

Election Fasting and Prayer Guide



As God's people, we are to seek the welfare of the city where we live (**Jeremiah 29:7**) and to pray for all people, including government leaders (**1 Timothy 2:1-2**). So, with Election Day coming up on Tuesday, November 3, we are asking Watermark Members to do two things: to vote and to spend the day before the election (Monday, November 2) in fasting and prayer.

Check out our election resources at watermark.org/vote for help in making voting decisions. In this guide, you'll find resources on fasting and a prayer guide that we invite you to follow with us as we fast and pray together over November 2.

What Is Fasting?

The dictionary definition of "fasting" is pretty simple: it means abstaining from food for a period of time.

There are some different types of fasting, though. Usually, fasting means you don't eat any food, but you can still drink water. Sometimes it can mean abstaining from all food and water, as in **Esther 4:16**. Or, on the other end of the spectrum, it could mean giving up only certain types of food or drink, as in **Daniel 10:3**. Daniel abstained from the food he would have preferred—meat, wine, and "delicacies"—choosing to have only vegetables and water (**Daniel 1:12**).

People also sometimes use the term "fast" in reference to abstaining from things other than food, like a "social media fast." The Bible even mentions husbands and wives temporarily abstaining from sex in order to focus on prayer (**1 Corinthians 7:5**). The idea is very similar, in that you are voluntarily giving up something good in order to focus on something greater (your relationship with God).

However, the word "fasting" technically refers to giving up food, and that is what we are talking about for this day of fasting. Specifically, we are asking for a normal fast, where you abstain from all food but can still drink water. Of course, if you have a medical, health, or other reason why giving up food for the day would be a bad idea, we want you to be wise and not do anything unsafe. In those situations, consider something like a **Daniel 10:3** fast, where you abstain from only certain types of food.

Why Should We Fast?

The main point of fasting is to focus your attention on God. It provides that focus in a few ways:

- The time and effort normally spent cooking and eating can be spent on prayer or meditation instead. If you want, the money you would spend on food (or the food itself) can be donated to care for others instead (**Isaiah 58:6-7**).
 - When you fast, you get hungry. That hunger serves as a reminder of why you are fasting, keeping it top-of-mind. Every time you feel hunger when fasting, use that as a prompt to pray.
 - Fasting for a specific purpose (such as the election) also reminds us of the seriousness of the situation. Without a specific purpose, the focus of the fast becomes the fast itself; you're just hungry for the sake of being hungry. But when you fast for a purpose, you are demonstrating the significance of that which you are fasting for. Fasting serves as an acknowledgment that we want to seek God even more than we want to eat.
 - Fasting can help us focus on the Giver instead of His gifts. Food is a gift from God, but how often do we fully appreciate God's goodness in how He provides everything we need? Going without food, or abstaining from any gift of God, makes you more appreciative of both the gift and the Giver.
- Those are all good reasons for fasting. However, there are also some wrong motivations for fasting, or common misunderstandings about why Christians should fast.
- Fasting won't make you right with God. It is not a religious observance required to get on God's good side (**Luke 18:9-14**). No action on our part can earn God's grace; it is only through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross that we are saved (**Ephesians 2:8-9**).
 - Fasting does not obligate God to answer your prayers. God doesn't owe you anything, and there is no way to put Him in your debt (**Job 41:11**). Fasting does not make God more likely to hear our prayers or to do what we ask; He always hears our prayers, and always acts according to His will (**1 John 5:14-15**).
 - Fasting shouldn't be done to impress others. It should not be motivated by trying to show others how righteous or religious we are (**Matthew 6:16-18**). We should seek God through fasting, not the approval of man (**Galatians 1:10**).

When Should We Fast?

In the Bible, fasting is usually prompted by some significant event or decision to be made. People fast to pray for specific things (**Ezra 8:21-23**), mourn a loss (**2 Samuel 1:12**), repent from a sin (**1 Samuel 7:6**), or dedicate their lives to God (**Acts 14:23**). They do it to seek God's guidance (**Judges 20:26-28**) or deliverance from enemies (**2 Chronicles 20:1-4**).

This election represents a significant event for our country, so it is appropriate to take time to pray and fast for our nation. We can pray for guidance, we can mourn wrongdoings, we can repent of

individual and national sins, we can ask for protection, and we can pray for courage to be men and women who live as salt and light before the watching nation.

As you fast and pray on November 2, remind yourself that God is in control. He is the One who institutes leaders and gives them authority (**Daniel 2:21; Romans 13:1**). Whatever the outcome, we can trust that it will ultimately be used for His good purposes (**Romans 8:28**).

Prayer Guide

As you fast on November 2, use this prayer guide as a starting point for prayer throughout the day. In addition to prayer, you can spend time meditating on the Scriptures referenced within this document. Also consider journaling your thoughts, prayers, and insights.

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47

Pray for your elected officials, your government, and those in authority, both locally and nationally. Pray for the elections in your district. Pray for the welfare of your city. Pray the Lord would show you what it looks like to vote faithfully and lovingly. More specifically:

- Pray those in authority over us would come to know and trust in Jesus Christ and that their lives and perspectives would be radically transformed by the gospel. (**1 Timothy 2:1-4; Proverbs 29:2**)
- Pray for the following leaders:
 - *President Donald Trump*
 - *Senator Ted Cruz and Senator John Cornyn*
 - *Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Congressmen Lance Gooden, Kenny Marchant, Michael Burgess, Colin Allred and Marc Veasey (Dallas County Representatives)*
 - *City of Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson*
 - *Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins*
 - *Pray for the Supreme Court of the United States of America*
 - *Justices John Roberts, Clarence Thomas, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett*
- Pray our government would seek to protect the citizens and carry out justice in an impartial manner. (**Romans 13:1-5**)
- Pray for the city of Dallas, your neighbors, and those you encounter on a day-to-day basis. Pray for the lost and the hurting in our communities. Pray for opportunities to serve and care for those you come across. (**Jeremiah 29:7**)
- Pray for laws to be enacted that protect all vulnerable and marginalized (including the unborn, immigrant, the widow, the refugee, and the orphan). (**Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 2:20-22**)
- Pray that our military leaders would seek to provide justice and order both domestically and abroad. (**Romans 13:3-4**)

Pray for your own family and the other families in our body. Pray that the Lord would strengthen and restore marriages. Pray for children and their parents. Pray for your roommates and friends. Pray that single men and women would feel welcomed and encouraged to live on mission. More specifically:

- Pray there would be oneness and unity with those who are married. Pray husbands would love and lead their families as Christ leads and loves the church. Pray wives would love and support their husbands. **(1 Peter 3:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-28)**
- Pray that children and teenagers within our body would come to know and trust in Jesus. Pray they would find no greater joy than knowing and loving Jesus Christ. Pray they would honor their parents in the Lord. Pray that a generation of fully devoted Christ-followers are sent from this body to the uttermost parts of the world. **(Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Ephesians 6:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:12)**
- Pray for the parents in our body who strive to be faithful in loving, nurturing, and preparing their children to go out into the world. Pray that parents would have the courage to make wise decisions even if they may be in opposition to what the culture says is appropriate. **(Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4)**
- Pray specifically for the single parents in our body who work diligently to love and serve their children. Pray the Lord would help you develop relationships with single parents who are exhausted, discouraged, or feeling overwhelmed. Pray the Lord would direct you to know how to help, love, support, and encourage them. **(1 John 3:16-18).**
- Pray that single men and women in our body would continue to demonstrate faithfulness. Pray that, if they are called to marriage, the Lord would help them maintain godly standards for their future spouse. Pray they would be free of anxiety and seek to please the Lord. **(1 Corinthians 7:32)**

Pray for your community, your church, and the church in America at large. Pray for assurance and conviction for other believers in your city. Pray for clarity and boldness for leaders as they seek to lead God's people. More specifically:

- Pray our Watermark family would be salt and light to Dallas and the surrounding cities and counties. **(Matthew 5:13-16)**
- Pray we would be diligent to pursue the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Pray we would repent and seek reconciliation if any of our discussions of late have been marked by divisiveness or lack of love. **(John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:1-3)**
- Pray for the members of your community group by name – pray that you would be a blessing to them; that you would be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Pray you would engage in hard discussions in a way that seeks to understand and honor Christ. **(James 1:19; Ephesians 4:29-32; Proverbs 18:2)**
- Pray our conduct would be honorable before the watching world and that we would boldly proclaim the hope we have in Jesus Christ. **(1 Peter 2:9-12; Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 4:5-6)**
- Pray that the Elders at Watermark would be diligent to shepherd the flock of God in a way that leads to blessing and righteousness. **(1 Peter 5:1-5)**
- Pray for other church leaders throughout our country who are faithfully shepherding and equipping the saints for the work of ministry would not grow weary of doing good. **(Galatians 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:58)**
- Pray the Lord would strengthen the resolve of pastors and Elders everywhere and that they would take seriously the call to courageously shepherd the flock of God. **(Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Proverbs 20:10)**
- Pray that every church in America would be a prevailing church and reject apathy, people-pleasing, and pandering to the patterns of this world. **(Revelation 3:1-3)**

Lastly, spend time thanking the Lord that He is more than able to create revival. Thank the Lord for His kindness and grace that has created in you a desire to pray and fast for our nation.

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21