



WEEK OF PRAYER & FASTING

FAITH

MONDAY 27TH JUNE
TO
FRIDAY 1ST JULY

FASTING

As part of the 'Sermon on the Mount' in Matthew 6, Jesus speaks about the importance & expectation of both prayer & fasting:

"And when you pray..." (v5 & 7) "And when you fast..." (v16)

Prayer & fasting are vital disciplines & powerful expressions of the Christian life. For many, prayer feels like hard work & fasting a challenging undertaking. Yet God doesn't want us to approach this with a heavy heart or an 'if-I-have-to' attitude. May we discover the joy of prayer & the powerful simplicity of fasting.

HUMILITY - throughout the whole Bible & across church history until today, fasting has been a primary means of humbling ourselves before God.

INTIMACY - as we deny appetites in the physical, we can experience increased appetite in the spiritual & our response inevitably draws us near to God.

DEVOTION - in fasting we devote ourselves to the Lord, seeking Him in a deeper way. Separating ourselves from the normality of life to draw closer to God.

PREPARATION - sometimes, times of prayer & fasting do the work of preparing us for the next season of our all with God.

SENSITIVITY - there is a greater sensitivity to the voice of the Holy Spirit as we pray & fast; we position ourselves to hear & receive from the Lord. We often further experience a sharpening of spiritual discernment as those things which are not of Him are filtered out.

FAITH - prayer & fasting is a natural way to express our faith with our whole being - spirit & body together, our spirit's hunger for God finding fulfilment through fasting with our body.

REVIVAL - in prayer & fasting there is a kindling of the Spirit's fire & zeal for the Lord. Further, in standing before God on behalf of needs & people, we see God moving in revival power.

POWERFUL - there is no doubting the power of prayer & fasting. Such times will often lead to incredible outcomes!

FAITH

PRAYER.

Whilst we can pray at any time, in any place, it might help us during this week to proactively plan how we will pray. “

Set a particular time – whether it’s first thing in the morning, during the day or last thing in the evening, why not make prayer appointments with God.

Set a particular place – having a specific place to pray can help us formulate prayerful rhythm, removing distractions, focussing our hearts & minds in prayer.

Set a particular plan – think about how to use the scriptures, worship music, times of silence & other ways of praying.

FASTING.

When it comes to fasting, there is no fixed formula. Most often it will involve abstaining from food but it is most importantly about the condition & posture of our heart before the Lord. Here are some suggested ways to fast:

Full Fast.

Drink only liquids for a fixed number of days.

Daniel Fast.

No meats, sweets, treats or bread. Only drinking water & juice.
Only eating fruits & vegetables.

1-Day Fast.

A Full Fast, Daniel Fast, or give up one or more item of food on any given day.

Partial Fast.

This could involve missing a particular meal each day, or giving up a certain kind of food. It could be fasting between certain times of the day.

Non-Food Fasting.

You could also consider fasting beyond food, such as: alcohol, social media, TV or any other activities.

FAITH

FAITH.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

Whilst many see FAITH as something for the weak, a flimsy affair for those who have no grip on life, the Bible speaks very differently. We see FAITH described as a ‘substance’ - it is foundational, necessary, vital & strong.

FAITH enables us to know a conviction about & encounter evidence for things we may not fully understand & cannot necessarily see. In fact, Biblical FAITH takes us behind the visible, exposing us to the invisible. In particular, those 2 eternal realities: God Himself & to His powerful Word.

“With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26)

“All things are possible to him who believes” (Mark 9:23)

In these statements, the words “all things are possible” are applied to God & then to the one who believes. We are sure that all things are possible to God but do we confidently accept that all things are possible to the one who believes?

Yet this is what Jesus says. He means that, through faith, those things which are possible with God are made equally possible to the one who believes.

FAITH is the channel that makes God’s possibilities available to us. It is therefore unsurprising that the Bible continually reinforces the vital importance of faith.

So as we focus on FAITH this week, may we know more of what it means to live by, walk in & act according to faith. May we move away from the confines of our thinking, beyond the formalised & the sanitised. May we live with great confidence in our great & awesome God, stepping out in faith & wholly trusting in Him

“Faith! Who can fully measure or express the potential represented by that short, simple word?” (Derek Prince)



DAILY PRAYER & FASTING.

DAILY THEMES.

Each day will focus on a particular 'FAITH'-based verse of scripture.

VIDEO DEVOTIONALS.

Pre-recorded devotionals will be released daily bringing thoughts & understanding around that specific day's Bible verse. In this way we are able to focus together in prayer on specific FAITH-based themes.

We will send the video out by email to the church, on Oakwood's WhatsApp group & post it on the 'Oakwood Church Taunton - Devoted' Facebook group.

BIBLE READING.

In addition to the specific daily verse, there are provided further bible references linking with relevant themes.

DAILY PRAYER.

Each day there are 2 opportunities to connect in prayer on Zoom:

- From 6.30-7.00am to start the day in prayer
- From 8.30-9.15pm (ish) to end the day in prayer

(NB: On Thursday evening there will be no Zoom - we will be meeting in the church building to pray at 7.30pm as usual)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87305748141?pwd=MFlod1JlY2l2eUFCL2VBSmhOVEpjUT09>

Meeting ID: 873 0574 8141
Passcode: 367167



MONDAY 27th JUNE

Hebrews 11:6 “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him”

MORE READING: Hebrews 11 // James 2:14-26

NOTES FOR PRAYER: _____

TUESDAY 28th JUNE

Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ”

MORE READING: Romans 10 // James 1

NOTES FOR PRAYER: _____

WEDNESDAY 29th JUNE

2 Corinthians 5:7 “for we walk by faith, not by sight”

MORE READING: 2 Corinthians 5 // 2 Kings 6:8-23

NOTES FOR PRAYER: _____

FAITH

THURSDAY 30th JUNE

Ephesians 6:16 “In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one”

MORE READING: Ephesians 6 // Mark 9:14-29

NOTES FOR PRAYER: _____

FRIDAY 1st JULY

Matthew 17:20 “For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you”

MORE READING: Matthew 17 // Matthew 8:5-27

NOTES FOR PRAYER: _____

FAITH

“Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time”
(Oswald Chambers)

“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times.”
(Martin Luther)

“Faith is like radar that sees through the fog.”
(Corrie Ten Boom)

“Faith does not eliminate questions. But faith knows where to take them”
(Elisabeth Elliot)

“Faith is not believing in my own unshakeable belief
Faith is believing an unshakeable God when
everything in me trembles and quakes”
(Beth Moore)

“Faith tells me that no matter what lies ahead of me,
God is already there”
(Anon)