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**DAYS OF PRAYER
+ FASTING**

PRAYER JOURNAL
HEIGHTS CHURCH

DEAR READER,

Since the beginning of our church in 2015, we have set our hearts to be a people of prayer. Our rally cry has simply been, "Pray First." In every situation, whether good or bad, we try to pray before we act. Many times people act first and then want God to bail them out of that situation, but prayer should be our first response, not our last resort.

Understanding the necessity of prayer is not enough. In order for it to become a part of our life, it needs to become something we look forward to doing. I'm convinced most people don't enjoy prayer because they have never been taught how to pray. That's where this simple prayer journal can help. Using biblical prayer models, verses and daily reflection questions to make prayer more personal, this booklet is designed to bring joy into your time with God.

When you discover the beauty of daily conversation with Him, you'll experience the presence of God that will change your life. Once you learn how to pray, prayer can become a part of everyday life. And then...

Before the day begins —
Before you go to bed —
Before you go to work or school —
Before you send that text —
Before you eat, drive or travel —
When bad things happen —
Before bad things happen —
In every situation — PRAY FIRST!

Prayer changes everything!

Pastors Josh and Crystal Whitlow

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

Prayer is most effective when it isn't something we do every now and then, but when it's a lifestyle we cultivate. To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during His life on earth.

"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 (NIV)

HAVE A CERTAIN TIME

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with His Heavenly Father. Make a daily appointment with God — whether it's first thing in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening — and faithfully keep it.

HAVE A CERTAIN PLACE

Jesus had a specific place He went to pray. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and frees us to worship and pray out loud.

HAVE A CERTAIN PLAN

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. We recommend what we like to call the First 15. Essentially, it is five minutes of worship, five minutes of prayer, and five minutes of reading your Bible every day as a starting point to practicing prayer. As we pray every day, our plans for our prayer time can vary and grow, but it helps when we have a plan for regularly connecting with God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray..."

LUKE 11:1 (NIV)

"Our Father in heaven. Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

MATTHEW 6:9-13 (NKJV)

1. CONNECT WITH GOD RELATIONALLY | "Our Father in heaven..."

You have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ROMANS 8:15 (NLT)

God loves for us to call Him our Father. Establish your intimate relationship with Him and thank Him for the relationship you have with Him.

2. WORSHIP HIS NAME | "...Hallowed be Your Name..."

The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. PROVERBS 18:10 (NIV)

What are His Names? Righteousness, He makes me clean. Sanctifier, He has called me and set me apart. Healer, He heals all my diseases. Banner of Victory – He has defeated my enemy. Shepherd, He speaks to me and leads me. Peace, He is my peace in every storm. Provider, He supplies all of my needs

3. PRAY HIS AGENDA FIRST | "...Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven..."

He will always give you all you need from day to day if you will make the Kingdom of God your primary concern. LUKE 12:31 (TLB)

God's priorities: Saving the Lost, Guiding those in authority (parental, spiritual, governmental, workplace), and His will in us

4. DEPEND ON HIM FOR EVERYTHING | "...Give us this day our daily bread..."

I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth! PSALMS 121:1-2 (NLT)

Ask God for what you want and need and then trust Him for the answer.

5. GET YOUR HEART RIGHT WITH GOD AND PEOPLE |

"...Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..."

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 JOHN 1:9 (NIV)

Ask God to check your heart and motives. Receive His forgiveness for any area that He brings to mind. Forgive anyone who has offended you in any way. You can even forgive people in advance.

6. ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE | "...And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one..."

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. EPHESIANS 6:12 (NIV)

Take your stand against the enemy and fight the good fight of faith. Every lie that the enemy has told you should be replaced with the truth of God's Word.

7. EXPRESS FAITH IN GOD'S ABILITY | "...For yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever..."

Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. JEREMIAH 32:17 (NIV)

End your prayer time by reminding yourself of God's ability. Return to praise and make your faith declarations. "Yours is the Kingdom" – all rule belongs to You. "Yours is the Power" – all mightiness flows from You. "Yours is the Glory" – Your victory shall be complete.

TOPICAL PRAYERS

We know that we should pray about the things that are happening and important to our lives, but many times we don't know how to go about praying for those things. Below are some common topics, scriptures, and sample prayers to help get you started.

FINANCIAL NEED

SCRIPTURE: *Psalm 23:1, Romans 13:8, Proverbs 10:4*

PRAYER: Thank you, Lord, for all that you've given me. I know you are my Shepherd, and I shall not want for anything and that includes my finances. I need wisdom when it comes to handling my finances, I pray that you would give me steps to take to live financially free and to not owe anyone anything except to love them. Forgive me for any financial mistakes I've made. I desire to steward all that you give me and to honor you in every area of my life, especially with my finances. Give me opportunities to sow into other people's lives with what I have. Although it may only be a little at first, I know that it will continue to grow as I realign my finances with your Word. From this day forward, I promise to be diligent with all that you bless me with financially. Help me to keep my eyes on you, and help me focus on my relationship with you more than anything else. In your powerful name I pray, Amen.

MARRIAGE

SCRIPTURE: *Ephesians 5:25,33, Matthew 6:13-15, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, James 1:19*

PRAYER: Father, thank you for the spouse you've blessed me with. Help me to be forgiving and loving towards them. Teach me to love my spouse unconditionally. God, allow my spouse and I to fulfill the plans that you have for our lives. Lord, help us seek you first and teach us to depend on your power through every difficult moment we face together. God help us be quick to listen and slow to speak - help us not say hurtful things to one another. Rather help us to build each other up and stay unified. I pray that my spouse and I would not yield to any temptation that comes our way. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Thank you for

your peace, love, guidance, and unity in our marriage. Pour out your Spirit on us Lord, and pour out your blessings on our marriage. In Jesus name, Amen.

FAMILY

SCRIPTURE: *Ephesians 4:2, John 10:29*

PRAYER: God, thank you for my family. I know that you've placed them around me and me around them so that we could protect and love each other and be a picture to the world around us of what it looks like to be in your family. Lord, help me to be humble and kind when I spend time with my family. I place my family in your faithful hands, knowing that nothing can take them from you. Thank you for the joy that my family provides me. I pray against any evil plan or scheme that comes against them, and today I declare that it is powerless and must leave right now. I declare as a member of their family that they are covered by Your protection. In the mighty name of Jesus, I pray all of these things, Amen.

UNBELIEVERS

SCRIPTURE: *2 Peter 3:9, John 3:16, Isaiah 55:11, Ezekiel 11:19*

PRAYER: God, I come before You in prayer and in faith, believing. Your Word says that You desire no one to perish, so I bring *(insert name)* before You today. I pray against any attack, plan, or scheme of the enemy on *(insert name)* life. God, use another believer or me to display your character and share the gospel's good news in such a way that he/she will listen and understand it. God soften their heart towards you, only you can take a heart of stone and make it a heart of flesh. Father, I ask that You fill *(insert name)* with the knowledge of Your will in all wisdom and understanding by the power of your Holy Spirit. I am confident that Your Word will not return to You void, and it will accomplish that which You sent it to do. Therefore, my confession today is that God has begun a good work in *(insert name)* life and He will perform it and bring it to full completion. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

GUIDANCE

SCRIPTURE: *Psalms 24:4-5, Psalm 119:105, Psalm 32: 8-9, James 1:5-6*

PRAYER: Father, I ask that you would give me wisdom and guidance today. My desire is for you to lead me in your truth and teach me to hear your voice no matter what else is going on. May your Words guide every step that I take. I ask that you would give me wisdom and give me the faith to step obediently into all that you're calling me to do. Teach me which way I

should go in every area of my life, and give me the grace to use this guidance so I never stray from you and your Word. Thank you for your guidance in my life and highlighting the best direction for me. In the mighty name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

PERSONAL LIFE CHANGE

SCRIPTURE: *2 Corinthians 10:5, James 4:8, Jeremiah 29:13*

PRAYER: Today, I realize that I need something in my life to change. Reveal to me what's happening in my life and heart. Show me if there is anything that's out of alignment with your Word. I know that if you have my whole heart, you can change my life. So I ask you to help me open up every part of my heart to you. Free me, heal me, and wash me from every sin, hurt, and pain. Thank you for revealing all of these things to me, and allowing me to be in a relationship with you. I believe you're working in my life - give me the strength to take every thought captive to the authority of your Word. I know that life change doesn't always happen overnight, so give me the patience, strength, and discipline to wait on You as You continue this process within my heart over time. Lord, thank you that progress, not perfection, is your desire for me. So today and every day, I surrender everything to you. In Jesus name, Amen.

FASTING GUIDE

Heights Church has truly been built on seasons of prayer and fasting, and it is one of the most powerful weapons God has given us for our daily lives! Prayer and fasting are pivotal steps to take in the life of a believer. As you take these steps in your spiritual journey, we believe you will experience more of God's presence and growth in your relationship with God!

WHAT IS FASTING?

The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God. Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating distractions for a spiritual purpose. By intentionally abstaining from something that comforts us for a period of time, typically food, we focus on expressing need for the only One who can truly comfort us, God. However, fasting without prayer is simply a diet. When coupled with prayer, fasting becomes a powerful discipline that nourishes our spirit and draws us closer to God. The focus of fasting is not the lack of food, but rather on what we are gaining, the revelation and presence of God.

HOW TO FAST

1. *DISCREETLY* (Matthew 6:17-18 NLT) "17 But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. 18 Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you."

2. *WITH FAITH* (Hebrews 11:6 NLT) "6 And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."

TYPES OF FASTS

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.

COMPLETE FAST

In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

SELECTIVE FAST

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, dairy, sweets, bread, and caffeine from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

PARTIAL FAST

This fast is sometimes called the "Jewish Fast" and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown.

SOUL FAST

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

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