



Fast Start!

A 21-DAY
PRAYER & FASTING
EXPERIENCE



northwoods.church

introduction

We are so glad you've chosen to participate in this 21-day prayer and fasting experience. We are confident you will grow in your spiritual life and see God's amazing power at work in and through you!

To help make your time more fruitful, we have prepared resources to guide you on your journey:

Daily video devotional lessons from Pastor Cal

Worship music videos featuring the Northwoods team

A prayer and journaling guide available to pick up or print on your own

Optional group discussion guides for small groups and families

There are several ways to access these resources.

Download the updated Northwoods mobile app for iOS or Android devices

With this free app you can receive daily reminder notifications, watch the devotionals and worship songs, access the journaling guide, and more.

Visit the Fast Start web page at northwoods.church/faststart

Via this page you can access the devotionals and worship videos, download a printable version of the journal, subscribe to receive a daily email reminder, or sign up for text message reminders.

Install the Northwoods channel on your video streaming device

You can also watch the devotional videos and worship songs using the free Northwoods apps on Roku and AppleTV.

Pick up a DVD and printed booklet

The disc contains the devotional lessons and worship videos. The booklet provides fasting tips, group discussion tools, and the journaling exercises.

MIDNIGHT WATCH EVENT

In the middle of the 21-day journey, we've scheduled a prayer and worship focus—a Midnight Watch—running 6:00pm through midnight Friday, January 20.

fasting resources

Fasting is an important discipline in the life of any Christ follower. The practice can be a powerful way to draw close to Jesus. A quick visit to northwoods.church/fasting will provide you with a crash course on fasting—types of fasting, how to choose a fast, important tips, how to incorporate fasting into your daily life, and more.

MEDICAL NOTE

If you have any medical conditions that would make it difficult or dangerous for you to go without food for any extended period of time, please check with your doctor as to what level of fasting would be advisable for you. Also note that there are non-food ways you can choose to fast, such as TV, social media, or spending.

Types of Fasts

- A normal fast involves going without food for a meal, a day, or a certain number of days. Drink plenty of water. You may also choose to take clear broth and 100% juices in order to maintain your strength.
- A partial fast involves giving up particular foods and drink. This is often referred to as the Daniel fast (cf. Daniel 1:12 and 10:3) because Daniel allowed himself no choice foods, meats, or wine—consuming only vegetables and drank water.

Tips to get started right

- Fast one meal a day, one day a week, or a partial fast for a few days.
- Cut out sweets and sodas altogether.
- Blend a 21-day partial fast with 1–2 days of a normal fast each week.
- Expect a normal fast to be uncomfortable at first. You may feel weak and experience a headache.
- Consider simple meals for several days as a form of fasting: yogurt, spoon of peanut butter, small bowl of soup, piece of toast, etc. This works especially well for those with medical concerns. The purpose is to maintain your spiritual focus, not to eat for pleasure or to spend time preparing food.

group discussion guide 1

Use this guide at the beginning of the 21-day fast.

Opener (10 minutes)

- Share your past experience(s) with fasting and prayer.
- Who could you invite to join you on this 21-day fasting journey?

Worship (5-10 minutes)

Choose one or more worship song(s) to play from the DVD and praise God together as a group.

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

- Read Matthew 6:16-18 out loud. What is Jesus teaching us in these verses about our motives for fasting and its rewards?
- Share what you are fasting during this 21 day journey (i.e. food, TV time, Facebook, complaining, etc.) It's not too late to decide.
- During this fast, what are you specifically asking God for in prayer? What "shifts" or "breakthroughs" do you want to see happen in your life?
- Have you ever noticed any difference in your prayer time as a result of combining prayer with fasting? Explain. Are there any areas you are struggling with in this fast? Explain.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

- Identify in your group a prayer partner for this 21-day journey. (We suggest men partner with men and women with women.) Share with your partner the top three things you want God to do in your life and in the lives of your loved ones during this fast.
- Pray for each other using this simple tool:

T.A.B. — Thank, Ask, Bless

Dear God,

Thank You that I can come to You in prayer and that You are listening.

I ask You for _____ (insert top 3 things here).

Please bless _____ (name of prayer partner here).

In Your name, Amen

day 1

SCRIPTURE

... When you fasted and mourned [during those times], was it really for me that you fasted? **ZECHARIAH 7:5 (NIV)**

What is your motive behind this fast?

What specific needs are you fasting for?

"If God came down and asked you to list the three top things you want Him to do in your life and in your family, you should know those reasons and keep them before you during this time of fasting."

— *Jentezen Franklin*

[illegible]

day 3

SCRIPTURE

...You do not have because you do not ask God. JAMES 4:2 (NIV)

The surest way to receive nothing from God is to fail to ask. Ask God for what you need! Are there some other needs you want to add to your list at this time? Ask! And don't forget to thank God in advance for how He is going to meet your needs.

PRAYER ALONE

A

D E

B C

day 4

SCRIPTURE

...This kind can come forth by nothing but prayer and fasting.

MARK 9:29 (KJV)

Ponder any issues in your life that seem to persist in spite of all your prayers and best efforts to change them. Name them! Write down the troubling issues or persistent problems that you're going to submit to fasting and prayer.

See also Luke 10:18-20 and Mark 9:14-28

PRAYER
& FASTING

A

D E

B C

day 5

SCRIPTURE

If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. JOHN 15:7 (NIV)

We must ask in faith. We must abide in Christ. We must have proper motives. We must ask in accordance with the will of God. What are you asking God for today? Ask Him to bring your desires and motives in line with His will—and then release your faith as you pray and thank Him in advance for the answer He is going to send in response to your prayers offered in faith.

See James 1:6–8, Matthew 21:22, James 4:3, 1 John 5:14–15

[illegible]

day 6

SCRIPTURE

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. **HEBREWS 11:6 (NIV)**

Fix your faith on a specific target! Envision the answer when you pray! Remove all obstacles that may negate God's answer. Repent of and renounce any sin in your life.

See also 1 John 3:21–22

[illegible]

day 7

SCRIPTURE

'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.' JEREMIAH 33:3 (NIV)

Does it make sense to you that God would come to a people who don't really care if He comes or not? If we're going to see a fresh work of God, we must be passionately pursuing Him in prayer. Spend some time pondering the promise of Jeremiah 33:3 and focus on where you are in your spiritual life versus where you really want to be. Let God know you're ready to go deeper.

[illegible]

group discussion guide 2

Use this guide after the first week of the 21-day fast.

Opener (10 minutes)

What is the best thing imaginable that could happen to you in the next two weeks? Explain how you think you would handle it.

Worship (5-10 minutes)

Choose one or more worship songs to play from the set and praise God together as a group.

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

- Read Luke 11:9–11 out loud. What is Jesus teaching us about ask, seek and knock in these verses?
- How important of a role should prayer play in our lives? Explain.
- What do you think of the statement, “a life of prayerlessness leads to a life of carelessness”?
- Describe things that could possibly keep you from pursuing a deeper prayer life.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

- Quickly connect with your prayer partner and openly share how your fast is going.
- Pray together once again. Specifically envision the answers you are both asking God for. Pray from a posture of power, with an attitude of faith and a heart of expectancy.

day 8

SCRIPTURE

... "Couldn't you men keep watch with Me for one hour?"

MATTHEW 26:40 (NIV)

How important of a role does prayer play in your life? Do you have a desire to grow closer to God through prayer? If not, what is keeping you from pursuing a deeper walk with God through prayer? What if Jesus asked you personally, "Could you not keep watch with Me for one hour?" How would you answer Him? What answer could you give Him for not doing so?

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day 9 - praise

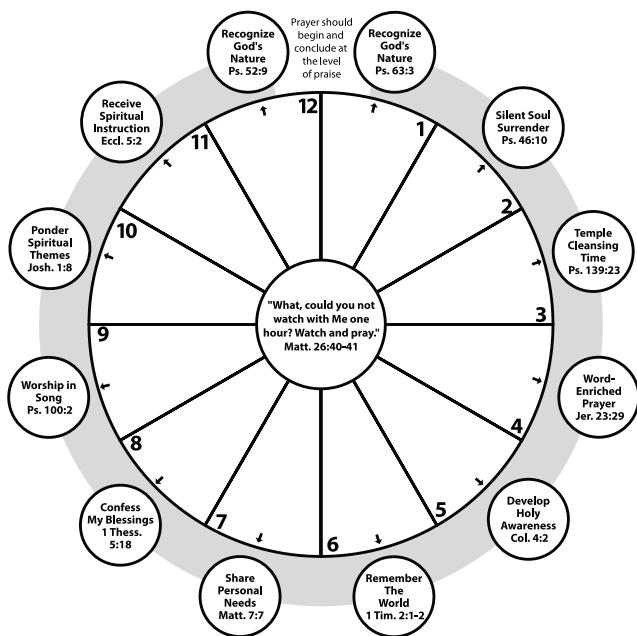
SCRIPTURE

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

PSALM 100:4-5 (NIV)

Practice praising God for five minutes and then journal about your experience. If you need a prompt, you could use the five A's Pastor Cal mentioned in the video lesson—Advisor, Active, Approachable, Answers, Attentive.

Write in the first of the twelve dimensions of prayer.



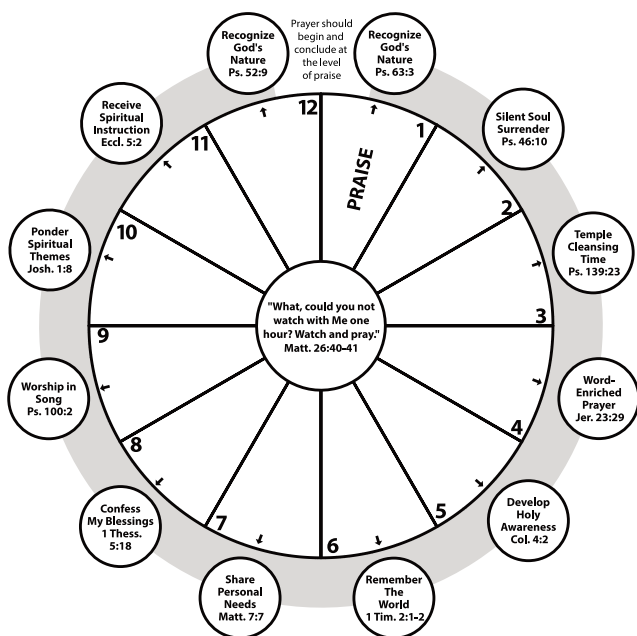
day 10 - silence

SCRIPTURE

... "Be still, and know that I am God. ..." PSALM 46:10 (NIV)

Spend five minutes praising God with the letter B. For example, "Lord, You're beautiful, You're bountiful in Your provision, You're benevolent and so good to me." Then spend five minutes in silence, just being with Him, being quiet but in your heart saying, "Lord, I need You, I love You, and I want to be close to You."

See also James 4:8.

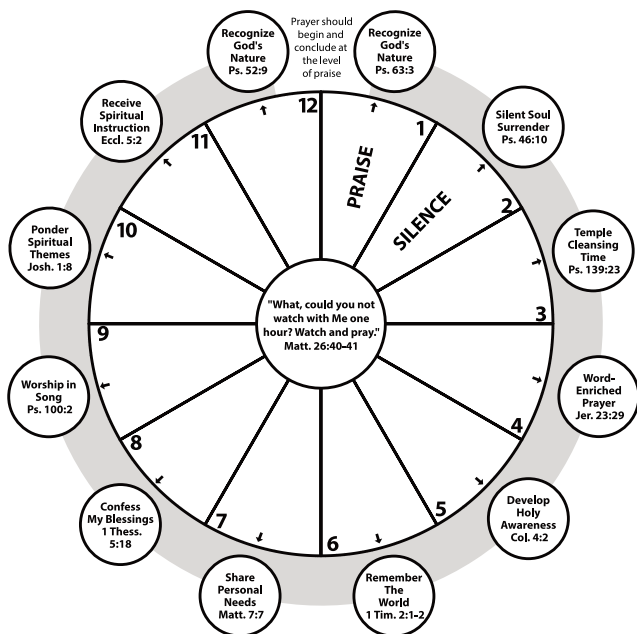


day 11 - confession

SCRIPTURE

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. PSALM 139:23-24 (NIV)

Praise God for five minutes, spend five minutes in silent soul surrender, and then finish with five minutes of confession. Ask Him to search your heart and to show you if there's anything you need to confess or any areas of growth He wants you to focus on!



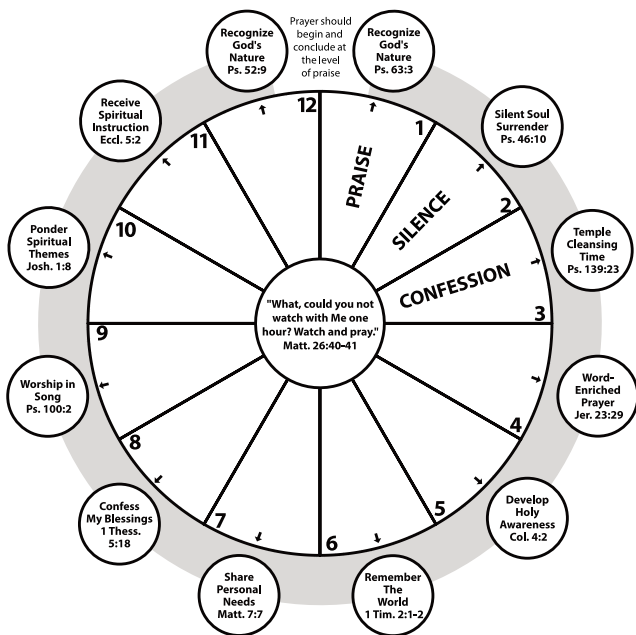
day 12 - scripture praying

SCRIPTURE

"Is not my word like fire," declares the Lord, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" JEREMIAH 23:29 (NIV)

Pastor Cal shared how he turned James 1:2–3 into his prayer: *Lord, I'm not sure that I count it joy when I face trials in my life, so would You help me to rejoice in all circumstances? Help me to truly believe that You are strengthening my faith and building perseverance in my life!*

Take the highlights of what God has shown you as you've read the Bible and pray them back to Him.



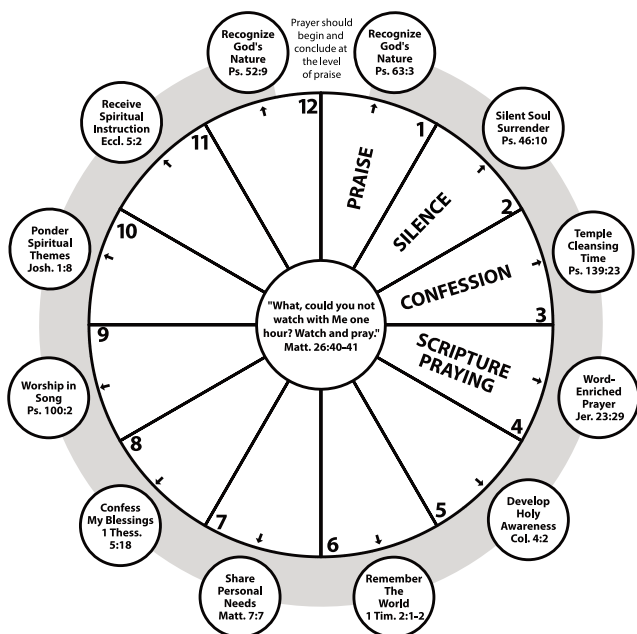
day 13 - watching

SCRIPTURE

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. COLOSSIANS 4:2 (NIV)

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." MATTHEW 26:41 (NIV)

Are you aware of the temptations that are seeking to swallow your life and divert you from God's course? Spend some time right now asking God to make you sensitive and alert to both His warnings and His whispers as you go throughout the day.

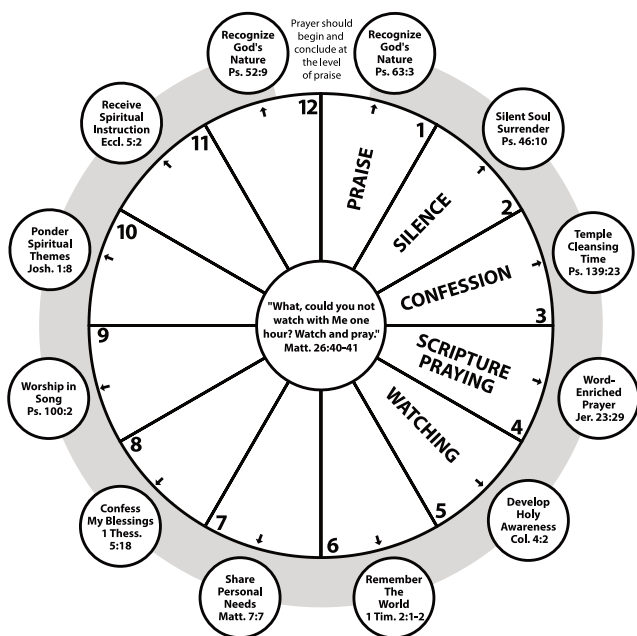


day 14 - intercession

SCRIPTURE

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives... 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2 (NIV)

Write down the names of people you're going to begin praying for on a regular basis. Take some time now to practice five minutes of intercession.



group discussion guide 3

Use this guide after the second week of the 21-day fast.

Opener (10 minutes)

Share one compelling thought from your devotions this week. What have you sensed God saying to you during your quiet time with Him?

Worship (5-10 minutes)

Worship together as a group using songs from the Fast Start set.

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

- How has meditating on God's Word strengthened your prayer time?
- Read God's Word out loud... Mark 11:22-24. What is stressed about praying with faith and expectancy?
- As you're praying for others in your life, describe how you can pray for them with expectancy.
- If you prayed daily for 10 minutes, 30 minutes or 1 hour, what encouraging words do you think Father God would say to you regardless of the amount of time spent?

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

- With your entire group, pray scripture back to God and into your lives.
Father God, we thank You for Your son Jesus and His amazing grace. Because of His sacrifice, we can approach You with freedom and confidence. You have chosen us and adopted us as your children. But You didn't stop there. You are completing the good work You started in us. And we know that in all things You work for the good of those who love you. You are such a good Father. You are able to do more for us than we could ever ask or imagine. If You are for us, who can be against us? No one! You love us always. And we love You with all our hearts.

In Jesus Name, Amen

EPHESIANS 3:12, JOHN 1:12, PHILIPPIANS 1:6, ROMANS 8:28, EPHESIANS 3:20, ROMANS 8:31

- Briefly connect with your prayer partner and share an update. Describe how God is moving in a fresh way in your life and share any challenges you may be experiencing during fasting or prayer. Commit to pray for your partner this next week.

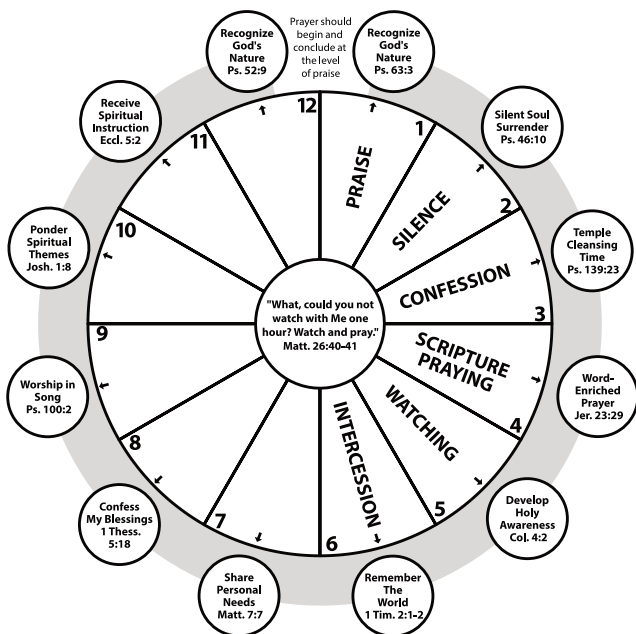
day 15 - petition

SCRIPTURE

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6 (NIV)

Write down in your journal some particular needs in your own life as well as the lives of other people. Spend some time identifying the needs you're going to begin praying for and then spend five minutes in petition today.

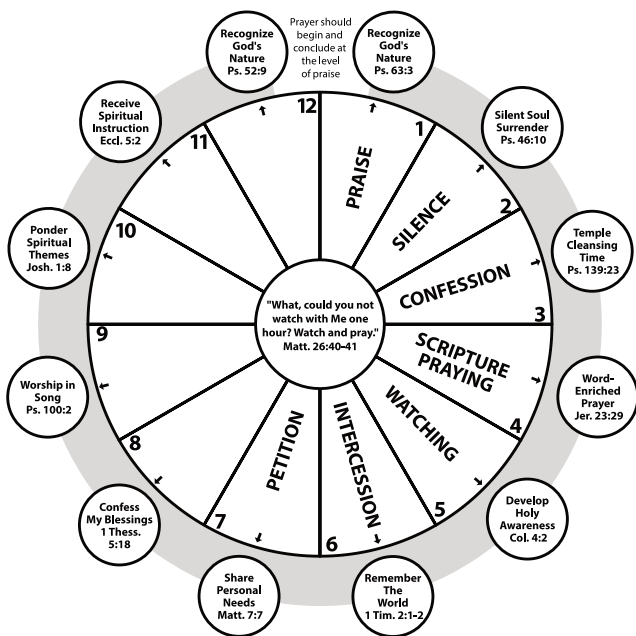


day 16 - thanksgiving

SCRIPTURE

... give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 (NIV)

**What "Thank you, Papa" prayers do you need to express today?
Thank God for anything and everything you can think of.**



day 17 - singing

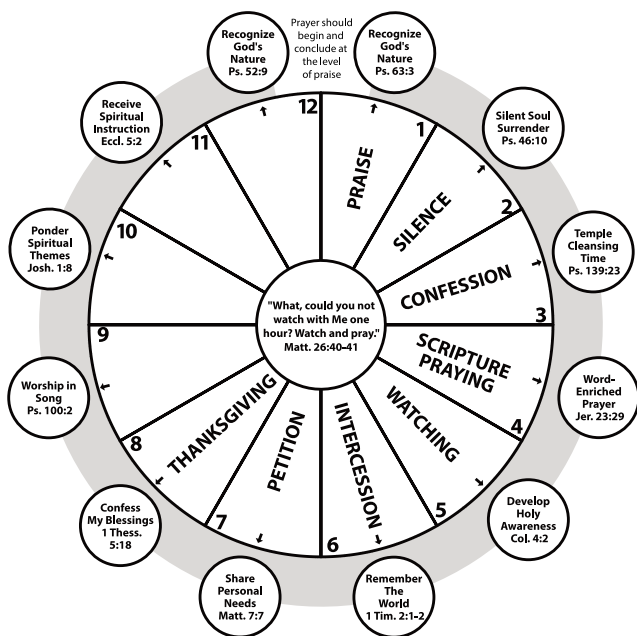
SCRIPTURE

Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs.

PSALM 100:2 (NIV)

Worship God in song for five minutes today. If you've been diligently adding five minutes of specific prayer elements each day, you're already up to 45 minutes of prayer!

Also look at Ephesians 5:19.

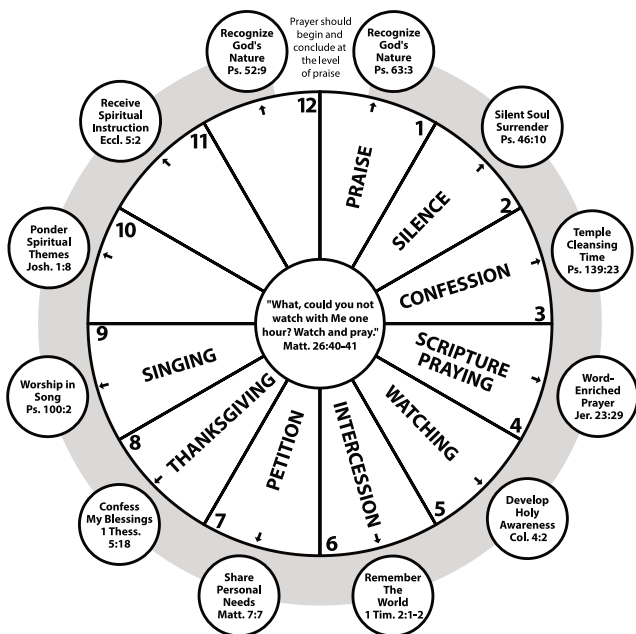


day 18 - meditation

SCRIPTURE

... meditate on [Scripture] day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. ... JOSHUA 1:8 (NIV)

Meditate on the theme of God's faithfulness. What are some of the ways God showed himself faithful to people in the Bible? How has God shown himself faithful to you? How willing would you be to trust someone who is not faithful? Why can you have complete trust in our faithful God? Finish your time today by asking God to help you trust Him at a deeper level.

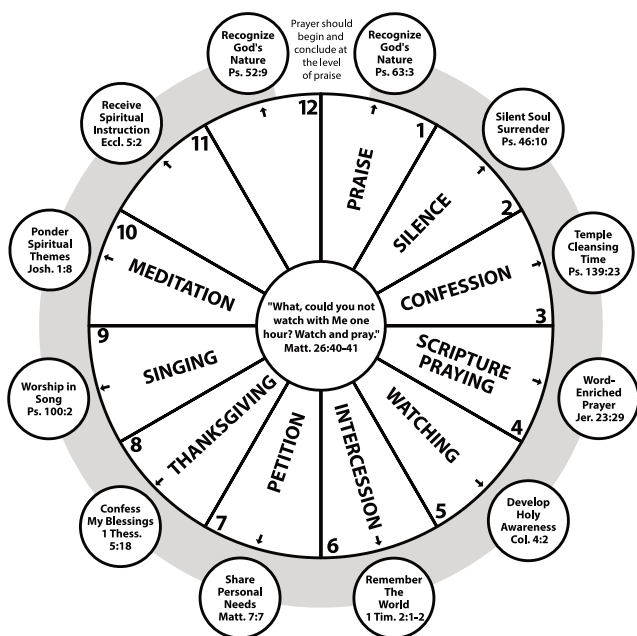


day 19 - listening

SCRIPTURE

My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow me. JOHN 10:27 (NIV)

Spend five minutes attuning your ear to God and listening with your spirit. What do you sense Him saying to you today? How is He trying to encourage you? What does He see today as He looks at your heart? What promise does He want to deposit in your spirit to encourage you today? Write down what you believe He has said to you and let it be an encouragement to you throughout the day.

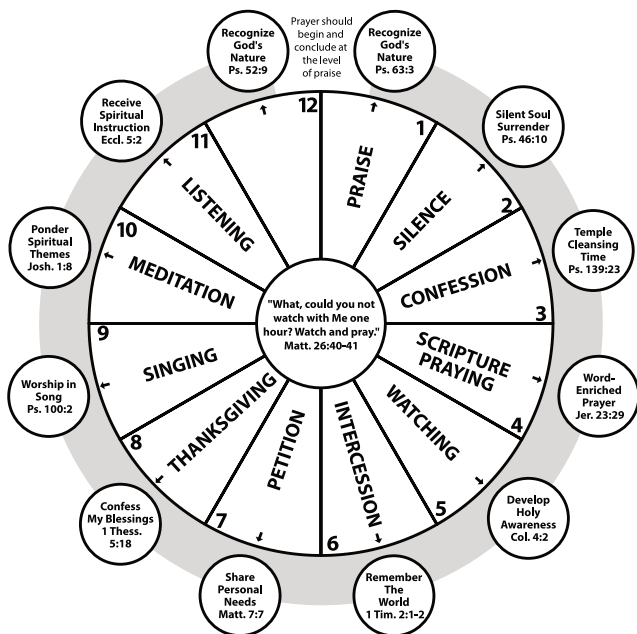


day 20 - praise

SCRIPTURE

For what You have done I will always praise You in the presence of Your faithful people. And I will hope in Your name, for Your name is good. PSALM 52:9 (NIV)

We end our time of prayer by offering our praise to the Lord! Praise Him for what He's shown you. Praise Him for who He is to you. Praise Him for how He's going to walk with you and show Himself faithful to you today. Praise Him for who He is: Jehovah Jireh, the God who Provides; Jehovah Rohi, God my Shepherd; Jehovah Shalom, God my Peace; Jehovah Rapha, God my Healer. Spend time praising Him for who He is in your life.



day 21

SCRIPTURE

However, [Jesus] continued His habit of retiring to deserted places and praying. LUKE 5:16 (ISV)

Jesus Himself started His day with prayer and much-needed times of refreshment alone with His Father. How much more do we need that connection?

Set aside one day each week—maybe one meal a week on a particular day—where you will skip your meal so that you can spend an hour with God in prayer. Why not today, before you do anything else, take these keys you’ve learned over the past 12 days and commit to praying for the next hour?

group discussion guide 4

Use this guide after the final week of the 21-day fast.

Opener (10 minutes)

How has this prayer and fasting experience been enriched by doing it with others?

Worship (5 minutes)

CHOOSE ONLY ONE worship song and praise God together as a group. (A second song will be done later in the meeting. See below.)

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

- Read 2 Chronicles 20:20-22 out loud. Why do you think Jehoshaphat sent men to sing and praise “at the head of the army”?
- Has praising God daily through worship music enriched your time with Him? Explain.
- Have you ever sung a new song (Psalm 96:1) to the Lord? Or is that a new concept? Explain.
- Identify and share one or more praiseworthy things God did during your prayer/fasting journey.

built up prayer
muscles

answered
prayer

deeper bond
with God

hunger to read
the Word

a breakthrough
spiritually,
relationally,
financially or
physically

increased time
in prayer and
worship

consistent time
alone with God

better aware-
ness of God's
promptings

greater sensi-
tivity to God's
presence

Closing Prayer (5-10 minutes)

Now, thank God together for those praiseworthy things. Sit in a circle and, one at a time, go around and share a one-sentence praise out loud to God. Continue to move around the group until all have had a chance to share two or three things. The intent is a quick, short praise to God, then move to the next person. (Choose one person to start and one to close as you explain the instructions to the group.)

Worship (5 minutes)

Praise together with a song from the DVD for the many things God did during this 21-day journey. Honor God with your worship and thanksgiving.

personal challenge

Pastor Cal challenged us to consider regularly reconnecting with the discipline of fasting and prayer by possibly fasting one day a week, one meal a week, or praying for one hour a day.

Share with your group or journal for yourself about new practices you might implement as a result of participating in this fast.

Who can you ask to join you in this new practice?

[illegible]

Fast Start!

visit **northwoods.church/faststart** for

- VIDEO DEVOTIONAL LESSONS
- WORSHIP MUSIC VIDEOS
- PRAYER AND JOURNALING GUIDE
- GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES



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