



*King's Park International Church*

# **THE DISCIPLESHIP PATH**

*fasting guide*



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# THE DISCIPLESHIP PATH

In our current sermon series called “The Discipleship Path,” we are exploring what it means to follow Jesus as disciples. When Jesus called His first disciples, He invited them on a journey, on a path that would transform their lives and, in turn, impact the world forever. Here at King’s Park, we want to embark on this Discipleship Path. It is our mission to know God, grow together, discover purpose and make a difference.

During this study, you will look at what the Bible says throughout the New Testament and discover what it looks like to follow Jesus. This week, we encourage you to take some time for fasting and prayer, using the Scripture as a guide. Throughout this week, you will see that:

*Jesus is inviting you on the Discipleship Path.*

*What you need most in life is to know God.*

*Your life is better in God’s community.*

*You have a role in God’s story.*

*You can change the world.*

This week, let’s fast and pray for our church, cities, schools and personal lives so that we may walk in the fullness of God’s call.

The following guide includes tips for fasting, space to plan your fast and list your prayers and a daily devotional to help you study the Bible along with the various topics.

**Join us for corporate prayer each day:**

- **Prayer Call:** 12:00-12:30 PM | 919-551-8101
- **Prayer Meeting:** 6:30-7:30 PM | King’s Park Sanctuary

# A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO FASTING

## WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is stopping an activity (usually eating) for a period of time to focus more on God, by praying, worshiping and reading the Bible. These activities strengthen our relationship with God.

As children, we should pay attention and listen to our parents when they speak to us. Fasting helps us pay attention and listen to God, because it helps us put aside distractions. We are saying 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 4:1–2**

If you cannot fast from food, you can also fast from other things, like entertainment (TV, video games) or technology. The important thing is to keep your focus away from the things the world offers to spend more time with God.

## WHY FAST?

We all have needs and wants. Needs are things that we cannot live without. Wants are things we would like to have. Sometimes, we focus so much on our needs and wants that we put aside our relationship with God. Fasting helps us focus more on God by setting aside our needs and wants.

*NOTE: Consult a physician, especially if you are pregnant, nursing or taking medication. If your situation does not allow you to do a full fast, consider alternatives. Children, discuss with your parents what fasting could look like for you.*

## BEFORE FASTING

### **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.

### **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.

### **Act.**

If you are 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

### **Focus.**

Set aside time to read God's Word and pray. This guide 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.

### **Pray.**

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

### **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 become 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).

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## AFTER FASTING

### **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.

### **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!

# MY PLAN

## DAY 1

### Fasting Options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- Skip one meal
- Technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 4

### Fasting Options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- Skip one meal
- Technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 2

### Fasting Options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- Skip one meal
- Technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 5

### Fasting Options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- Skip one meal
- Technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 3

### Fasting Options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- Skip one meal
- Technology
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**MY PRAYER PARTNER:** \_\_\_\_\_

*If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. **Matthew 18:19***

## ***I AM THANKFUL TO GOD FOR...***

### **Answered Prayers**

List highlights, answered prayers and lessons learned since January 2022.

## ***IN THE FALL OF 2022, I AM BELIEVING GOD FOR...***

### **Personal Faith Goals**

*(For example, spiritual growth, physical healing, rich generosity, increased faith or specific need)*

### **My Family**

*(For example, your parents and siblings, a restoration of relationship, household salvation)*

### **My Education/Job**

*(For example, excellence, grades, interactions with teachers, promotion, faithfulness in work)*

### **My Ministry**

*(For example, small group growth, salvation of family members/friends/classmates)*

*I AM COMMITTING TO PRAY FOR...*

**Name**

**Request**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**My Church**

*(For example, church leadership, provision, discipleship ministry)*

**My Community**

*(For example, your neighborhood, educational institutions, local government, outreach opportunities)*

**My Nation and the World**

*(For example, elected officials, spiritual revival, economic stability, peace)*



## ***PRAYING FOR KING'S PARK***

Join us as we pray for God's continued empowerment to help people know God, grow together, discover purpose and make a difference. Pray for growth in our congregations, campus ministries, church planters and missionaries.

*Ask of Me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*

**Psalm 2:8**

### **Congregations**

King's Park (RTP/Durham)

King's Park Raleigh

Celebración Cristiana

King's Park Chinese Congregation

### **Every Nation Campus Ministries**

Duke University

Meredith College

North Carolina Central University

North Carolina State University

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

### **Church Planters & Missionaries**

Caitlin Ball (France)

Rollan & Barbara Fisher (Chicago, IL)

Charles & Tiffany Kiefer (France)

Yesupadam Paidipamula (India)

Mike & Myra Watkins (Eastern Europe)

David & Theresa Wiggins (East Asia)

Ross and Abby Williamson (Nepal)

**Read: Mark 1:16-20**

In Mark chapter 1, we see where Jesus calls some of His first disciples (followers). It is a remarkable story that has some important things to see. First, none of the individuals Jesus called were out looking for Him. Simon, Andrew, James and John were all busy with their work as fishermen. It was Jesus who saw them and pursued them.

Second, Jesus' invitation was simple and personal, "Come, follow Me." Here these men were invited to follow Jesus. The invitation was not to follow an ideology, philosophy or set of cultural or political beliefs but to follow a person.

Third, these men were called to follow Jesus collectively. Even though these men were individuals and Jesus saw each of them individually, His call to them was not individualistic; rather, it was a collective call into a community.

Finally, Jesus invited these men on a journey that would transform their very identity. They were fishermen, but Jesus' purpose was to make them "fishers of men." These men didn't hesitate to leave behind their livelihood, family and reputation in order to follow Jesus.

From this text, we see that when Jesus calls you to follow Him, He is extending an invitation to embark on this wonderful path of discipleship. On the Discipleship Path, you will experience a relationship with Jesus, community with others and a transformation that changes both you and the world around you.

Today Jesus' invitation is still open. He welcomes you to join Him on this walk through life where you can know God, grow together, discover purpose and make a difference. Just like the first disciples "left their nets and followed Him," you too must decide to leave behind anything and everything in order to follow Jesus on the Discipleship Path. The question is, will you?

**APPLY**

1. What of Jesus' invitation to His followers in Mark 1:16-20 stands out to you?

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2. How can you start (or continue) to walk with Jesus on the Discipleship Path this week?

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**MEMORIZE**

*And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.*

**Mark 1:17-18**

**PRAY**

*God, thank You for pursuing me even when I wasn't looking for You and for calling me to walk on the Discipleship Path with You and others. Help me respond to Your invitation so I may know You more. Receive my life and transform me by Your grace in Jesus and power in the Holy Spirit so that I may impact the world for Your glory and the good of others. Thank You for the opportunity in Christ to know You, grow together with others, discover Your purpose for my life and make a difference. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Read: John 17:1-3**

In the final hours before Jesus is arrested and later crucified, John's Gospel account gives us some of the most personal interactions and prayers ever recorded by one of Jesus' followers. During His prayer in John 17, Jesus speaks about the time coming where He will be glorified, which is a way that Jesus spoke about His crucifixion.

By the world's standards, there was nothing glorifying in the act of crucifixion. Jesus knew that by being obedient—even to the point of death on a cross—His life would be the perfect sacrifice that pleased and brought glory to God. He goes on to speak about how God gave Him authority over all people to grant eternal life.

This is an amazing claim that would later be verified by Jesus' resurrection three days after His death. The question still remains, what is eternal life? Many of us associate eternal life with the concept of heaven. Jesus gives us a clear definition of what He means by eternal life. For Jesus, eternal life is simply knowing God in the present and also in the future.

Many of us look for the fullness of life in all sorts of places: career, marital or family status, economic affluence and all it provides, educational prestige or even defining life on our own terms as we see fit. By this standard, the things we need most in life are the right job, spouse, identity or opportunity.

According to the Scriptures, our greatest need isn't physical, emotional or even mental; our greatest need is spiritual. We do not know God. In Jesus, we can know God, and this isn't mere head knowledge like from reading a book. It is an intimate knowledge like knowing a friend.

Knowing God through Jesus brings about real transformation where we experience the fullness of life because our broken relationship with the Author of Life has been restored. The Discipleship Path begins when we know God through Jesus and journey with Him to grow in our relationship everyday as we practice the way of Jesus: reading the Bible, praying, living in community with other followers and loving others to see them know God too.

**APPLY**

1. What do you consider your greatest need in life? Do you see Jesus' invitation to "know God" as provision for your greatest need, and have you responded to Him?

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2. Why do spiritual disciplines (Bible, prayer, fasting, community, outreach) help you to know God? Which of these could you begin or improve to know God more?

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**MEMORIZE**

*And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

**John 17:3**

**PRAY**

*Father, thank You for helping me see that my greatest need in life is knowing You. I believe that You not only reveal this need to me, but You also make provision for me through Jesus. Thank You that I can know You today and every day hereafter because of the life, death and resurrection of Your Son. By the power of the Holy Spirit, help me to continue along the Discipleship Path; to read Your Word, talk with and listen to You in prayer, live in community and love others like Jesus. Help me to know You more and more each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### Read Acts 2:40-47

In Acts chapter 2, we see the birth of the New Testament church on the Jewish celebration of Pentecost. Just weeks after Jesus rose from the dead and days after He ascended to Heaven, on this day, God chose to pour out His Holy Spirit upon 120 men and women, disciples of Jesus Christ. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit made it possible for these disciples, and all who would come after them, to be spiritually connected as God's family, displaying the glory and power of God as they continue Jesus' mission together.

We see God's community is vital for the church from the start of their path as disciples of Jesus Christ. God, Himself is an eternal loving community—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and desires for us to participate in His community to which we belong when we trust in Him.

In this passage, we find several benefits of being devoted or committed to God's community:

- We can remain pure, holy and uncorrupted by the evil and immorality of the world
- We can know God more as we pray, worship and learn the Bible together
- We can obtain inspiration to reflect and be thankful for God's goodness

- We can find our need for emotional and practical support satisfied
- We can share meals and times of mourning and rejoicing
- We can advance the Gospel and see the lost and broken come to know Jesus.

On the Discipleship Path, we find that God's community is the right environment for each and every one of His sons and daughters to survive and thrive. An orange or mango tree doesn't survive or thrive in a subterranean environment but will survive and thrive in a tropical environment because it's the right environment for growth. God enables us by the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit to grow together with our fellow Christ-followers. Your life is better in God's community.

**APPLY**

1. What benefit of God’s community have you experienced or would you like to experience?

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2. How can you start, restart or continue to participate in God’s community as conveyed here in the book of Acts?

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**MEMORIZE**

*They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

**Acts 2:42**

**PRAY**

*Heavenly Father, I thank You for the Holy Spirit living in my heart that has joined me to Your community through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. You made me for community and redeemed me so spiritual family can be one of the primary blessings I enjoy on the Discipleship Path. Thank You for dispensing in my life the benefits of belonging, purity, friendship and love through spiritual community. Help me to be devoted to Jesus and His body of believers as we seek to know God, grow together, discover purpose and make a difference. My life is better in Your community. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

**Read: Ephesians 4:11-16**

The apostle Paul summarizes God's plan of salvation through Christ in his letter to the Ephesian church in chapters 1-3. He writes about being united as one body under one Lord and emphasizes walking in humility towards each other. This virtue is totally counterculture to the pagan society in their time, where pride and the pursuit of power, wealth and status were highly valued. As believers, we need humility to walk in grace and in the gifts God gives us for our calling. Do you know God's calling in your life? Have you discovered your role in God's story?

The Bible teaches that God had planned for the saints to be equipped by apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. These offices are gifts to us so we can know our role in God's story and be ready for it. As followers of Christ, we each have been made masterfully to serve God, His people and those who don't yet know Him. These "works of ministry" have been prepared by God in advance for us to do. When we discover God's purpose and find our place in God's plan, we will have great joy and fulfillment. This role is a place of experiencing Christ's power, provision and permission.

Knowing our role in God's story and living it out also affects the body of Christ as a whole. Paul writes that as we get equipped, the result will be unity in the faith and maturity.



**APPLY**

1. How connected are you to the church? Have you considered being part of a Life Group or participating in Growth Track or serving on the Go Team?

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2. How has the Lord been leading you to use your time, treasures and talents these past months?

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**MEMORIZE**

*And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...*

**Ephesians 4:11-12**

**PRAY**

*Heavenly Father, I believe that You have plans to prosper me and not to harm me; plans to give me a hope and a future. Give me the faith to trust in You and help me discover my role in Your grand plan. You said that You know my days before one of them came to be. Please grant me a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that I can know You better and know the hope to which You have called me. Give me also the courage to take a step toward following Your lead. Help me be faithful and fruitful one day at a time. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Read: Matthew 28:18-20**

The Gospel starts and ends with Jesus. When Jesus commissioned His disciples to change the world, He first gave them authority to do so. His resurrection confirmed His absolute authority in heaven and on earth.

No matter where the disciples went, Jesus' authority went with them. Only after Jesus has established this, does He give them their command: Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations. Just as He called them to be His disciples, they were to draw others to the same Discipleship Path.

While Jesus gave them this massive mission, they could walk in full confidence because of the authority He had given them. If the disciples looked at what was before them, their task looked overwhelming, perhaps even impossible.

However, they had no reason to fear or drawback, if they remembered what, or rather Who was behind them. Jesus also provided one more promise to His disciples at the end of His commission: He would be beside them. "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

We have the same authority backing us up to go to all the nations and make disciples, to change the world one disciple at a time. The path is clear, the provision is clear and His presence is clear. Let's go!

**APPLY**

1. How can focusing on Jesus' authority help set you in motion to make disciples?

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2. Where could your "Go" start?

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**MEMORIZE**

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ..."*

**Matthew 28:18-19a**

**PRAY**

*Father, we thank You that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. Because of that, we declare that we have everything we need to obey Jesus' command to go and make disciples of all nations. We pray for Your guidance as to where to go and whom to make disciples. Thank You that as we go, Your presence is with us to change the world one disciple at a time. In Jesus' name, Amen.*







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