



As is our custom, Bethel will give God the first of this new year by pursuing Him in a focused program of prayer and fasting beginning Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> for a period of 21 consecutive days.

We are asking each Bethelite to pray for at least one hour at home each day during this time. Each Bethelite is also asked to fast in some manner for each of these 21 days. Suggested fasts are listed on the back page of this brochure.

We also recommend that you *increase* your Bible reading during this 21-day period. As we deny the appetite of the carnal man we need to increase the appetite of the spiritual man. Replace natural bread with spiritual bread.

We will conclude this 21-day period of prayer and fasting with a Special Worship Celebration on Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *if you have health issues, please speak with your health care professional before undertaking any extended fasting regimen. This fast is not recommended for children. If you have significant difficulty with this fast or any other fast, you should seek medical attention immediately!*

## eFast

We are also requesting that during these 21 days of dedication to the Lord that we fast from electronic entertainment. We want to get rid of the unnecessary background noise in our lives and tune in to the spiritual world. We want to learn the value of quietness, peace, and stillness. God speaks to us when we are quiet.

This eFast (electronic entertainment fast) includes, but is not limited to:

- *Entertainment DVDs, television, etc.*
- *Electronic video games*
- *Social Media (for entertainment)*

Reading or listening to news reports or using the Internet for work or business purposes is not considered entertainment.

**Note:** Playing Christian music can be of spiritual value. Watching a film with a strong Christian message can also be a benefit. Make sure any music you listen to or any media you watch feeds your spirit rather than just your flesh.

## PRAYER PRINCIPLES

### WHY SHOULD WE PRAY?

- *We pray because God's Word teaches us that we should pray.*
- *We pray because we love God and want to express that love to Him.*
- *We pray to praise and worship God for who He is.*
- *We pray to repent and confess our sins to God.*
- *We pray to listen to God, to have a conversation with Him.*
- *We pray to give thanks to God for what He has done.*
- *We pray to draw closer to God.*
- *We pray to petition God for our needs and the needs of others.*
- *We pray to intercede for others.*
- *We pray against the enemies of God.*
- *We pray for power to resist temptation.*

### HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

- *Pray with faith. (Hebrews 11:6)*
- *Pray with clean hands and a pure heart. (Psalm 24:3-4)*
- *Pray genuine, heart-felt (fervent) prayers, rather than vain repetitions. (Matthew 6:7)*
- *Pray in sincerity. (Matthew 23:14)*
- *Pray persistently. (Luke 18:1)*
- *Endeavor to pray for things according to God's will. (Luke 22:42)*
- *Pray boldly as you come before the throne of grace. (Hebrews 4:16)*
- *Pray with thanksgiving. (Phil. 4:6)*

- *Pray in the name of Jesus. (John 16:26)*

### WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY FOR?

- *Pray for your "relationship" and not just your "remedy" – pray to draw closer to God; don't just pray for "things".*
- *Pray for spiritual wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 1:9)*
- *Pray that you may be able to escape (resist) temptation. (Mark 14:38)*
- *Pray that Christ may be fully "formed in you". (Galatians 4:19)*
- *Pray that you "do no evil" but that you "do that which is honest". (2 Cor. 13:7)*
- *Pray that you may be sanctified by the peace of God. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)*
- *Pray that your whole spirit and soul and body would be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)*
- *Pray that you would allow God to use you for His glory.*
- *Pray that the gospel would go forth and triumph (evangelism). (2. Thess. 3:1)*
- *Pray for the church, that God would bless, protect, and increase it.*
- *Pray for your leaders - both political and spiritual. (1 Timothy 2:2)*
- *Pray for the welfare and needs of your family and loved ones.*
- *Pray for the welfare and needs of your brothers and sisters in Christ.*
- *Pray that all of God's people would minister with holy boldness. (Acts 4:30)*
- *Pray that God would vindicate His people who are suffering. (Luke 18:7)*
- *Pray for the lost. (Romans 10:1)*
- *Pray for your enemies and for those who "despitefully use you". (Luke 6:28)*

## FASTING PRINCIPLES

- You **ARE NOT** trying to force God to do your will. This is not a hunger strike. We are fasting and praying that we may do God's will. We pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- You **ARE NOT** trying to limit caloric intake. This is a fast, not a weight-loss program.

- You **ARE NOT** trying to find ways to make fasting easier. This is deliberate self-denial; it *should* be difficult, it should be a sacrifice.
- You **ARE NOT** trying to just obey a set of dietary rules. This fast should not be an exercise in legalism.
- You **ARE NOT** trying to improve your health or your eating habits. You may or may not experience health benefits from this fast, but the purpose of this fast is spiritual, not physical.
- You **ARE** endeavoring to draw closer to God by building up your spiritual man as you deny the desires of your carnal man.
- You **ARE** engaging in spiritual warfare against powers of darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places.

## TIPS ON FASTING

1. If your job requires physical labor, it may be necessary to adjust your fasting plan accordingly.
2. Keep the fast spiritual. Without spending more time with the Lord in prayer during these 21 days, your fast is of little value. Use this time strategically to add that extra spiritual "umph" to your "triumph!"
3. If you like, keep a prayer and fasting journal during this time. Write down what God speaks to you and how He answers your prayers.
4. Take vitamins. If your health requires it, drink an occasional protein drink or supplement.
5. Drink plenty of water each day.
6. Get sufficient rest and sleep.

## BE SPIRIT-LED

*Be careful not to judge other people in their prayer and fasting practices. Remember, the foods you eat (or do not eat) do not make you more spiritual than your brothers or sisters. It is the voluntary denying of the flesh and *humbling of the spirit* that produces spiritual results.*

# JANUARY 2018 FASTING PROGRAM

## TYPES OF FASTS:

### TOTAL FAST

Eat no food whatsoever. This is the most complete type of fast. It cannot be undertaken for extended periods of time without fluids. Great care and discretion should be used when observing this type of fast. Often this fast is conducted from sunup until sundown or from 6:00 AM until 6:00 PM.

### PARTIAL FAST

Omit one meal or two meals during the day.

### LIQUID FAST

Drink liquids only. No solid foods.

### DANIEL'S FAST

Eat only produce grown from the earth (fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, etc.) No meat, dairy, eggs, or animal products.

### UNPLEASANT FOOD FAST

Eat food that gives nourishment only but provides no pleasant taste or flavor. (Unseasoned oatmeal, unseasoned lentil soup, dry bread, raw vegetables or unseasoned cooked vegetables, etc.)

### SPECIALIZED FAST

This type of fast is often chosen by people who suffer from serious health problems. It involves creating a personalized list of foods to be omitted for a specific period of time. Examples of food types that can be omitted: sugars, sweets of all kinds, dairy products, meats, breads, pastas, etc.

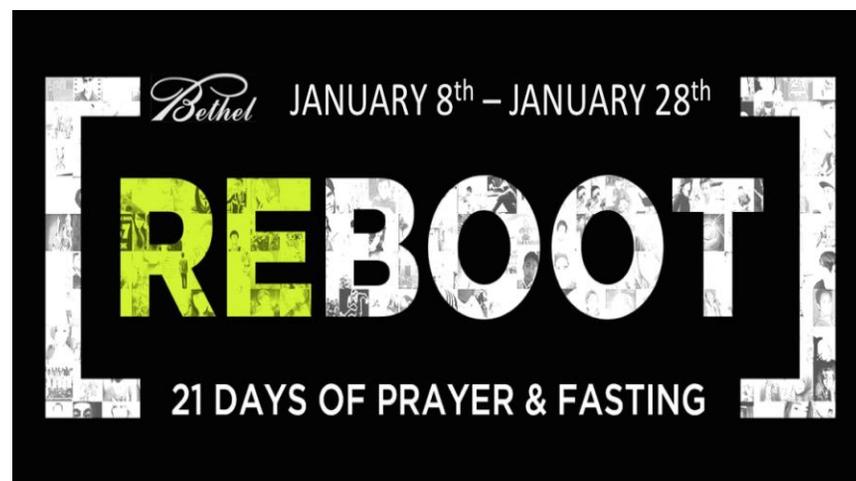
Each person can choose the type of fast(s) for his or her particular situation. You can even do several different types of fasts throughout each week. However, be careful not to choose only those fasts that are "easy" for you. Fasting should be a challenge and it should definitely create within us a keen sense of self-denial and sacrifice.

## AGREE WITH SOMEONE IN PRAYER

*"Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 18:19*

## ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Ephesians 6:12*



“**CALL** unto me,  
and I will  
**ANSWER** thee,  
and **SHOW** thee  
**GREAT** and **MIGHTY** things,  
which thou knowest not.”

**JEREMIAH 33:3**