

RESOURCES

**21 DAYS OF  
PRAYER AND FASTING**

January 8-28, 2012

## 2012 Theme: “Elevate!”

In sports, when facing an arch rival or preparing to play a key game, many coaches often remark, “We will need to elevate our game!” What they’re referring to is essentially ramping up their team’s efforts, in every phase, and taking it to the next level. It means key elements like attitude, focus, preparation, execution, and performance, etc., need to be elevated to a new level of intensity.

This doesn’t mean that the previous or current “level” of participation has been wrong or insufficient; it simply means that the next game, the new opponent, or the upcoming schedule or season, is going to require the coaches, the team, even the fans, to *elevate* their game!

For all intents and purposes, with the end of 2011, GCC has closed out a season of ministry - the wins, losses, challenges, and celebrations are past, and the record stands. Our vision and mission remains strong; it’s biblical, it is on target, and it needs no change. Now, a new season of life and ministry emerges in 2012, with new challenges, new expectations, and new focus - **ELEVATE!**

### Key Verses:

Proverbs 14:34 *“Uprightness and right standing with God (moral and spiritual rectitude in every area and relation) **elevate** a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”* (Amplified Bible)

Colossians 3:1-2 *“So if you’re serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don’t shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. **Look up**, and be alert to what is going on around Christ - that’s where the action is. **See things from his perspective.**”* (The Message)

**God is calling us to elevate our lives for Christ, our Life Groups, and our leadership!**

### **Elevate our lives for Christ to the next level**

- Next level lives for Christ that are devoted to personal discipleship
- Next level lives for Christ that are strategically connected
- Next level lives for Christ that are on mission

### **Elevate Life Groups to the next level**

- Next level Life Groups that are making disciples
- Next level Life Groups that are multiplying (Leaders and Groups)
- Next level Life Groups that are missional

### **Elevate leadership to the next level**

- Next level leadership personally and in the home
- Next level leadership on the team and in Life Groups
- Next level leadership through coaching and reproduction

### **Imagine the possibilities...**

What if, in 2012, every person that is a part of GCC, decided to elevate our life for Christ to the next level? It would elevate relationships. It would elevate families. It would elevate GCC. It would elevate our witness in our mission field. It would elevate where we live and work, our communities, our cities, and our nation!

What if, in 2012, every Life Group at GCC decided to elevate their group to the next level? It would elevate what it means to be a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. It would elevate being connected and committed to others. It would elevate how we serve missionally, make disciples, and reproduce leaders. This would elevate GCC, elevate our witness, our community, city and nation!

What if, in 2012, every leader in GCC decided to elevate their leadership to the next level? It would elevate every person, every Life Group, every gathering, every decision, every commitment, every action to a greater level of significance and effectiveness! It would elevate GCC, our community, our city, and our nation!

Whatever you call it, raise the bar, lift the lid, go to the next level, we must **elevate** *who we are* in Christ and *what he has called us to do* as we live and minister as a part of the GCC family.

**In 2012...**

Let's elevate Learning, Living, and Serving!

Let's elevate seeing as many people as soon as possible knowing and serving Christ!

Let's elevate reproducing fully devoted and spiritually maturing followers of Christ and life-producing churches!

**And it all begins with 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting! January 8-28, 2012.**

# 21 Days of ELEVATE!

Week 1 Focus:

January 8-14, 2012

“Elevate the level of our lives for Christ!”

## Key Bible Verse:

Philippians 3:12-16 *“I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Let all who are spiritually mature agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. But we must hold on to the progress we have already made.”*

- Next level lives for Christ that are devoted to personal discipleship
- Next level lives for Christ that are strategically connected
- Next level lives for Christ that are on mission

**Week 2 Focus:**

**January 15-21, 2012**

**“Elevate the level of our Life Groups!”**

**Key Bible Verse:**

*Acts 2:42-47 “All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity - all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”*

- Next level Life Groups that are making disciples
- Next level Life Groups that are multiplying (Leaders and Groups)
- Next level Life Groups that are missional

**Week 3 Focus:**

**January 22-28, 2012**

**“Elevate the level of our leadership!”**

**Key Bible Verse:**

*Ephesians 4:11-16 “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”*

- Next level leadership personally and in the home
- Next level leadership on the team and in Life Groups
- Next level leadership through coaching and reproduction

Be encouraged to not only join others in this time of prayer and fasting, but to do so with the simple prayer of ***“God, help me, our Life Groups, and our leadership to elevate our devotion to you and to one another!”*** The following information will show you how you can prepare for and participate in the 21 days of Elevate through strategic prayer and fasting.

### **Why should we pray and fast?**

As we prepare for these 21 days of prayer and fasting, we need to understand that this discipline, in the truest context, has everything to do with the attitude of our heart. The Bible reveals that not all prayer and fasting is received by God. There were times when he rebuked people’s attempts because their motives were not pure. It’s clear that Jesus made prayer and fasting a significant priority and it was unquestionably the key to his ministry, especially in the areas of spiritual warfare and deliverance. We should learn from his example and instructions in making prayer and fasting an integral aspect of our responsibility in continuing his mission.

We cannot use 21 days of prayer and fasting as a quick weight loss program, although there are physical benefits; nor as a spiritual badge of honor. Rather, we must see it as a primary means to enhance our focus on God and His purposes, be energized with his power; and elevate our attitude and actions so we can most effectively fulfill those purposes. That’s why we must pray and fast, and that’s when we can expect God-blessed results.

### **For more biblical information about prayer and fasting, read:**

Ezekiel 47:1-12  
Daniel 9-10  
Matthew 6, 17

Isaiah 54, 58  
Nehemiah 9:1-2  
2 Corinthians 6:5, 11:27

## Why 21 days?

We take the 21 days from Daniel 10:2-3 when he prayed for a revelation regarding his people's (Israel) future. It's not a prescribed amount of time, but certainly we can use a 21 day period for the purpose of prayer and fasting in order to hear from God regarding certain matters, or to simply draw closer to him, etc.

In Daniel's case, he received great favor despite significant opposition. **We believe that these 21 days of elevating our lives, Life Groups, and leadership, through prayer and fasting will provide us with God's favor wherever we endeavor to take our stand for Christ.** If each of us will set aside these 21 days, from January 8 through 28, for this purpose, we will most certainly experience more than we could have hoped for.

## What you should pray and fast for...

- That you will elevate your life for Christ - your relationship with Him, and His purposes - His will for your life, a deeper devotion to spiritual disciplines, etc.
- That we will elevate our Life Groups to be our primary means of connecting people in relationship, developing disciples, reproducing leaders, and better reaching our community for Christ, etc.
- That leaders will elevate to a new level of gaining godly wisdom, living with integrity, exemplifying Christlikeness, and being servant-leaders, etc.

## How you should pray and fast...

1. Only enter into a time of prayer and fasting if you believe God has called you to do so, you desire to do so, and for the right reasons.
2. Make sure you clearly understand “why” we are fasting and “what” we are fasting for during these 21 days.
3. Consider fasting at least one meal per day. Also, consider a “Daniel Fast” for the other meals during the day - avoiding meats and sweets; and/or consider a “media fast” - giving up TV, recreational internet, etc.
4. Be sensitive to God's Spirit during this time. He will speak to you, so be prepared to journal, as well as, follow through on seeking reconciliation or restoration in broken relationships, or any other such things that He may lead you to do.
5. Be in a “mind-set” of prayer during the 21 day fast; have consistent, appointed times of purposeful prayer.
6. Read and study the Bible throughout the 21 day fast, follow the Daily Bible Reading Plan in this journal; especially note those verses that are provided, and other specific areas of Scripture that are revealed to you.
7. Don't just skip meals! Set aside at least as much time as would be required to prepare and eat a meal to pray and study God's Word.
8. Pray audibly, kneel, walk, praise and worship - all of these things will help foster an attitude of humility in prayer and keep you focused on your purposes.

9. Resist comparing the fast you are undertaking to the fast others may be undertaking - just be obedient to what God wants YOU to do.
  
10. Apply the spiritual lessons you will learn during this time in this order:  
yourself, your family, the church...

### **Physical Preparations**

- As a precautionary measure you may need to check with your doctor before beginning your first fast.
  
- Several excellent books have been written regarding the physical benefits alone of fasting over a period of time. A recommended book is, "Toxic Relief" by Dr. Don Colbert.
  
- If you plan to fast more than one meal per day:
  - ~ Eat mainly raw food and drink plenty of water for a few meals leading up to your fast (Fact: your body needs 2 quarts of water per day to sustain life).
  
  - ~ Days two through four are often the most challenging, expect some physical, mental, and perhaps even some emotional discomfort.
  
  - ~ When drinking juice during a fast, unsweetened and non-acidic juices are best. Try to avoid coffee and caffeinated tea.
  
  - ~ You may need to restrict some of your physical activity, especially rigorous exercise during a fast.

### **Church Prayer Gathering Times**

During the 21 days of prayer and fasting the church auditorium or other locations may be made available for personal and corporate prayer. We will announce these opportunities.