



# 21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

February 4, 2019–February 24, 2019

[www.covenant.cc](http://www.covenant.cc)



# DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING

COMMUNITY

COUNTRY

COVENANT

FAMILY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A NOTE FROM PASTOR SHEETS	2
LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER	3
PATTERN FOR PRAYER	4
WHY DO WE FAST?	5
TYPES OF FASTS	6
HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL	7
21 DAYS OF PRAYER DEVOTIONAL	8

Hello Covenant Church!

I'm excited to welcome you to our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting. Thank you for picking up this devotional guide and agreeing to participate in this significant event in the life of our church. You will be glad that you embarked on this journey! I'm sure of it!

Personally, I look forward to this time of fasting every year. Well actually, that is not exactly true. I always benefit from fasting and it's exciting to talk about, but there are always times, mostly at the beginning of the fast, when I'm not getting to eat food I would typically choose, that I wonder why I had lost my mind and agreed to do it. Then, after several days, the benefits kick in! I start feeling more clear-headed and I start hearing from the Holy Spirit more regularly and clearly.

I've discovered that there is never a convenient time to fast. I've had to skip great meals on ministry trips and birthday cake at parties. I've had to say NO to a lot of things, but I have NEVER regretted doing it. I think that's why I really do look forward to what God is going to do in me during this time of fasting. (If you've never tried it, let me assure you that you will not die...you can do it!)

I also love that we are focusing on prayer. Nothing is more powerful than seeking God through prayer. When I spend time each morning and expect God to meet me in prayer, He does. He reveals things that I did not know, never would have thought of, and invites me to draw closer to Him. This 21 Day project will bring intentionality to all of our prayer lives. I also love that we will all be focusing on the same things each day in prayer.

This devotional book will give us a scripture each day. Friends, God speaks through His Word and I expect Him to speak to each of us as we open our Bibles and seek his wisdom and guidance. Begin each day by saying, "Lord as I open your word, speak to me through these verses of scripture. Teach me and lead me in ways that will bring greater understanding to me and greater glory to you today."

Finally, let me thank the members of our Prayer Team, Staff Team, and Pastor's Advisory Team who have worked hard to make this three week period the very best experience for all of us. I believe that through these efforts, great things are in store!

*Branson*

Pastor Branson

## LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER

How do we make prayer a part of our everyday life? We can learn from three things that Jesus did...

*Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed. (Mark 1:35)*

### **A CERTAIN TIME:**

Jesus got up very early in the morning to spend time with His Heavenly Father. In order for prayer to be a regular part of our day, we should do the same. Make a daily appointment with God and keep it.

### **A CERTAIN PLACE:**

Jesus had a prayer place. Your prayer place needs to be an undistracted environment where you can pray out loud and perhaps have some worship music playing in the background.

### **A CERTAIN PLAN:**

Go into your prayer time with a plan. If it changes, that's fine. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. We call it the Lord's Prayer. Read Matthew 6:9-13.

## A PATTERN FOR PRAYER:

Many Christians often use a simple acrostic as a guide to prayer: **A.C.T.S.** —each of the letters in the acrostic stands for one of the key elements of prayer:

# A

### **Adoration:**

- Give God praise and honor for who He is as Lord over all.
- (Example: “We adore you God, because You are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords”, “You are mighty and powerful, all-knowing and all-seeing”, “You are \_\_\_\_\_”)

# C

### **Confession:**

- Honestly deal with the sin in your prayer life. Honestly be specific about the sins in your life. (Example: “Father, I confess I have not been respectful to \_\_\_\_\_”; “Jesus, I am sorry for listening to gossip about \_\_\_\_\_”, etc.)

# T

### **Thanksgiving:**

- Verbalize what you’re grateful for in your life and in the world around you.
- Be specific on thanking God for what He has done for you. (Example: “Father, thank You for keeping us safe as we traveled to and from \_\_\_\_\_”; “Jesus, thank you for blessing us with \_\_\_\_\_”).

# S

### **Supplication:**

- Pray for the needs of others and yourself.

## WHY DO WE FAST?

Fasting is a temporary renunciation of something that is, in itself, good in order to intensify our expression of need for something greater — namely, God and his work in our lives.

When we fast, we are denying ourselves things we love for something we love even more (God). Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating food for a spiritual purpose; it hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out.

Fasting is a way of saying, with our stomach and our whole body how much we need and want and trust Jesus. It is a way of saying that we are not going to be enslaved by food as the source of our satisfaction. We will use the renunciation of food from time to time to express that Jesus is better than food. Jesus is more needful than food. Remember, your personal fast should present a level of challenge, **but it is very important to know your body, your options, and, most importantly, to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.**

Food is good. Let there be no mistake about this. It is a gift of God and we glorify God with it in two ways. We feast on it with gratitude for God’s goodness and we forfeit food out of hunger for God Himself.

### **Before you begin, Ask yourself these questions:**

1. Am I confident this desire is from God?
2. Pray and ask the Lord what type of fast you should partake in.
3. Are my motives right? Is there hidden desire to impress others?
4. What are my spiritual objectives? (personal sanctification, consecration, interceding for special burdens, guidance, divine intervention, healing, unsaved loved ones, revival...) Be specific and write them down.

## TYPES OF FASTS:

**The Normal Fast:** Eliminating solid foods, but drinking only water or liquids for a period of time.

**The Daniel Fast:** Intaking only vegetables and drinking liquids for a period of time.

### Example of foods to eat:

**Fruit:** fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned

**Vegetables:** fresh, frozen, juiced, or canned

**Nuts & seeds:** nut butters are also included (ex: almond butter - without sugar)

**Legumes:** (canned or dried): black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, pinto beans, and split peas.

**Beverages:** water and juices (with no sugars added)

**Other:** unsweetened almond milk, rice milk, soy milk, herbs, spices, salt, pepper

**The Partial Fast:** Fasting one or two meals a day for a period of time (May be especially suitable for those with medical conditions or children who desire to participate etc.)

## HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

**The 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting will start on Monday, February 4, 2019 through Sunday, February 24, 2019.**

Participate online or person at the prayer sessions held Monday-Friday in the Worship Center.

We will NOT meet on Sat/Sun.

### Format for Prayer time:

**Time:** 6:30-7:15 a.m.

6:30-6:45 a.m. devotion and music

6:45- 7:10 a.m. personal prayer time using 21 Day Prayer Booklet

7:10-7:15 a.m. communion and closing prayer

**Location:** Covenant Church 4015 Corey Road, Winterville, NC 28590 Building A or online at [www.covenant.cc](http://www.covenant.cc).

Use the notes section to take notes during the speaker's introduction and to write down anything that the Lord speaks to you. Use the scripture of the day as prayer prompts for the time of personal prayer.

Review the journal entries weekly, watching for themes of what God is saying specifically to you.

Parents, since we have not included kid-specific content, we encourage you to review the guide before sitting down with your kids and praying with them. This is a great opportunity to build the joy of talking regularly with God into the rhythm of your family life.



*21 Days of Prayer and Fasting*  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Daniel 10

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

This passage is a source for the idea of a 21-day fast. As you set apart these three weeks to seek God, know that God has already heard your prayer. He is already at work on your behalf. What specific clarity of vision are you seeking from God during this time? Write down your prayer so you can reflect on it at the end of the 21 days. Spend time praying for God to speak to you and give you strength.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for the "crisis of brokenness" that is affecting our culture, that is, the lonely, the overwhelmed, the vulnerable, and the empty. Pray specifically that we as a church can effectively tackle this very important issue in meaningful ways in our community.

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*21 Days of Prayer and Fasting*  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**

I Chronicles 21:28-27

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

During this fast, build an "altar" and lay on it a sacrifice that honors God. It will cost your convenience and your comfort, and it will also take some serious willpower and commitment. What will your sacrifice be during this fast? Make sure it's a sacrifice that will cost you something. Make your commitment in writing and share it with a friend who will hold you accountable to your commitment. Pray for God to show you what he wants you to sacrifice.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for the workplace. Pray for those who are seeking jobs to find employment. Pray for those who have jobs. Pray they have peace, a healthy work/life balance. Pray they would represent Jesus well in their workplace. Pray for boldness, favor and courage in their job. Pray for people who are not working to desire employment.

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21 Days of Prayer and Fasting  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**  
Psalm 100

**PRAYER PROMPT:**  
This psalm talks about entering God’s presence with thankfulness, gladness, joy, and praise in your heart. If you’ve become focused on the physical hardships you’re facing or the burdens you’re bringing to God in prayer, then spend today just being joyful in the Lord. Write down some things that bring you joy today. Sing a song of praise to him. Pray that God will stir an urgency to press in and see what God has for you beyond His gates.

**TODAY’S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**  
Today we are praying for our first responders, people who work in the hospital, law enforcement, sanitation workers, mail carriers. Pray they find wholeness through Jesus and for confidence in their next steps of life.

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21 Days of Prayer and Fasting  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**  
Romans 12

**PRAYER PROMPT:**  
This is a great time to explore how you can present your body as a “living sacrifice” to God. This passage starts with that challenge and offers many ways to express it. In what ways has your fast been helping you experience true worship in new ways? Pray today and ask God to continue to reveal his will for you during this time of sacrifice and worship.

**TODAY’S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**  
Today we are praying for our relationships and friendships. Pray they would be full of encouragement, growth, and strong communication. Pray for your friends by name and any concerns you may have for them.

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21 Days of Prayer and Fasting  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Luke 4

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Forty days of nothing? Not hardly. Even though Jesus fasted for forty days, he clearly came out stronger than ever based on the events following it. How is your fast strengthening you? Do you feel like you're floundering? Maybe you're not experiencing the outcomes you expected. Ask God to lead you into the same kind of preparation, power, and purpose that Jesus gained from His time of fasting.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for our community. Pray for life change within our community. Pray for those who are broken (ex. addictions, negative thought patterns) to find peace and be healed in Jesus' Name. Pray for friends and family who have experienced tragedy. Pray they find peace and comfort in this time of grief. Pray for healing in Jesus name for those who are sick.

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21 Days of Prayer and Fasting  
COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Matthew 6:5-18

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Isn't fasting supposed to be a secret? You may have started this journey with a group that is fasting along with you. Many fasts in the Bible were corporate fasts called by authority figures for a whole group to participate in together. Reflect on the heart of what Jesus is saying in this passage. What has been the motive behind any conversations you've had about fasting? Is it to encourage others or receive support? Is there some secret wish that you have to be seen as holy or spiritual? Only two people know the answer to those questions—you and God. Pray today asking God to uncover your motives for fasting and ask for ways you can seek the encouragement you need without clouding your heart with pride.

**Today's church-wide prayer focus:**

Pray for unity among the churches in our Community. Pray for a desire to come together to reach our community for Christ. Pray the churches in our community would represent Jesus well and would be known by their love.

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COMMUNITY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Daniel 3

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

This is one of the most dazzling stories in the Bible. You can surely relate to the situation these three young men faced—when facts fly in the face of truth. The facts were: they had broken the law; the punishment was death; Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful man in the world; the fire was hot enough to kill a nearby guard; there were plenty more guards to throw them in; and they were either going to bow or burn. Period. But the truth opposed those facts, and truth was what the three men stood upon. The truth was that either their God was going to deliver them or they would willingly die in his service. The truth is that the Son of God walked with them through the flames. What facts are you facing that defy God’s truth? Take the facts to God in prayer today and believe with boldness that your God will be with you in the fire.

**Today’s church-wide prayer focus:**

Today we are praying for our ministry partners here in Greenville and Beaufort County; Building Hope, Third Street Educational Center, Restore One, Community CC, Refugee Ministry, 1209 Breakfast, Carolina Pregnancy, God’s Love, FCA, Young Life, Sportworks, Hope of Glory, Restore One, Pray for God to multiply our efforts to impact our surrounding area for Him.

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COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

2 Corinthians 1

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Food is a source of comfort for many. Reflect on how much your thoughts have been overtaken with craving certain foods, missing the things you’re fasting from, or even how much weight you could lose. Is it often? If it were alcohol or a harmful drug, would you consider yourself addicted if you were this consumed with your desire for them? For many, this fast can begin an awareness of a harmful place food may have in your life. It can reveal an addiction. Pray that the God of compassion and all comfort will become your primary source of comfort. Ask him to use this experience with suffering to remove anything in your life that has taken the Holy Spirit’s place as your Comforter.

**TODAY’S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for peace and reconciliation in our country . Pray that even in the midst of brokenness, there is a sense of peace and love for others that surpasses all understanding. Pray for anyone you may need to be reconciled with.

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# COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Daniel 1

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Nothing but vegetables and water. And not just for three weeks, but more likely for the duration of their training in Babylon! This response from these four young men didn't come from a fear of getting caught. It came from a devotion to God's commands already formed in them before being taken from their homeland. During this fast—whether you're doing a "Daniel Fast" or a total fast—you'll have many opportunities to deviate from your commitment, especially if you're fasting alone or if no one will find out. Pray that God will give you the resolve and courage to stick to the standards you've set and honor him no matter what.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for all of the women, men, girls, and boys affected by human trafficking, which has become increasingly prevalent in our country and around the world. Pray for healing, restoration, and peace. Pray for Restore One who is a local ministry seeking to help those affected by human trafficking.

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# COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalms 51

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

If you're fasting with a group, take time to reflect together and celebrate what God has begun. If you've been fasting alone, be sure to write down your experiences. Even though you may feel like you're in a groove now, for many this week will be harder than the others. Ask God to search you and begin to shine a light on all the dark corners of your heart. Ask him to use this experience to refine you and cleanse you.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for stress relief. Pray that people would turn to God in times of stress instead of other things. Pray that people would begin to have a hunger for God and His Word. What stress do you need to give to Jesus today?

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# COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalm 27

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

The title of today’s reading is “A Psalm of Fearless Trust in God.” It talks about seeking one thing. During this time of seeking, it’s easy to focus on seeking things from God instead of just seeking God—to seek His hand and not His face. Think of the difference between approaching a king to kiss his hand and approaching a loving father to kiss his face. God is both our King and Father. He is capable of meeting your needs and answering your prayers. But He also loves you more deeply than you can ever know. When you seek His face, you end up in a much closer posture toward him. Pray today that you will seek God’s face and get closer to Him than you ever have before.

**TODAY’S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for the CHURCH in our country and world. Pray the CHURCH can continue to make an impact by representing the hands and feet of Jesus. Pray for our international ministry partners in Greece, Ethiopia, Lebanon, India, Syria and the Syrian Refugees. Pray for courage, provision and open hearts to the gospel.

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# COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Joel 2:12-32

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Rend (tear) your hearts instead. You can finish strong by making sure you are weeping and mourning and “tearing your heart” open wide to allow God’s power and presence to sweep across the landscape of your life. Tell God today that you are baring your heart before His mercy, compassion, and unfailing love. Ask Him to give you the courage to join His advancing army. Ask Him to open your eyes to dreams and visions.

**TODAY’S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for our nation. Pray for healing, unity, and wholeness throughout our nation. Pray that our nation would be a nation under God and would seek to follow His ways and His Word. Pray for revival in our nation. Pray for truth to prevail in our nation.

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COUNTRY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalm 84

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Do your heart and flesh feel faint? As this time in your fast, think of the marvelous joy of spending this one day in his courts. Praise Him for the ways you are growing and seeking Him more. No matter where you are, read this psalm out loud today as your prayer to God. Personalize it or add to it. Sing it loudly or just whisper.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for our government. Pray for the leaders in our local, state, and national government. (examples: Pray for wisdom and safety of our President and Vice President; Pray for the Congress and Senate; pray for the Judicial system; Universities, School systems, our Military. Pray that the Holy Spirit pours out over our government leaders; pray that God raises godly leadership (Ps. 75:7); repentance as a nation that we have turned from God, that we can once again become a Christian nation).

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COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

James 1

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

This prompt has many convicting challenges—one being for you to match your faith with action. Don't just contemplate God's Word; do what it says. You are half way through your fast. Reflect on whether your fast would be characterized more by listening or doing. Ask God for wisdom about where He wants to lead you during this time.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for the year of 2019. Ask God to use you for His glory, and pray for wisdom and direction. Pray we as a church would be diligent, wise, bold and courageous as we seek to follow Jesus and make Him famous. Pray we would be a church who would be willing to sacrifice for the cause of Christ because He sacrificed everything for us.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Isaiah 58

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

This is a message from God to His people who were frustrated with his lack of response to their fasting. It's easy to confuse fasting with a hunger strike to get God to do what you want. But in this chapter, God describes what HE wants. Pray that God will use your experience with hunger and discomfort to permanently alter how you see those in the world who are lost and needy. Pray that God will empty you of all that is YOU and fill you with all that is HIM.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for our children. Pray for them as they endure growing up in a culture that doesn't know Jesus. Pray that we can help them grow up "never knowing a day without Jesus" and show the love of Christ wherever they go. Pray for them to be bold and to step up and serve within the church and the community. Pray that weekly Children's and Student Ministry gatherings will attract, inspire, and disciple students.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Matthew 5:1-14

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Blessed are those who hunger... If you can relate to that, spend time meditating on this passage called the Beatitudes, or Blessings. Make a point today to count your blessings. Keep a journal with you all day to write down the blessings that God brings to your mind. Pray to thank him for the blessings, even the ones that come as a result of enduring hardships or trials.

**Today's church-wide prayer focus:**

Today we are praying for marriages in our church family. Pray for unity in marriages and restoration in those marriages that may be going through difficulties. Pray for your spouse or future spouse. Pray for single people who desire to be married. Pray for those struggling with their sexuality.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Ezekiel 47:1-12

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

No matter how deep you are now, wade in deeper still. Don't worry about what's going to get wet. Don't stop at the point where you can keep your feet underneath you. Get swept away. What are you holding on to? What are your hesitations to living a more Spirit-led life of faith? What illusion of control are you clinging to? Go all-in. Pray today that this fast will be just the beginning of a deeper relationship with God. Pray that He will continue to beckon you to dive in and let Him take complete control of your life.

**Today's church-wide prayer focus:**

Today we are praying for finances. Pray for guidance and wisdom when it comes to your finances, so that they are being used according to God's will. Pray for courage to trust God with your finances. Pray for you and others to have generous hearts towards God's people and His work. Pray for revelation in the area of your finances. Pray for Covenant to be wise stewards with the resources God has entrusted to them.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalms 119

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

This longest psalm in the Bible is primarily about a passion for God's Word. These 21 days you've set apart hopefully have been much richer by combining Bible reading with your fasting and prayer. You may want to make plans to start a reading plan that takes you all the way through the Bible. How would you describe your passion for God's Word at this moment? Pray today that God will increase that fire in your heart during this time.

**Today's church-wide prayer focus:**

Today we are praying for Covenant Church. We are also praying for the United Methodist Denomination and the upcoming General Conference (General Conference dates: February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, Missouri). Pray that our leaders will be bold and stand firm in upholding the authority of scripture. Pray that leaders will also develop a plan for a positive and faithful future, committing to the authority of scripture and the Lordship of Jesus Christ and unity among believers.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

1 Peter 2

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

You are chosen, holy, set apart, a royal priest—you are a child of God! You may be in need of an anchor right now. Set Christ as your cornerstone today. Write down the ways He has brought you from darkness into light. Spend time in prayer today thanking God for beginning a work in you, with His Son set as the foundation for Him to build upon.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Today we are praying for our staff, elders, and church leaders. Pray specifically for guidance, strength, and for their families. Pray for God to give the leadership of our church unique, creative strategies to deliver His heart for us. Pray that Branson, our staff and leadership teams will not make any mistakes or take any wrong turns.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Mark 14:1-26

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Broken and poured out. You see those words in both the story of the woman and the last supper. Since bread and wine are likely not options for you to remember Jesus during these 21 days, do what the woman did. Do what Jesus did. Live your life "broken and poured out" in remembrance of what He has done for you. How can your life be a living memorial to Christ? Talk to God about things in your life that need to be broken and poured out like that vase of perfume.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray for continued clarity of God's vision for us and for unity as a church. Pray that Covenant would be filled with people who seek out the lost and the lonely and LOVE them into God's family. Pray we would never be ashamed of scripture and would honor them as God's Word given to the church to usher us into salvation.

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# COVENANT FAMILY

**SCRIPTURE:**

Zechariah 7

**PRAYER PROMPT:**

Are you considering continuing your fast or maybe beginning new habits of regular fasting? In this chapter people are wondering if they should continue the fasting calendar they had kept and the Lord answers through Zechariah. Since Moses' time, God instituted a whole calendar of fasts and feasts. Both were designed to draw His people closer to Him. If drawing closer to God is your goal every day, both times of fasting and feasting can be holy to the Lord. Take time to allow God to speak to you about your fasting experience. Ask God to help you reflect on the ways your fast has softened your heart and influenced you to treat others differently.

**TODAY'S CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER FOCUS:**

Pray we would be a church who isn't afraid to step into the world's mess with the truth in love. Pray that each person who comes thru the doors of our church is changed by the story of Jesus and His love for each one of us. Pray that we as church are obedient and make God famous wherever we go.

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