

EPHESIANS

IN CHRIST

PRAYER AND FASTING WEEK
JANUARY 8-12, 2018



EVERY NATION

© 2018 by Every Nation. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from The Holy Bible, Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)
Copyright 2006 by Bible League International.

everynation.org/fasting #ENfast2018

CONTENTS

Fasting 101.....	1
Fasting Commitments.....	4
Answered Prayers.....	5
Prayer Commitments.....	6
Before You Fast: Identity in Christ.....	7
Day 1: Finished Work of Grace	11
Day 2: God's Super Power	15
Day 3: Walk Worthy of Christ.....	19
Day 4: Walk in the Light	23
Day 5: Walk Strong in Christ	27



FASTING 101

Connect

All of us have needs and wants. Needs are things that we cannot live without. Wants are things we would like to have. What are some of your needs? What are some of your wants?

There are many things we need and want. But sometimes, we focus so much on our needs and wants that we put aside our relationship with God. Fasting lets us focus more on God by setting aside our needs and wants.

What is fasting?

Fasting is stopping an activity (like eating) for a period of time to focus more on God. We replace eating or using our gadgets with time with God. This means praying, worshiping, and reading the Bible. These activities build our relationship with God.

When our parents speak to us, we should pay attention and listen to them. Fasting helps us pay attention and listen to God. It helps us put aside distractions. We say to God, "I am going to listen to You because You are my Father. I trust You!"

Jesus gave us an example of fasting in Matthew 4. Jesus knew that He would need strength and power for His ministry. He prepared by fasting for forty days in the desert. During this time, He was tempted by Satan. His response to that temptation is the truth we can hold on to for strength when we fast:

... *“People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

MATTHEW 4:4 (NLT)

Fasting is usually keeping yourself from eating and drinking as you devote more time for God. But you can also fast from different media (TV, video games) and technology (gadgets, Internet) if you cannot fast from food. The important thing is to keep your focus away from the things the world offers to spend more time with God.

Before Fasting

1. Pray.

Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. Write down your specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

2. Commit.

Pray about the kind of fast that you will do and commit to it ahead of time. Ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decision. Also, ask your parents and maybe even your doctor if you are allowed to do a specific type of food fast.

3. Act.

If you will be fasting from food, start eating smaller portions a few days before you fast. Avoid sugary and fatty foods. Ask someone to be your prayer partner throughout the fast.

While Fasting

1. Focus.

Set aside time to read God's Word and pray. This devotional will help you go through your fast. Just be ready to listen to God's voice and do what the Holy Spirit is telling you.

2. Pray.

If you can, join at least one prayer meeting in your church. Pray for your family, church, pastors, nation, campuses, and missions throughout the week.

3. Fill up.

During mealtimes, if you're fasting from food, read the Bible and pray instead. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Keep in mind that you may find yourself becoming physically weak, tired, impatient, or irritated. If you're doing a different type of fast, read the Bible and pray during the time you would normally do what you are fasting from (for example, browsing through social media or playing video games).

After Fasting

1. Eat.

If you fasted from food, reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day. It may be tempting, but try not to eat junk food and sweets right away. If you've finished a different type of fast, remember what God revealed to you as you spent time with Him. Take what you learned from the fast into your everyday life.

2. Pray.

Don't stop praying! Trust that God will keep His promises and knows what He's doing. Don't stop believing in and listening to God all year. Be in faith and expect God to answer your prayers!

FASTING COMMITMENTS

Day 1

Fasting Options:

- Social Media Fast
- Gadget Fast
- Skip One Meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

Day 2

Fasting Options:

- Social Media Fast
- Gadget Fast
- Skip One Meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

Day 3

Fasting Options:

- Social Media Fast
- Gadget Fast
- Skip One Meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

Day 4

Fasting Options:

- Social Media Fast
- Gadget Fast
- Skip One Meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

Day 5

Fasting Options:

- Social Media Fast
- Gadget Fast
- Skip One Meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

I AM THANKFUL TO GOD FOR ...

How did God answer your prayers last year?

IN 2018, I AM BELIEVING GOD FOR ...

What are your prayer requests this year?

Myself (e.g. to be closer to God)

My Family (e.g. good health for parents)

My School (e.g. good grades)

My Friends (e.g. for friends to know Jesus)

Others (e.g. for more people to know Christ)

My prayer partner is _____ .

BEFORE YOU FAST

IDENTITY IN CHRIST

READ Ephesians 1

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has given us every spiritual blessing in heaven.

EPHESIANS 1:3

What would you do if your parents suddenly became the richest people in the world? You would probably be living a totally different life. When we have a relationship with Jesus, our lives change as well. This is what being “in Christ” means.

“In Christ” sets our new identity. Being in Christ redefines who we are. It beats all other definitions of us such as gender, culture, nationality, and other labels we put on ourselves (i.e. being the top of the class or having the best and latest gadgets). All these come second to our identity in Christ.

Just as our last names tell us which family we belong to, being “in Christ” means that we can receive every spiritual blessing in heaven that we do not deserve and cannot ever earn. We have been adopted into God’s family as His sons and daughters. This means that we have these same rights in Jesus! We can claim whatever God has for His children today through Jesus Christ.

“In Christ” means we recognize that we have been hand-picked and bought from our sins through His blood. Left to ourselves, we are helpless and miserable, with nothing to offer. But “in Christ,” and only through Christ, do we have life and all we need. No one who understands the value of money would choose a one-peso coin over a million-peso check. In the same way, no one who has experienced what God has to offer will ever choose anything or anyone else over Him.

APPLY

1. What are the things that determined your identity before you were in Christ? (This could be anything: your school, the people you know, or having the latest gadgets.)

2. Now that you have a new identity in Christ as God's son or daughter, how will you change the way you pray and relate with Him?

3. What is one thing you will change today as a result of what the Holy Spirit has revealed to you?



4. There are many things about God that we don't understand, because God is so big compared to our limited minds. But God loves to be known by you and is willing to reveal Himself to you. List down things you want to know about God or questions you want to ask Him. You can go back to this list as you go about your year and be expectant for God's answers.

What I want to know about God	Questions I want to ask God

PRAY

Pray to Know God Better

I always pray to the great and glorious Father, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that he will give you the Spirit, who will let you know truths about God and help you understand them, so that you will know him better.

EPHESIANS 1:17

Has your friend ever told you the details about a movie he or she watched, and though you knew the story, you were more excited to watch it because you knew that experiencing it yourself would be better?

This is like your relationship with God. Knowing *about* God will never be as good as truly knowing Him. It is only after God enables you to see Him that you can grow in your relationship with Him. Shall we pray?

“Heavenly Father, thank You for giving me Your Spirit of wisdom and revelation to know You better. I don’t want to just know *about* You but *know* You better. As I read my Bible every day, help me grow in my relationship with You so that I can see how great the real You is, not only depending on what I hear from my parents or from church. Teach me to see what makes You happy and what makes You sad. Help me reflect Your character to those around me, and let the light of You in my life be obvious to them too. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

FINISHED WORK OF GRACE

READ Ephesians 2

I mean that you have been saved by grace because you believed. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God.

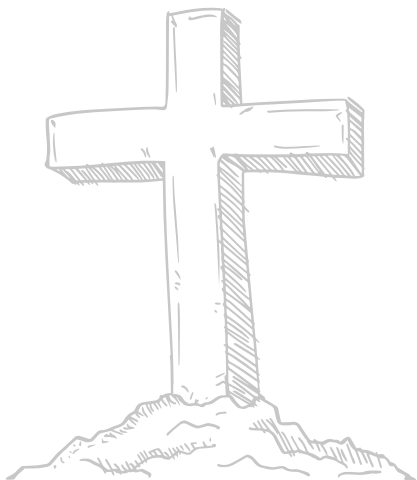
EPHESIANS 2:8

How would you feel if, after completing a masterpiece (a drawing, clay sculpture, lego structure, painting, or anything else you love doing), your friend changes it and removes parts of it because he or she thinks it needs “improving”?

The work of Jesus on the cross is a masterpiece of God. It is already perfect and finished. Trying to add to it will only destroy its power and effectiveness. To add to His work on the cross is to say that “it’s not enough,” or that “I could do better.” When we stand before some of nature’s wonders, like a huge waterfall or the starry sky, we are left in awe, wonder, and even joy. Like them, when we fully experience the beauty and worth of the gospel, we cannot leave the experience and still be the same person.

What’s equally amazing is that this same Divine Craftsman is at work on another masterpiece—you! In Ephesians 2:10 (ESV), Paul says that

we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Will you let Him work in and through you to produce what He envisioned for you, even before the creation of the world?



APPLY

1. According to Ephesians 2, what were we like without Christ? What has God done for us? What made God want to do this for us?
2. Read Ephesians 2:8–10. How do good works relate to His gift of salvation?
3. What are some ways God has worked through you to bless others?



4. There are many things that we know we should do but have a hard time doing, such as greeting a scary teacher, or approaching the bully in class and telling him or her about Jesus. What are the things that God has been telling you to do that, in faith, you will be able to do this year? You can look back at this list as you go about your year and expect God's grace to be at work in you!

What God is telling me to do

PRAY

Pray to Understand Your Calling

I pray that God will open your minds to see his truth. Then you will know the hope that he has chosen us to have. You will know that the blessings God has promised his holy people are rich and glorious.

EPHESIANS 1:18

The Israelites, God's chosen nation, were expected to follow God. This meant stopping some of the old things they used to do and beginning to do the new things that God was telling them to do. When God called us and freed us, He also gave us a new identity. This new identity in Christ lets us live our lives differently, have a new way of seeing things, and develop new and better habits. We need to ask God to help us. Shall we pray?

"Heavenly Father, thank You for helping me to see clearly what my new identity is in You. I understand that You have called me to walk with You, in holiness and faithfulness. Help me to remember that I am rich in You, and not only that, You see me as Your treasure, a finished work of grace. Cause me to honor and glorify You in all I think, say, and do. In Jesus' name, amen."

GOD'S SUPER POWER

READ Ephesians 3

I ask the Father with his great glory to give you the power to be strong in your spirits. He will give you that strength through his Spirit.

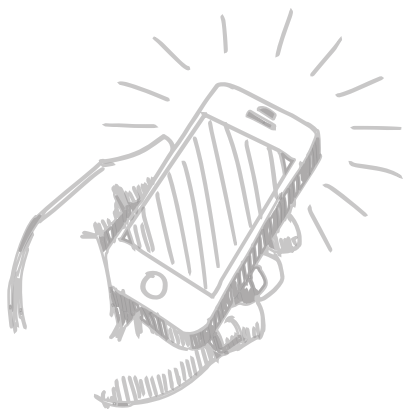
EPHESIANS 3:16

In Ephesians 1:19,20, Paul introduced the theme of God's mighty power, referring to the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised him from the dead.

Most mobile phones have a battery indicator at the top right corner of the screen. When the battery gets to full power, the indicator shows 100%. It will not stop at 99%! The Bible says that for those who believe, our "full power" is the same as the power released when Christ was raised from the dead.

How much power was this, exactly? Let us look at some Greek words Paul used to explain this great power:

- *dynamis*, where we get the word "dynamite," means one's potential power
- *energeia*, where we get the word "energy," means energy in action
- *kratos* means the power exerted to control and overcome resistance
- *ischys* means the power to bring to life



These Greek words all show different ways to describe the power that raised Christ from the dead. It was the real, full, super power that only God has, and this is the same power that we can have through the Spirit when we are in Christ!

APPLY

1. What are some habits and routines you will start doing to help you *be filled with all the fullness of God?* (Ephesians 3:19, ESV)
2. How did Paul describe God in Ephesians 3:20? Have you ever put God in a box by believing only for small things in spite of His enormous power?
3. What is one thing you will do today now that you know about the unlimited power made available to us by the Holy Spirit?



4. There are things we want and need that are beyond our own abilities. But we know that God is limitless. What are the things God has been telling you to believe for? It might be this year's tuition, restoration of friendships, or even healing! You can go back to this list as you go about your year and expect God's power to be demonstrated in your life.

What God is telling me to believe for

PRAY

Pray to Experience His Power

I ask the Father with his great glory to give you the power to be strong in your spirits. He will give you that strength through his Spirit.

EPHESIANS 3:16

Who is your favorite superhero? No superhero is perfect, no matter how strong he or she may be. A superhero will always have a weakness. But God is omnipotent, which means that He is all-powerful and without any weaknesses. The good news is we can experience, and even access, His immeasurable power. Shall we pray?

“Heavenly Father, show me more of Your huge power that I can never even imagine. You are a mighty God! Please give me more and more faith, and help me see the limitations that I have set on You and on what You can do. Thank You that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is actively at work in me right now. I choose not to rely on what I can do by myself, but to depend instead on Your Holy Spirit for the strength to live out Your calling for me. I admit that apart from You, I can do no good thing. May Your life and power overflow in me, and may I become a great example of You to the watching world around me. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

WALK WORTHY OF CHRIST

READ Ephesians 4

So, as a prisoner for the Lord, I beg you to live the way God's people should live, because he chose you to be his.

EPHESIANS 4:1

Have you heard of the story of the eagle who was raised with chickens? He did not know that he could soar through the sky like the other eagles, and so he never did. He acted like a chicken because he believed he was a chicken. Like the eagle, what we believe determines how we act. In Ephesians 1-3, the Apostle Paul describes who we are as believers in Christ, and in chapter 4, he explains how we should act. Because we are now in Christ, we can *walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which [we] have been called* (Ephesians 4:1, ESV).

The Holy Spirit works in us, telling us we are God's people, and how to act now that we are in Christ. (This is called sanctification.) We are called to walk in God's light every day, which means we must walk in the truth of the gospel.

After telling us how to live each day, Paul also tells us that we should have good relationships with other believers. After all, we are called to be part of a church. We demonstrate our relationship with Christ by the way we treat others. We can be united in spite of our differences because of the most important similarity we have—our love for Jesus!

Jesus is the only way by which we can walk worthy of our calling. He is the only way that we can have what Paul mentions—humility, gentleness, patience, love, and unity in the bond of peace. In the same way that fruits cannot make themselves grow apart from the tree, we cannot live out any aspect of our calling apart from Him.



APPLY

1. What does it mean for you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling?
How can God's grace be seen in your life and relationships today?

2. In Ephesians 4:11–16, how does Paul describe the role the church plays in spiritual growth? Who is helping you grow in your walk with God?
How can you help others walk with God?

3. What is one truth you will hold on to today as a result of what the Holy Spirit has revealed to you?



4. There are many things about ourselves that we need to get rid of or improve. This may be being easily irritated or having difficulty in speaking in front of a class. List these down. Pray about them and ask for God's strength to enable you to overcome them. You can go back to this list as you go about your year and be expectant of God's strength to be at work in you!

What I need to get rid of or improve

PRAY

Pray to Experience His Strength

I ask the Father with his great glory to give you the power to be strong in your spirits. He will give you that strength through his Spirit.

EPHESIANS 3:16

Have you ever been so tired that you felt too weak to move? Or have you ever been clumsy because you lacked sleep? All of these are signs of physical weakness due to lack of energy. But humans are both physical and spiritual beings. We need the Spirit of God to empower us. Shall we pray?

“Heavenly Father, I see that I must completely depend on You for everything. By myself, I am weak, but You are my strength. Strengthen me with power through Your Holy Spirit. Enable me to face the trials before me with boldness, courage, and faith that Your Spirit in me is greater than any opposition that I may face in the world. I declare that I am more than a conqueror through Christ who strengthens me. Amen!”

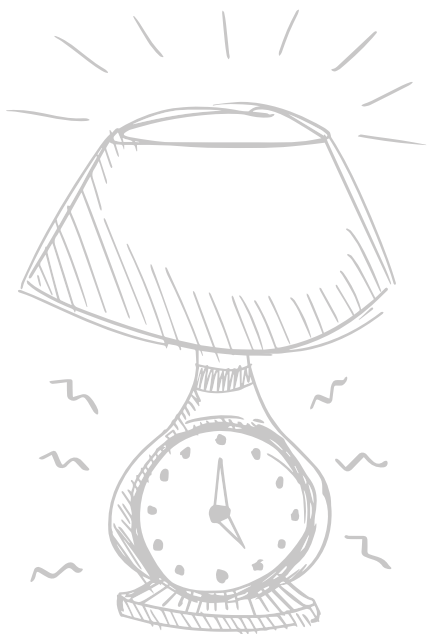
WALK IN THE LIGHT

READ Ephesians 5

... “Wake up, you who are sleeping! Rise from death, and Christ will shine on you.”


EPHESIANS 5:14

Have you ever heard of the wake-up light? If you have a hard time getting up when you're supposed to and have worn out the snooze button of your alarm clock, this might interest you. A wake-up light is a lamp with an alarm clock designed to simulate the sun rising in your darkened room. The artificial dawn created by this device triggers our brain's natural response to sunlight and wakes us up.



Anyone who has ever woken up because someone turned on the light in their room while they were sleeping knows that light can wake us up. We have to intentionally choose darkness if we want to go back to sleep.

Jesus is the light of the world that shines on us. He wakes us up from our sin and wakes us up to a new life—a life of pleasing the One who brought us from darkness into light. The more we stay in His glorious light, the more we bear the fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth in our lives. Who would want to hit the snooze button and miss out on all of that?

- 
4. There are many people in our lives who we know need to be loved. This may be your neighbor or the young beggar on the streets. Pray and let the Holy Spirit help you think of ways you can show love for them. List them down below and see how God's love can flow through you!

How I can show love to those around me

PRAY

Pray to Be Rooted in Love

I pray that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. I pray that your life will be strong in love and be built on love.

EPHESIANS 3:17

It's not always easy to love others. Sometimes, you have to love people who are unlovable. This may be your classmate who continues to bully you. Or maybe you had a fight with your sibling, and it's hard to show love to him or her. Even if we fail to love others sometimes, God's love for us never fails. There are times that we, too, are unlovable; and yet God loves us unconditionally. This is why we love others. Shall we pray?

"Heavenly Father, let me be rooted in Your love for me. Remind me of my identity in Christ. Let me not be affected by my feelings or what's happening around me, but anchor me in Your truth. Help me grasp how wide, long, high, and deep Your love is. The more I reflect on what You have done for me on the cross, the more I realize that I will never be able to understand Your great sacrifice of love. Let Your compassion overflow and move me to love others as You have loved me. In Jesus' name, amen."

WALK STRONG IN CHRIST

READ Ephesians 6

That is why you need to get God's full armor. Then on the day of evil, you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing.

EPHESIANS 6:13

On July 20, 1969, the American astronaut Neil Armstrong stepped out of the lunar module onto the moon's surface. As 450 million listeners tuned in around the world, he uttered these now-famous lines, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Armstrong and his partner Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon for a little over two hours despite the extreme temperatures that get as high as 200 °C (392 °F), as hot as a desert under the scorching heat of the sun, during the day and as low as -200 °C (-328 °F), even colder than ice and snow, during the night. However, in that hostile environment, the astronauts were shielded by their complex A7-L space suits which used a combination of insulation, reflective surfaces, and an ice sublimator to regulate

temperature. If they stayed in their suits, they could fully explore their surroundings.

In Christ, we are protected from the hostile spiritual atmosphere around us. We can walk in His strength. We can stand firm against the enemy's schemes and face the spiritual battle head-on, knowing our fight is not against flesh and blood. Our victory is assured in Christ because He has won the battle for us on the cross.



APPLY

1. Read Ephesians 6:10–20. Identify all the weapons and armor that God has given us for spiritual battle.

2. Draw each part of the armor in the boxes below. Write down in the boxes what each part is designed to overcome. (For example, the shield of faith will help me overcome fear of what will happen in my future.)

Belt of Truth

Protection of Right Living

Good News of Peace

Shield of Faith

Helmet of Salvation

**Sword of the Spirit—
the Teaching of God**



3. Why does Paul's call to prayer come after his discussion of our spiritual battle and armor? How does prayer relate to this battle?

4. What is one thing you will change today as a result of what the Holy Spirit has revealed to you through this study?

PRAY

Pray to Experience the Fullness of God

¹⁸And I pray that you and all God's holy people will have the power to understand the greatness of Christ's love—how wide, how long, how high, and how deep that love is. ¹⁹Christ's love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love. Then you can be filled with everything God has for you.

EPHESIANS 3:18,19

Our battle in this world is not just with things that we see. We have enemies that are unseen and powerful. But that is not a reason for us to be afraid. This is because we have a God who is stronger and more powerful. And the good news is, we can experience victory as we depend on Him. We can be strong in the Lord, as He has given us His full armor. Let us trust God that we can experience Him fully. Shall we pray?

“Heavenly Father, I am amazed by everything You have for me in Christ. Help me grab hold of all You have given me—Your grace, Your peace, Your comfort, and Your strength. Not only do You answer the wants of my soul, You also provide far beyond what I think I need! Teach me to abide in Christ, so that I may be filled with all the fullness of God. Amen!”



EVERY NATION

**Every Nation is a global family of churches
and ministries that exists to honor God
by establishing Christ-centered,
Spirit-empowered, socially responsible churches
and campus ministries in every nation.**

everynation.org/fasting

#ENfast2018