



Fast Forward

**A SEASON OF
PRAYER AND FASTING**

GUIDE BOOK





**WEAVING PASSIONATE, EFFECTIVE PRAYER
THROUGH THE FABRIC OF THE SALVATION ARMY**



Fast Forward

A SEASON OF PRAYER AND FASTING IN THE UK SALVATION ARMY



“Throughout the centuries, God’s people have set aside seasons for prayer and fasting, sometimes as a cry for divine assistance, sometimes in repentance, sometimes to prepare for a great battle, but always as a sign of their desire to dedicate themselves to the Almighty and his purposes. As the territory continues to pursue our Kingdom Ambition to be disciples who make disciples, we recognise that the energy for our outward mission comes, first and foremost, from our inward pursuit of God. Prayer teaches us humility and dependence, just as reading the Scriptures focuses our minds and hearts on eternal, life-giving truth. And fasting - whether it be from food, coffee or a particular leisure activity - is a way of signalling our dedication to God, and our determination to see his Kingdom advance.

“May this opportunity to engage in this season of prayer and fasting spur us on to deeper relationship with God and more active engagement with our world.”

Commissioner John Matear, Territorial Commander





Welcome to **'Fastforward'**! You are about to step out on a 24-hour prayer journey which might just change the world!

Throughout the Bible, God's people have set aside times to fast and pray, and God has taken them so seriously that momentous and miraculous things have happened as a result. As you embark on this prayer journey, you join thousands of us, across The UK Salvation Army, all walking the same journey, and all praying in the same direction: to see God's Kingdom transform our homes, our churches and our communities.

But this is also a personal journey. You and God will do some miles together over the next day or so. Whether you pray for 12 hours or 2, whether you fast food or TV, whether you see struggles or miracles, our prayer for you is that you will have some quality time with the God who walks the road of life with you, and that you will get to know him better.

The 24-7/SA Prayer Network Team





ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is your personal guide to the **Fastforward** journey. It's not a set of directions to be followed to the letter, it's a guide book, giving you ideas of things to see and do along the way, so keep it with you throughout the next 24 hours.

We are journeying together through one particular Bible verse (*2 Chronicles 7:14*), and visiting four themes along the way: identity, humility, repentance and restoration. For Each theme, the booklet gives you some thoughts to inspire you, some creative ways to explore the theme further, some topics to pray for, a written prayer to help you respond to God, and a blank 'reflections' page where you can write down what God has said to you, and what you've learnt through that phase of the journey.

Some of these themes will be explored in your times of prayer and worship together, and some you will unpack in small groups or on your own, but the booklet will be useful in any of those settings, so keep dipping into it, making sure you have a Bible to hand.





Fastforward

HOW WILL IT WORK?

'Fastforward' is a journey you take as a corps, cell group or prayer group. It's that powerful combination of prayer, fasting and unity. It will look different in every place it happens, but there are some key principles which we encourage you to follow.

So, like the best guide-books, let us give you our top tips for making the most of the **Fastforward** journey:

- This is a prayer journey, so set aside some times over the next 24 hours to pray!
- This is a fasting journey, so fast from food if you can. Some people shouldn't stop eating, but there are other things you can fast from (TV, music, the internet or caffeine for example). Read the 'Fasting Tips' on the back pages of this booklet before you begin.
- This is a journey in company, so don't go it alone. Join in with the gathered prayer times, and make space to connect with others around you who are doing **Fastforward**.






'IF MY PEOPLE, WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES AND PRAY, AND SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS, THEN I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, AND I WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN AND WILL HEAL THEIR LAND.'

(2 CHRONICLES 7:14, NIV)





'Bear up the hands that hang down, by faith and prayer; support the tottering knees. Have you any days of fasting and prayer? Storm the throne of grace and persevere therein, and mercy will come down.'

(John Wesley)

'Fasting confirms our utter dependence upon God, by finding in Him a source of sustenance beyond food.'

(Dallas Willard)

'We tend to think of fasting as going without food. But we can fast from anything. ... There's nothing magical about fasting. It's just one way of telling God that your priority at that moment is to be alone with him, sorting out whatever is necessary, and you have cancelled the meal, party, concert, or whatever else you had planned to do, in order to fulfil that priority.'

(J. I. Packer)

'Is fasting ever a bribe to get God to pay more attention to the petitions? No, a thousand times no. It is simply a way to make clear that we sufficiently reverence the amazing opportunity to ask help from the everlasting God, the Creator of the universe, to choose to put everything else aside and concentrate on worshipping, asking forgiveness, and making our requests known-considering His help more important than anything we could do ourselves in our own strength and with our own ideas.'

(Edith Schaeffer)

'Our greatest victories are won on our knees and with empty stomachs.'

(Julio C. Ruibal)



**'IF MY PEOPLE, WHO ARE
CALLED BY MY NAME...'**

(2 CHRONICLES 7:14, NIV)

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FastForward

IDENTITY

KNOWING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S FAMILY

What's in a name? Well, just about everything really. When your friends and family think of you, speak to you or talk about you to others, they identify you by your name.

What's more, your name tells people who you 'belong to'. In many other languages, our word 'surname' is translated 'family name'. Your surname denotes which group of people you are a part of.

As you begin the **Fastforward** prayer journey, take a moment to think about the awe-inspiring fact that we are God's people, called by his name. We have been given God's very own 'surname' (*Romans 8:14–16*), and it marks us out as being people who belong to him – who are part of his family.

And it's the best place from which to pray. If we start out knowing we are beloved children, then we know we're not praying and fasting to win his favour or persuade him to be nice to us. We're praying and fasting because we love to be near him, and because he is so worth it.





Explore

IDENTITY

KNOWING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S FAMILY

Explore this issue of 'bearing the Father's name' a little further by studying some or all of the following Scriptures: *Romans 8:14-16*, *Ephesians 3:14-21*, *1 John 3:1-3*, *Hosea 2:14-23*, *Isaiah 43:1-13*. As you read them, ask the Holy Spirit to give you some new insight into what it means to belong to the family of God.

Get to know the family God has put you in. Take a few minutes to talk to two other people who are doing **Fastforward** alongside you, and ask them what they are hoping and praying for at the moment. Share your own hopes and prayers with them, and commit to praying for them throughout the next 24 hours.

Get to know the Head of the Household. Begin this prayer journey by spending some time in worship and praise. Whether you sing, dance, speak it out or just contemplate in silence, remind yourself of as many of God's attributes and wonders as you possibly can.



Pray



IDENTITY

KNOWING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S FAMILY

- Pray for all those doing '**Fastforward**' today, that God will meet our costly prayer with his lavish love and power.
- Pray for your own church family, that your relationships will grow stronger, and that you will know how to live together as family, work together as body and fight together as army.
- Pray for children and young people in your local community who don't know what it is to be part of a stable, loving family, that God will bring healing to wounds sustained at such a young age. Pray that God will raise up strong, secure adults to offer themselves for adoption and foster parenting.
- Pray for organisations working with children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic, that they will find all their financial and staffing needs fulfilled, even in this time of economic uncertainty.
- Pray for your own family. What do you most need God's Spirit to supply at this time? He is the family counsellor par excellence, so take your needs and concerns direct to him.







Respond

IDENTITY

KNOWING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S FAMILY

Make this declaration out loud, either on your own or together with others:

*Father God, you made me and you know me completely.
You know the pattern of my life and the rhythm of my days;
You know the heights of my hopes and the depths of my fears;
You know the state of my heart;
And through it all, you love me.*



*Jesus, friend and brother, I am made in your likeness.
I was dreamed and designed in the Father's heart before creation came to be.
By your death, my wrong is made right;
By your resurrection, my death becomes life;
And through it all, you love me.*

*Holy Spirit, when you invade my life, all things are possible.
You equip me for my service;
You empower me for my calling;
You propel me into my God-given destiny;
And through it all, you love me.*

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I give you my praise and adoration today,
Because in you I live and breathe and have my being.
Amen.*

(Based on Psalm 139, Gen 1:27, Eph 1:11, 12 2:10 & 3:20, 1 Cor 1:5—9, 2 Cor 5:18, 19, Is 54:10, Acts 17:28)

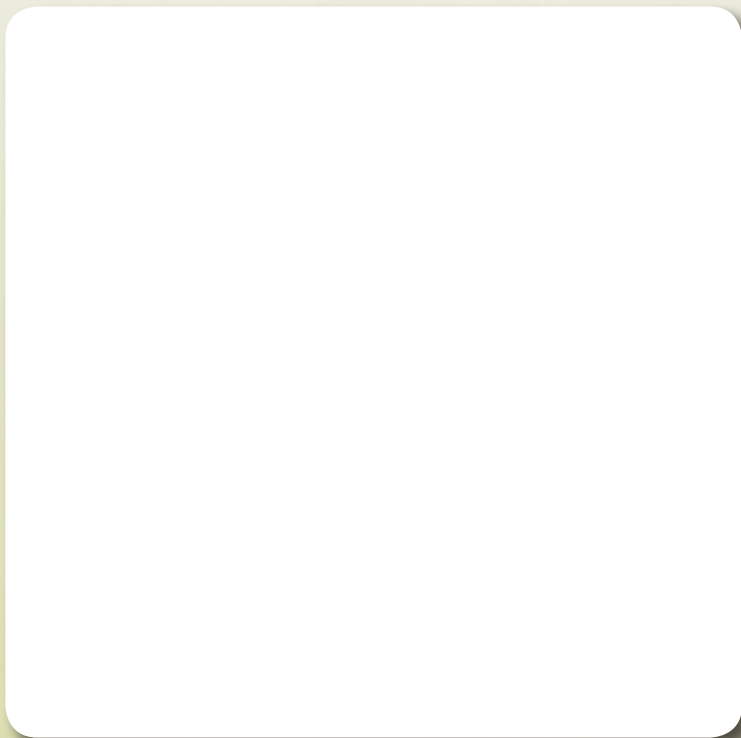


Reflect



IDENTITY

KNOWING OUR PLACE IN GOD'S FAMILY





**‘IF MY PEOPLE ... WILL HUMBLE
THEMSELVES AND PRAY ...’**

(2 CHRONICLES 7:14)





FastForward

HUMILITY

KNOWING GOD'S PLACE IN OUR WORLD

According to the dictionary, humility is 'a modest opinion or estimate of one's own importance, free from vanity, egotism, boastfulness or false pretensions'. In fewer words, humility is being honest with ourselves about who we are.

C. S. Lewis wrote:

'Pride leads to every other vice: It is the complete anti-God state of mind.'

Why such a brutal description? Perhaps because to live in pride is to be the ruler of our own kingdom. It is to sit on the throne of our own lives. Thrones tend to be single seats, not double sofas, so if we're taking up that seat, then God can't have his place there.

Humility begins when we recognize that God is the only one who has the right to sit on the throne of our lives; he made us, he sustains us, and only he loved us enough to die for us. The way to learn humility isn't to spend hours reflecting on how hopelessly flawed we are. It is to spend hours reflecting on how mighty, worthy and wonderful our God is (*Isaiah 40:21—28*).



Explore

HUMILITY

KNOWING GOD'S PLACE IN OUR WORLD

Humility - Three ways down

This prayer exercise can be carried out on your own, or in conversation with someone you trust.

- **We step down from the throne of our lives**
(*Colossians 1:16—18*)

Take some time to consciously hand back to God all those areas of your life which you have been trying to keep control over. Make him Lord of your whole life again today.

- **We lay down our rights and our agendas**
(*Colossians 3:8—15, Romans 8:28*)

Are you fighting for your right to have things a certain way? Now is the moment to lay it all down ... not because God is a cruel tyrant, but because he really does know how to work everything together for your good, if only you will let him have your struggles and stresses.

- **We kneel down in prayer to the God who reigns supreme over all creation** (*Colossians 2:6—10*)

God is not looking for our impressive solutions, he is looking for our humble dependence. Bring to him now everything that feels hopeless in your world, fully knowing that he alone has the power to make the impossible possible.

Pray



HUMILITY

KNOWING GOD'S PLACE IN OUR WORLD

- Pray for our national leaders, that they will know their own fragility, and their need of God's wisdom and guidance, as they make decisions which will affect millions of lives.
- Pray for Christians working in the media and entertainment industries, that they will have courage to speak up for honesty and humility in a world which is so often obsessed by image and ego.
- Pray for those with power and influence in the world of finance and banking, that they will have a right attitude towards wealth: understanding its fragility, refusing to let it master them, and ensuring that it is used for the good of the poor and vulnerable in our world.
- Pray for the members of your local council, that they will have wisdom to know how to use their time in office wisely, and will prize humility and uprightness in all their dealings.
- Thank God for those people around you who exhibit the quality of humility. Pray for them, that they will know how much God loves them.



Respond

HUMILITY

KNOWING GOD'S PLACE IN OUR WORLD

The Responsive Covenant

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you;

Exalted for you, or brought low for you.

Let me be full, let me be empty;

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and gladly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, o glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

You are mine and I am yours.

So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,

Let it be ratified in Heaven.

Amen.

(Taken from The Covenant Service, Methodist Book of Offices)

A Prayer of Dedication

Eternal God, you have declared in Christ the completion of your purpose of love.

May we live by faith, walk in hope, and be renewed in love, until the world reflects your glory, and you are all in all.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

(Taken from The Alternative Service Book 1980)



Reflect



HUMILITY

KNOWING GOD'S PLACE IN OUR WORLD



**‘IF MY PEOPLE ... WILL HUMBLE
THEMSELVES AND PRAY, AND
SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN
FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS ...’**

(2 CHRONICLES 7:14)







FastForward

REPENTANCE

WALKING OUT ON DEATH

This part of our **Fastforward** journey is a bit like one of those washing powder adverts, where a sparkingly white garment is held up against one which is somewhat less dazzling. When we take time to seek the beautiful face of our holy God, then the flaws and stains in our own lives begin to show up.



Any journey towards healing and transformation, whether our own or that of our church, must involve repentance. We have been set free from the power of sin through Christ's death on the cross, but the temptations and frustrations of a fallen world are never too far away, and it is worth making regular repentance 'pitstops', to ensure that none of them have got stuck to us (*Isaiah 1:16—20*).

Repentance isn't about beating ourselves up or going on a guilt-trip; it is simply being honest, before God and one another, about where we have gone wrong. It isn't about apportioning blame or getting weighed down by condemnation; it is about turning: picking ourselves up, receiving God's limitless forgiveness, forgiving one another, and helping each other to live differently.



Explore

REPENTANCE

WALKING OUT ON DEATH

These exercises can be done alone or in a small group. After each one, take time to ask for God's forgiveness, and for his help to live differently. You may also need to ask forgiveness of others.

Invite the spotlight (*Psalms 139:23,24*). Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what he wants you to turn from today, either as individuals or as a church. Take the first one or two things which come to mind, and reflect on practical ways you can turn away from them.

Examine *Romans 12:9—21* in detail, and make an honest list of your successes and failures. Which of the things Paul lists are you or your church doing well at, and which are you not doing so well at?

Often our wounds become our sins. We get hurt, and as a result we respond in an unkind or ungodly way to others. Can you identify areas in your life where you hurt others because you yourself have been hurt? God wants to heal you so you can break out of that cycle once and for all.

Pray



REPENTANCE

WALKING OUT ON DEATH

- There are many in our communities who, having been hurt by their experience of church, have lost their faith. Pray that God will break into their world afresh today, and reassure them of his love, power and presence.

- Our churches are full of fallible human beings, so they are also often weighed down by pain and division. Pray for your own church, asking God to bring healing and reconciliation where there has been hurt and wrongdoing.

- Pray for all those in your local community who are involved in helping people find reconciliation in broken relationships; that God will give them wisdom to know how to handle each individual situation.

- Pray for UN peace-keeping forces, for courage and strength as they seek to bring stability to war-torn nations.

- Pray for The Salvation Army, that God will give us the courage to acknowledge our shortcomings, the humility to seek his forgiveness, and the power to turn and live differently. Pray that he will use us to bring healing, hope and restoration to those whose lives have been blighted by sin and suffering.



Respond

REPENTANCE

WALKING OUT ON DEATH

Prayer of Repentance

(Based on Psalm 51)

*Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love.
We come to you, stained and battle-scarred, in need of your lavish and
limitless grace.
Wash away our wrongdoing, and make us clean again.*

*Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach us wisdom in the
inmost place.*

*Spirit of Truth, Open our eyes to see ourselves as you see us.
Save us from sanctimonious self-righteousness;
Save us from crushing condemnation;
Give us the humility and courage to face what we are, and to believe in
what we can be.*

*Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and grant us a willing spirit to
sustain us.*

*Spirit of Life, touch our sin-hardened souls with your softening grace.
Surprise us with boundless forgiveness;
Astound us with the possibilities of redemption;
Confound our sin-dead deserts with irresistible life.*

*Create in us a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us.
Write your law in our hearts, so that we will be changed from the inside
out.*

*O Lord, open our lips, and our mouths will declare your praise.
Amen.*

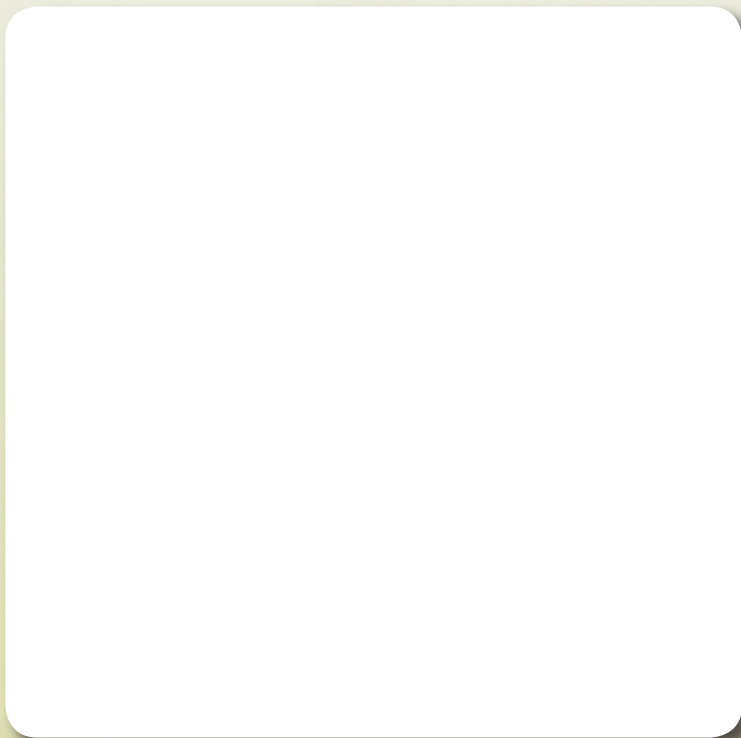


Reflect



REPENTANCE

WALKING OUT ON DEATH





‘... THEN I WILL HEAR FROM
HEAVEN, AND I WILL FORGIVE
THEIR SIN AND WILL HEAL
THEIR LAND.’

(2 CHRONICLES 7:14)



I LOVE YOU



FastForward

RESTORATION WALKING INTO LIFE

God has more hope for our world than we do. He has more hope for our communities, our schools, our hospitals and our workplaces than we do. He has more hope for our churches than we do. He has more hope for us than we do for ourselves.



The verse we've been journeying through is a thunderous wake-up call to God's people, but it is more than that. It isn't a self-help mantra; it is a recipe for transformation. When we are prepared to seek God in a costly, self-sacrificial way, he promises to answer with a seriousness of his own. He promises to heal our land.

In these final hours of our **Fastforward** journey, we invite you to become dreamers. The God who hears, forgives and heals has his ear turned towards you. He is longing to know what you want your world to look like. Amazing though it sounds, it's our hopes and dreams, prayed with passion and commitment, which activate his healing, transforming power (*Matthew 21:21,22*).

He is ready, able and willing to heal, but he won't do it without us, his people, who are called by his name.



Explore

RESTORATION

WALKING INTO LIFE

Write your own version of *Revelation 21*. Read through John's vision of the New Jerusalem, then write a similar description of what you would love your church or local community to look like, using phrases such as: 'Then I saw ...' and 'And there was no more ...'. Then read it out to some of your fellow **Fastforward**-ers.

Place a large map of your local community in the centre of your worship area, and cover it with prayers and dreams. You could write or draw on it, stick prayers to it, or simply stand on or around it, speaking out your hopes and longings for how you'd like God to heal it.

Make some resolutions. **Fastforward** has only been worth it if we move forward more determined to let God use us 'out there' in his world. Ask him to give you one new resolution for the coming weeks – something he wants you to begin to do, to impact the lives of those around you.

Pray



RESTORATION

WALKING INTO LIFE


- Pray that God will raise up ‘dreamers’ in your local community – people who will imagine a better place, and then pray and work to see that dream realised. Pray that God will raise up these dreamers not only in the church, but also in local politics, local business and in every other area of society.
- Pray for those you know, today, who live without hope. Ask God to open their eyes to the possibility that things can change for the better.
- Pray for those leading in your church, for courage to keep expecting great things of God, and for wisdom to know how to follow up on this **Fastforward** journey.
- Pray for those who have journeyed through **Fastforward** with you, that they will know God’s protection and refreshing over the next few days. Pray that they will be encouraged by seeing immediate answers to some of the prayers they’ve prayed in the past 24 hours.
- Pray for The Salvation Army world-wide, that God will weave prayer ever more deeply into the fabric of who we are, and that we will be known as a people of prayer.



Respond

RESTORATION WALKING INTO LIFE


Prayer based on Isaiah 61:1—4



*'The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.'
Lord, we welcome your spirit's power into our lives.
Give us boldness to speak of you,
Give us courage to boast in you,
Give us determination to see your word preached to the ends of the earth.*

*'He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted.'
Lord, we welcome your Spirit's love into our lives.
Use us to bind up the broken,
Use us to swing wide the prison doors,
Use us to bring the wounded and the weary to your banquet of lavish love.*

*'They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated ...'
Lord, we willingly embrace the mission your conquering Son has entrusted to us.
We offer you our own ruined places, to be rebuilt to your design
And we offer you ourselves, body, soul, mind and spirit, That we may take our place in the glorious adventure of infusing your creation with self-denying holiness and death-defying hope.
AMEN!*

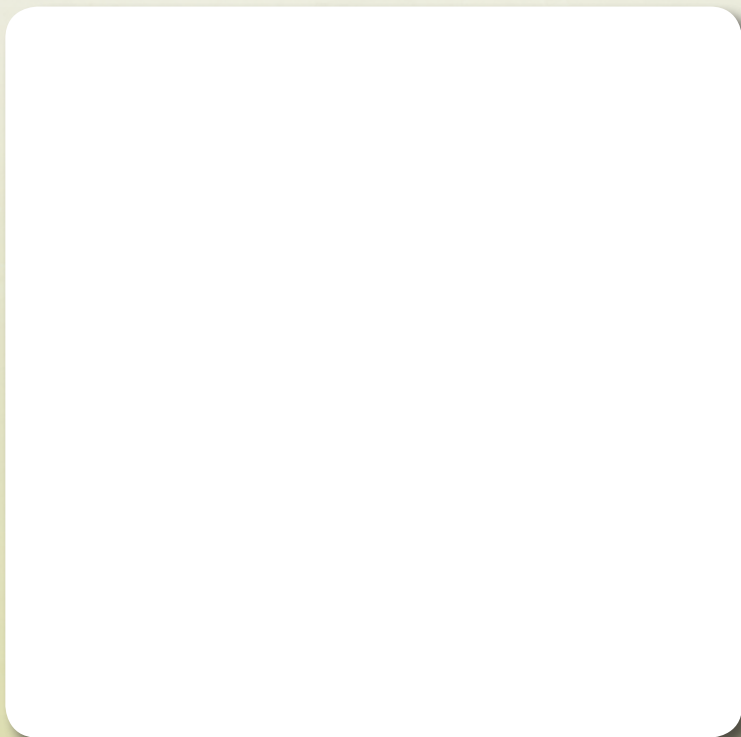




Reflect



RESTORATION
WALKING INTO LIFE





'Suggestions for Fasting and Feasting: Fast from discontent; feast on thankfulness. Fast from worry; feast on trust. Fast from anger; feast on patience. Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others. Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayers. Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness. Fast from discouragement, feast on hope. Fast from media hype, feast on the honesty of the Bible. Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence. Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that undergirds.'

(Anonymous)





FastForward

BOOKS ON PRAYER AND FASTING:

'The Hidden Power of Prayer & Fasting' *by Mahesh Chavda*

'40 Days of Prayer & Fasting' *by Mahesh Chavda*

'Key Principles of Biblical Fasting' (40-minute Bible studies)
by Kay Arthur and Pete Delacy

'A Hunger for God: Desiring God through Fasting & Prayer'
by John Piper

'Everything You Want to Know About Fasting'
by Otto H.F. Buckinger

'The Beginner's Guide to Fasting: Why Should I Fast'
by Elmer L. Towns

'Fasting' *by Derek Prince*

'Shaping History through Prayer & Fasting'
by Lou Engle & Derek Prince

'Fasting Can Change Your Life' *by Jerry Falwell*

'Fasting Changed My Life' *by Andy Anderson*

'The Power of Prayer & Fasting: 21 Days That Can Change Your Life' *by Marilyn Hickey*

'Fasting: What the Bible Teaches' *by Jerry Falwell*

'The Transforming Power of Fasting & Prayer' *by Bill Bright*

'How to Lead a Successful Fasting & Prayer Gathering'
by Bill Bright

'The Power of Prayer & Fasting: God's Gateway to Spiritual Breakthroughs' *by Bill Bright & Ronnie W. Floyd*

'The Adventure of Fasting' *by James Beall*

'The Miracle of Fasting' *by Bill Bragg*



TIPS FOR FASTING FROM FOOD

- **Plan it** - Know when you will start, when you will end, and what you will be fasting. Will you still be drinking coffee or hot chocolate, for example?
- **Maximum Fast time** - The current record for fasting is held by a Chinese guy at 49 days with only water. He didn't look so good. Be realistic and honest. The aim is to set time apart for God, not to see how long it is before the world starts spinning.
- **Don't Plan anything Major** - Food is energy. Without energy you're not going to be able to run any marathons, chase any squirrels or lift copious amounts of shopping.
- **Don't binge when breaking fast** - Our bodies are adaptive machines, but they do so gradually, so going for a mega steak out after a day of fasting is likely to baffle your stomach.
- **Tell the people who need to know** - Just in case anything untoward happens to you, it helps if someone knows you haven't eaten for a while. But fasting is an exercise in humility so declaring your anguish to the world is not biblical.





FastForward

- **Don't torture yourself** - Trying to do the weekly food shopping, or even watching the copious amounts of food adverts on the TV, will both have your stomach sounding like a dinosaur.
- **Stay fresh** - The stomach gives off interesting odours when it's empty, so keep your breath fresh. What's more, people can be mighty irritating when you're hungry, so keep liberally applying grace to prevent your relationships from going sour.
- **Sleep** - You may feel pretty tired while you're fasting, so factor in extra sleep. And anyway, if you don't know your stomach is there, it doesn't matter if it's whinging.
- **Figure out why you are doing it** - Don't get to the end of your fast and still have no idea what the whole point of it was, other than to make the food you now have in front of you that bit more interesting.
- **Pray** - Fasting and prayer go together like Oreos and milk.



 **Fast
Forward**

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