closeness is foundational to our prayer life. Jesus teaches that prayer is a personal encounter with our Heavenly Father, inviting us into a relationship marked by intimacy. As you meditate on God's awesome creative acts, consider also the wonder of being known and valued deeply by Him. How will you nurture awe and intimacy with God over the next 21 days?

Reflect on the ways God has shown His presence in your life and express gratitude for His desire to be near you. Spend time in prayer, asking God to deepen your awareness of His presence and to draw you closer to Him.

Day 2: What's in a Name

EXODUS 34:5-9

In Exodus 34:5-9, God reveals His glorious character to Moses, proclaiming Himself as “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” This revelation of God’s mercy and kindness invites us to approach Him with honesty. Christians can pray with confidence because we pray honestly in Jesus’ name. Jesus took the punishment for our sins by His perfect sacrifice on the cross, and He has shared His righteousness with us. Jesus exemplified honest prayers expressing His deepest emotions and desires by quoting prayers like Psalm 22 and Psalm 118. Choose one of these Psalms to meditate on and consider how God’s character encourages you to be transparent in your communication with Him. What burdens, fears, or joys can you bring before Him today?

Reflect on the freedom that comes from being open with God, trusting in His grace and love. Allow this time of meditation to guide you in honest prayer, sharing your heart with the One who knows you and has everything you need.

Day 3: Higher Ways

ISAIAH 55:6-9

Isaiah 55:6-9 calls us to “seek the Lord” and recognize that His thoughts and ways are higher than ours. God’s Word tells us to forsake our own ways and our own wisdom for His so that we may be forgiven and restored. As you are reading God’s Word and praying to Him, He is available to you, but you must listen to His direction. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. His brilliance is beyond our understanding. 1 Corinthians 1:25 says that the “foolishness of God is wiser than humanity’s most profound wisdom, and the ‘weakness’ of God is stronger than humanity’s greatest strength”. In this moment of your life, He is calling for you to forsake your own way of living and your own perspective. In exchange, He wants to pardon you and lead you in the ways of the Almighty King of heaven.

Reflect on His strength and His wisdom. How have you experienced God’s mercy and higher ways in your story so far? How will you forsake your own wisdom today?

Day 4: God has Children

JOHN 1:9-13

John 1:9 tell us that Jesus is “the true light that gives light to everyone who was coming into the world.” Whoever trusts in Jesus as the Truth and the Life, He has given the right to become children of God. As His children, we are invited to hear our Heavenly Father. Jesus modeled this by regular time alone with the Father in prayer, seeking the Father’s will, and listening attentively & obediently. Meditate on the importance of listening in prayer, recognizing that prayer is not just about speaking to God, but also about being receptive to God’s voice. God is always speaking, but we are often not listening to Him. Make room to listen. Identify and prevent distractions. Ask for God to speak. An example of this is Samuel’s simple prayer of surrender: “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.”

How will you create space in your life to hear God this week? What are some of your distractions to hearing God? Set aside intentional time for silence and reflection, allowing God to speak into your life and guide your steps. Start with a few minutes and then build up from there.

Day 3: The Mighty Hand

1 PETER 5:6-7

1 Peter 5:6-7 encourages us to “humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.” God knows our weaknesses and limits. If we don’t turn to Him, we will be overcome by anxiety and stress. When you are pushed to your limits, God wants you to lean on Him; He is unlimited in strength and in care for you. Jesus assured us of His constant availability, promising to be with us always. Although He is not physically present, God will provide peace and exalt you in His perfect timing by the Holy Spirit. As you meditate, reflect on how you’ve been handling challenges, worry, and stress. How does God’s strength and care for you bring peace and confidence? Consider the areas of your life where you need to surrender your worries and embrace His faithful presence.

Spend time in prayer, asking God to strengthen your trust in Him and to help you rest in the assurance of His strength, love, and care.

Day 6: Reflect Day

Use today to catch up if you missed a day this week, revisit your reflections from the week, or simply enjoy the rest that God provides.

Day 1: Worship

We believe that God wants to do the unexplainable yet undeniable among us so that we would be filled with His praise. An important part of the 21 days is to share with others what God is doing in your life. Prioritize Encountering God with other believers at a Rush Creek campus and Engaging in Biblical Community.

Philippians 4:6-8: “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.”

Day 8: The Call of the Kingdom

MARK 1:14-15

In Mark 1:14-15, Jesus announces, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel.” This call is both urgent and transformative, inviting us to reorient our lives around the reality of God’s Kingdom. The gospel (good news) is that God showed up to save the world. Jesus is the physical expression of God’s Kingdom on earth. Jesus’ words and work to restore people physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually are glimpses of the Kingdom coming. The Kingdom is only made possible on the earth by the willingness of the King, Jesus, to draw near to us and to exert His power for us. Jesus commands for us to repent (turn away) from our own ways and to trust Him. Jesus leads us to pray to the Father that His will and Kingdom would be experienced on earth today.

As you meditate, consider what it means for the Kingdom to be experienced in your life and through your life. How does this call to repentance and belief challenge your current priorities and actions?

Ask God to reveal areas in your life that need alignment with His Kingdom values and to empower you to live out this call today.

Day 9: Don't Settle

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

Colossians 3:1-4 urges us to “seek the things that are above, where Christ is.” This passage reminds us that our identity and future are secure in Christ, calling us to pursue the good, true, life-giving realities of the Kingdom of Heaven. There are many things in this world that are tempting to pursue, but they often take more from us than what they promised to give. The verses after this passage give some examples of sin that we allow into our lives and to rip apart our lives: lust, greed, anger, and lying are just a few that are named. None of those sins will exist in heaven. Why would we wait to get rid of those from our lives now? The passage directs our attention to seek the qualities of Christ and His Kingdom: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love. The Kingdom of Heaven is going to be an overwhelming experience of love and joy. Why would we wait to pursue these attributes in life now?

As you meditate, which set of attributes currently characterize your thoughts and actions? How will you seek the good, true, life-giving attributes of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom today? You can't do this on your own.

Ask the God who loves you, chose you, and set you apart, to help you seek the things that are above today.

Day 10: Good, Pleasing, & Perfect

ROMANS 12:1-2

Romans 12:1 invites us to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.” This passage reveals that we can bring joy and delight to God by worshipping every day of our lives. Because of God’s mercy offered to us in Christ Jesus, we can encounter Him and enact His good, pleasing, and perfect will everywhere we go. In short, we get to be a part of God’s good work in the world. You’re made for this! His mercy to forgive our sins through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross means that He wants nothing to hold you back or get in your way of His great and wonderful work in your life. That’s why this passage says that our full-bodied, living sacrifice is our only reasonable (true) response to the Gospel. God’s Word transforms our minds and lives with His good, pleasing, and perfect will. We offer our hearts and minds to God through reading His Word, worshipping Him, and praying to Him.

What are some of your reasons for worshipping God and offering your life to Him as an offering? How could you remember to think about His Word, worship, or pray throughout your day? Pray for a deeper understanding and heartfelt gratitude for God’s abundant mercy and kindness shown to you in Christ. Ask God to give you a discerning heart to do His good, pleasing, and perfect will today.

Day 11: Wait For It

PSALM 37:3-7

Psalm 37:3-7 is instruction on how someone should wait for God's goodness and justice to be experienced. This Psalm makes clear that we will all experience moments in life that seem unjust or unfair. How we respond in those moments reveals our true character. God instructs us to trust in Him, do good while we are waiting, delight in Him, and commit our way to Him, believing that He will act in His perfect timing. Waiting for vindication can be one of the most challenging, but clarifying, seasons of faith. Trials are unparalleled opportunities to increase intimacy with the LORD. In our struggles, we come to terms with the depth of our weaknesses and the sufficiency of God's strength. There are a thousand things you might desire or feel like you deserve, but this Psalm urges you to set those aside and, instead, delight in the LORD. Before we ask for anything from God, we should always ask for God Himself. He is greater than everything we have ever desired. As Colossians 1:16 says, "... all things have been created through Him and for Him." We must force ourselves to slow down and look at Him deeply because He is worthy, valuable, and wonderful.

Consider how prayer is a declaration of your trust in God's sufficiency and timing. Are there desires and dreams that you feel have been unrealized? How might you entrust those to God and take delight in Him instead? Ask God to give you a greater desire for Him and delight in Him today.

Day 12: He Will Do It

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

1 Thessalonians 5:16 exhorts to us “rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” This passage acknowledges that you will face evil in this world, but God wants to do something good in you (sanctification) and through your life. Christians should not be reactive to the world. Instead, and in every situation, we are commanded by God to rejoice in Him, pray to Him, and be thankful for His work every day. We can do this because of His life-giving presence and His promises to complete His work in us by the Holy Spirit.

What promises of God and past experiences help you maintain a proactive perspective of joy, gratitude, and continual prayer? What are your current obstacles to worshipping more joyfully, praying more consistently, and thanking God in everything? Pray that God will give you wisdom, joy, and thankfulness as He completes His good work in you.

Day 13: Reflect Day

Use today to catch up if you missed a day this week, revisit your reflections from the week, or simply enjoy the rest that God provides.

Day 14: Worship

We believe that God wants to do the unexplainable yet undeniable among us so that we would be filled with His praise. An important part of the 21 days is to share with others what God is doing in your life. Prioritize Encountering God with other believers at a Rush Creek campus and Engaging in Biblical Community.

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Day 15: What God Gives

JAMES 1:12-16

James 1:12 reminds us that “Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” It also warns against being led astray by temptation. During trials and temptations, it’s vital to know that God does not desire your destruction or failure; He wants our trust and dependence. God allows trials and temptations to make us aware of how we view Him and where we stand with Him. God wants us to endure and overcome our temptation, and to receive the crown of life. It has been said that sin is the attempt to satisfy a true need through false means resulting in greater emptiness. God wants to provide everything you need to get through your trial and temptation. He also wants to give you the crown of life as one who overcomes temptation, evil, and hardship. This victory is only made possible as we depend on His great love and generosity to provide what we need. He does not have a heart of wickedness, but of goodness towards you. Imagine what the moment will feel like at the end of it all when you see Him face-to-face and He places a crown on your head.

As you meditate on this passage, do you view God as a harsh critic or as your loving Heavenly Father who provides what you need? Admit to Him where you are feeling tested or tempted right now. Pray for the wisdom to recognize temptations and for the courage to turn to Him for His love and strength to endure.

Day 16: Approaching The Throne

HEBREWS 4:14-16

Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to “approach the throne of grace with boldness”, knowing that Jesus, our High Priest, sympathizes with our weaknesses and wants to help us in our time of need. Jesus was tempted just like we are, yet He never sinned. As He faced direct lies from Satan in the desert, Jesus quoted the truth of scripture that declared His identity, purpose, and His Father’s provision. Jesus was able to overcome temptation by trusting in God’s Word. Jesus is our Perfect Priest and King who leads us through the desert of temptation by the truth of God. Jesus’ merciful and gracious sacrifice paid for all our sin so that we can live forgiven, joyfully, and powerfully in life as a child of God. He doesn’t want you to waste a moment of your life in sin, regret, or shame. Jesus Christ, our King, wants to help you live a life worthy of a child of God!

As you meditate, reflect on the incredible access you have to God’s mercy and grace. Pray boldly to the King of kings because of His mercy and grace shown towards you in Christ. Ask Him for His power and grace to give you what is needed to live today in a way that expands His Kingdom.

Day 17: The God of All Grace

1 PETER 5:8-11

1 Peter 5:8 warns us to “be sober minded, be alert”, as the enemy seeks to devour. It also assures us that God will restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish us after we have suffered a little while. It is imperative to remember that you are not alone in your suffering; there are believers across the world and history that will testify to God’s faithfulness. Every time we read about believers in the Bible, share with believers in a small group, or worship together as a church, the people of God are strengthened and supported by our honest faith through our shared struggles. Do you feel like your struggle is unique? Do you feel like you are the only Christian that has ever had the doubt, discouragement, or temptation that you face? You are not alone.

As you meditate, consider how your vulnerability and testimony might strengthen someone else’s faith. Whose honesty has encouraged you to trust the Lord and to take a step forward in a difficult time? Pray for believers in your life and around the world that are currently enduring suffering. Ask that God would strengthen His Church and that we would resist our adversary.

Day 18: Our Advocate

1 JOHN 1:9-2:2

1 John 1:9 assures us that “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” This is a shocking statement. God is just to forgive the guilty. How does that work? Our sinful lives have been found guilty and have been sentenced to death, but it has been served by Jesus our Savior! This verse continues by reminding us that Jesus is not just our Savior in the past, but our advocate with the Father in the present. As we walk by faith, according to Jesus’ commands and example, we will stumble, fall, and fail. Don’t fool yourself; even on your best day, you are not as good, wise, loving, and kind as Jesus. But He’s your advocate with the Father. John reinforces that it’s better by far if we walk perfectly in obedience to Jesus’ loving, good, and beautiful commands. But if we fail, Jesus is still on our side and He has succeeded in His good work. He paid for our sins. He is our hope. He is our strength to stand back up and to take the next shaky step of obedience.

Reflect on your growth as a Christian and your continued need for mercy and forgiveness. Consider how His response to your confession and repentance can make you more merciful to those struggling in sin around you. Who can you sympathize with and pray for in your life this week? Pray for your neighbors, family members, and others that God has called you to B.L.E.S.S.* Ask God for an opportunity to move forward in sharing the Gospel with someone this year.

**B.L.E.S.S: Begin with prayer, Listen, Eat together, Serve, Share stories*

Day 19: Still Standing

EPHESIANS 6:10-13

Ephesians 6:11 calls us to be strong in the Lord and to “put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil.” The armor of God is portrayed in the next verses as the belt of truth, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit (the Word of God), and the breastplate of righteousness. The Christian life is a spiritual battle that we must be equipped for spiritually. God has given us everything we need to be prepared for the battle ahead, but He calls us to put on what He has given us and to be together in the battle. There is no armor in the back. Followers of Jesus are called to armor up and stand shoulder to shoulder as the Gospel advances.

How do you armor up for spiritual battles? Who are you standing alongside in the spiritual fight? Pray for other followers of Jesus that you can rely on and help stand firm in the faith.

Day 20: Reflect Day

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Day 21: Worship

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**2350 SW Green Oaks Blvd, Arlington, TX 76017
817-468-7729 | rushcreek.org**

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