

# 5 Days to Fast & Pray for the Election Guide



Welcome to 5 Days to Fast & Pray for the Election. We are so happy to have you join us in praying for our country during this important time. No matter who you are supporting, we can all agree on the fact that prayer is needed as we head to the voting booth and as we transition to a new administration.

We are leaving it up to you to decide if you will participate in the fasting aspect of this prayer guide and if so, what type of fasting you will do. **If you are able, remember to join us for prayer Monday-Thursday evenings from 8 p.m.-8:30 p.m Eastern time on our Facebook page.** You may also post prayers anytime of the day or night on that page as well. If you have not yet asked to join that page and you would like to, go to the [Facebook page](#) and request permission to join, and we will grant it.

# Day 1: Turn from Sin

**Scripture:** “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

**Prayer Focus:** Candidates and voters would humble themselves and seek the Lord and have a servant’s heart. That revival would sweep across our nation.

## Actions Steps:

1. Find a quiet place to process with the Lord. Take your Bible and a journal.
2. Pray for revival to start in your own heart. Ask the Lord to show you any habits, actions, thoughts, words, attitudes, etc. that need to change in you so that you are ready for revival.
3. Journal about what you feel God is showing you.
4. Once you feel your own heart is set, move to praying for your community, state, and nation. Choose a scripture that you can pray specifically for our nation and use that throughout the week.

# Day 2: Turn to God

**Scripture:** ‘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 also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever Amen.’ Matthew 6:9-13

**Prayer Focus:** That our purposes and plans as a nation would align with God’s.

## Action Steps:

1. Make a plan to pray for the elections several times

throughout the day. If needed, set the alarm on your phone to remind you to pray.

2. Pray for people in your building or neighborhood to pray for God's will in this election. Ask another to join you in prayer today.
3. Take a prayer walk and pray for the elections and issues in your own city.
4. Get out a map or look up a map on Google and pray across the states in our great land. Ask God to raise up Christians to pray and exercise their right to vote.

## Day 3: Turn to Wisdom

**Scripture:** "An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge." Proverbs 18:15

**Prayer Focus:** That voters would seek the Lord's wisdom as they cast their ballots and vote on initiatives.

### **Action Steps:**

1. If you haven't done so yet, it is time to become educated about the issues of this election on every level. Please do your own research or click on the following link to learn about the candidates for 2016: [Wall Builders](#). If you go to your state's .gov site, you will be able to download a copy of the ballot to see all the candidates you will be voting on, plus any initiatives you may be voting on.
2. After you have completed your research, make a list of whom you plan to vote for and for the proposals in your community.
3. Research the location of your polling place and check the hours.
4. Help elderly neighbors and relatives by offering them a ride to their polling place.

# Day 4: Turn Your Eyes

**Scripture:** And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'" ' Acts 28:25-27

**Prayer Focus:** For this to be a peaceful, non-violent election and transition to the new administration.

## **Action Steps:**

1. The time to act is now. The destiny of our nation hangs in the balance. I have heard several people say they plan not to vote in this election. This attitude is defeatist and irresponsible. It is time for the church to wake up and take our place in the shaping of our culture before we lose the right to do so. Remember, when we cast our vote for a candidate we not only vote for the individual, but for the cabinet members they will bring on board. Most experts believe that the next President could be choosing around three supreme court justices. Personnel makes policy.
2. Spend some time interceding for peace and against violent protests or riots, especially the evening of the election.
3. Watch the news for any "hotspots" of where violence is occurring, whether it's due to the election or other reasons. Cover these geographic areas in prayer.
4. Pray and ask the Lord if there is any specific geographic region He wants you to cover in prayer over the next few months until the new President takes office. Record any direction in your journal so that you remember to make it a prayer priority.

# Day 5: Turn Your Heart

**Scripture:** “He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.” Daniel 2:21

**Prayer Focus:** For our country to be unified and for Congress to work together for the good of the people. That God-honoring laws and legislations would be enacted.

## **Action Steps:**

1. In my experience, this has been the most rancorous, divisive election ever. I have even experienced being “unfriended” due to my political beliefs, and I know others have experienced this as well. This should not be happening. Pray for civil discourse in our country and the ability to agree to disagree without friendships and family relationships suffering for it.
2. Decide to pray for our government officials at all levels. They need God’s wisdom. They need honesty. They need pure motives. And they need servants’ hearts.
3. Become informed about local, state, and federal legislation. What decisions is your school board making about curriculum and other important issues such as transgender issues and bathroom/locker room/overnight arrangements for students? Many of us may think that Roe v. Wade is beyond changing, but God can do anything. Ask God if you need to get involved in working to change this law. Perhaps you have never been involved in politics before, but it’s important to let your voice be heard on policies and laws. Call and/or email those in charge. Here’s a link to find your [local, state, and federal officials](#). We can’t afford to ignore these issues any longer.

We thank you so much for joining us this week as we pray for the election and our country. We know that your intercession is a fragrant offering to God, and we trust that your prayers will “availeth much.”

Please feel free to share this post with anyone else you think would be interested. Keep praying and God bless you!

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*Mary Kane*

*Jane*

(VanOsdol)

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**Living by the Numbers God's  
Way**



Any social media guru will tell you that when it comes to promoting yourself, it's [all about the numbers](#). Whether Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or Pinterest is where you interact, the higher the number the better.

And let's not kid ourselves: it's not only tweens and teens who are concerned about their followers. I know that once I post, I'm constantly checking back to see how many people are liking, loving, tweeting, or sharing it. I have even been known to let the activity, or lack thereof, on my accounts affect my attitude.

The numbers game is no new phenomenon. Oh, no. It's been around for a long time; it's just that now the results are so ... visible. Everyone can see at a glance how you're doing.

Well, you may be surprised to know that numbers are important to God too, but not in the way they are to us. He has a whole different take on numbers, one that we should pay attention to.

## Living By the Numbers God's Way

- **10,000 x 10,000:** "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand," Revelation 5:11. When you do the math on 10,000 x 10,000, that adds up to 100 million angels circling the throne of God and singing praise to Jesus. But, it doesn't stop there. It goes beyond viral to every creature in heaven and on earth and under the sea (v. 13). I can't imagine a more glorious spectacle than this one.
- **7,000:** "Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him," 1 Kings 19:18. In this verse, God is encouraging his worn-out prophet Elijah that he is not the only one left who is still serving the Lord. And so should we take courage when we feel overwhelmed and washed out in our ministries. God always leaves a remnant.
- **5000:** "Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children," Matthew 14:19-21. In this beautiful story, Jesus miraculously multiplies a little boy's lunch to feed 5000+ hungry people. When we give him what we have to use, he'll do the same for us.
- **1000:** "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house

of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked," Psalm 84:10. There is no better place to be than in the presence of our Lord. Life lived with Him is as rich as it gets.

- **300:** "So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites to their tents but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others," Judges 7:8. Gideon started out with 32,000 warriors to go to battle against the camp of Midian, who were "as thick as locusts," but God told Gideon to take only 300 men, because He wanted to show it was with the Lord's might that they would be defeated, not man's. When I feel discouraged at the overwhelming odds facing me, I need only remember that if God is on my side, the odds don't matter.
- **40:** "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry," Matthew 4:1-2. The number 40 is used often in the Bible, many times having to do with times of trials. One of the things that I glean from these circumstances is that God is always faithful and gives strength and wisdom to the ones going through difficulties.
- **10:** In Exodus 20:1-17 God first gives the 10 Commandments to the Israelites to follow. so that they will remain in good standing with the Lord. Today the law has been superseded by grace with Jesus' death on the cross, but the 10 Commandments still remain guidelines for us to live by.
- **3:** "He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and after three days rise again," Mark 8:31. What must have been happening spiritually during those three days is awesome to contemplate, for Acts 2:24 tells us that God raised Jesus from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was "impossible for death

to keep its hold on Him.” What is also incredible is that God makes that same Resurrection power available for us in ministry, as Ephesians 1:18-21 tells us! These three days make **all** the difference between Christianity and any other religion.

- **1:** “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time,” 1 Timothy 2:5-6. Our eternity is determined by only One, Jesus, and what we believe about Him. [Have you given your life to Him?](#) It’s as simple as confessing your sin, accepting that Jesus took the penalty for your sin, and asking Him to take control of your life. He’ll change your life in ways you never dreamed possible.

## God Trumps the Numbers

My takeaway from our brief biblical tour through some important numbers in the Bible is that God is not limited by numbers. From viral proportions down to one, God knows each need and will work in any and every situation that we ask Him to. When we are apt to obsess about our social media standing, let’s do the following:

Instead of counting followers, let’s follow.

Instead of tweeting, let’s sing his praises

Instead of updating your wall, let’s break some down in the name of Jesus.

## Action Steps

1. Discouraged by a small number of people signed up for your event or Bible study? Go with it. Someone needs to hear your message, and God will multiply it to others.
2. Overwhelmed by a larger-than-expected turnout? Ask God to bless your 5 loaves and 2 fish.

3. Remember, though, that the most important number is One, Jesus, and your relationship to Him. If you've made a decision to follow Him today, leave us a comment or contact us and let us know. We are praying for you!

*Jane*

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**i pray: divine appointments**



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# **short podcasts to bring the sacred into your everyday**

*Do you only have a few minutes for prayer today? You're in the right place! Try one of our new **i pray podcasts**. A few minutes is all you need to pray God's word into any situation by interceding for friends, family, and yourself.*

## **Show Notes**

Sometimes I go through life oblivious to everyone and everything—except for my own agenda, my own schedule.

When I do that, I may miss the **divine appointments** and opportunities that God has scheduled for me that day. Will I take the time to look the homeless person in the eye and talk to her, or will I listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and smile at the person on the bus sitting next to me? I know we live in a dangerous world, but I need to be listening to the direction and guidance of the Spirit. At times He may move me along, but many times He would have me pause. I want to be

alert to the work of the kingdom, not asleep on the job.

## Today's Scripture to Pray

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 1 Peter 3:15,16*

Just click on the arrow below to pray along with us today.

You may also subscribe on iTunes.

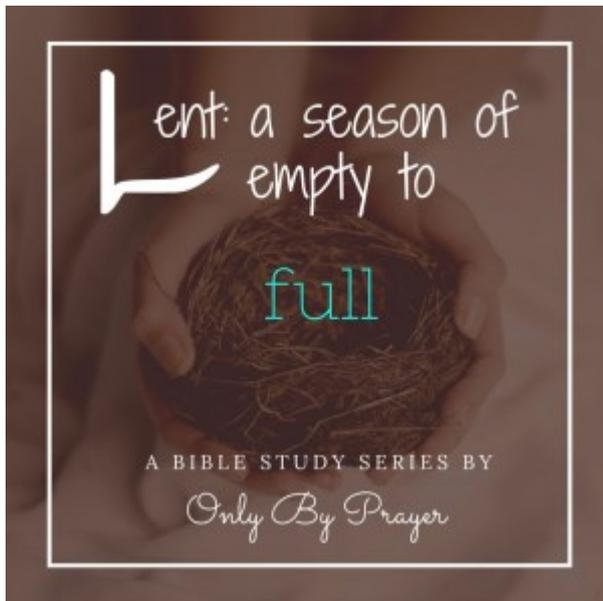
Thanks for praying and in the comment section below, feel free to tell us about a divine appointment you kept.

Pray on!

*Jane*

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**Lent: empty to full, fasting**



**Fasting is temporarily abstaining from food (electronic media, television, etc.) for a period of time with the purpose of focusing on prayer and spiritual guidance.**

Welcome to week 4 of our Lent guide! After spending last week studying prayer, this week's topic of fasting is a natural follow-up.

As we persevere through the discomfort of fasting, we often experience a time of laser focus and closeness with God that is at a deeper level than what we usually attain. It is interesting how a physical discipline such as fasting complements our spiritual development. But God has created us in a way that our bodies, souls, and spirits are intricately connected. Disciplining our bodies by way of fasting often brings about spiritual breakthroughs as we cooperate with God in our goal for the fast.

## **New to Fasting?**

If you've never tried fasting before, please don't be

intimidated. A fast does not have to be weeks long to be beneficial. In fact, if you are new, start slow. Try fasting for one meal. You'll find several suggestions in the Sway that should help you choose a method to practice during the upcoming week.

Please scroll through the Sway and explore the different resources we have for you this week.

Share your insights, questions, and prayer requests on our [Lent Facebook page](#). We love hearing from you!

Have a blessed week!

*Jane*

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## **Gifts of Time and Sabbath Rest**

Time is an elusive resource. No matter how hard we try, we

can't grasp it or control it or change it



- We complain that there isn't enough of it in a day to get things done.
- It flies by when we're having fun.
- Things can become frozen in it.
- The older we get, the faster it goes.
- It's of the essence.
- We tell people to stop wasting it.

**What is time, really?**

## **The Gift of Time**

With the creation of the sun and the moon on Day 4, God bestows upon us the gift of time and seasons. This Genesis 1 gift keeps on giving. We live out our lives within its parameters: seconds, minutes, hours; days, weeks, months, years. Over the course of a year, we rotate through the seasons of birth, growth, harvest, and rest.

[Cyclical rhythms are safeguards, to make sure we avoid the errors of doing too much or too little.](#)



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But how many of us even notice this gift of time or the seasons that should give meaning and purpose to our lives, both in our days and in our years? Do we fully experience and engage with our senses the passing and changing of day to night, of week to month, of season to season, of year to year?

**Do we build into our days times of rest, or do the days parade by in a stream of busyness and business, barely acknowledged much less celebrated?**



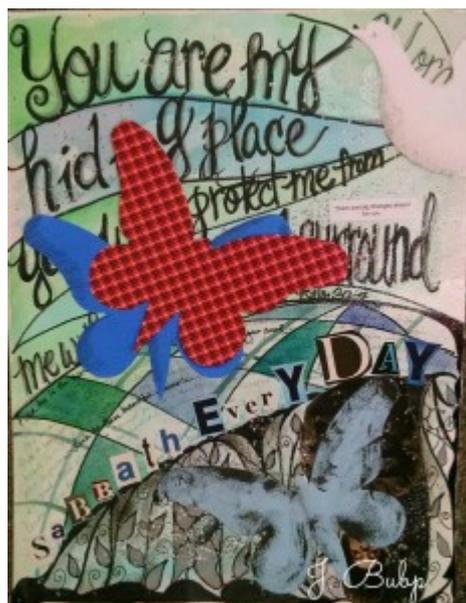
## Sabbath Rest?

As I've started working through The Way of Discipleship book with a friend, we're currently studying the practice of Sabbath. The definition states the following: "Sabbath is a specific period of rest from the labors of life for the purpose of rejuvenation and fellowship with God and one another." Three questions then direct me to evaluate my practice of Sabbath regarding these points:

- my pace of life and its effect on my soul and those around me
- what rest looks like for me, and
- how much time I set aside to rest or reflect on God

As I sat with these thoughts, I realized this wasn't going to

be a section I could zoom through, because honestly I couldn't see much Sabbath rest going on in my life on Sunday or any other day for that matter. I thought uncomfortably about what my Sundays typically look like. Morning is devoted to church, yes, but the afternoons are nearly indistinguishable from any other day of the week, crammed full of activities, cleaning, cooking, and laundry, lots of laundry. I often *intend* to slow down and relax, but rarely does it happen.



God set aside Day 7 to rest from His labors. It's a pattern He means for us to follow that's somehow been lost in our skewed vision of time. Each day we race from work to school to home to lessons to home and then start the process all over again. Sunday is supposed to be different, as it was when I was a child. Stores closed. Businesses shut. Families went to church, ate a leisurely dinner, napped, played, and visited. Somehow from

then to now, we've shed that tradition and made Sunday the catch-up day. Catch up on work, chores, laundry, with precious little time for Sabbathing.

I've tried to tackle this issue before in my life, but without much success. I want to be mindful of the gifts of time and rest and Himself that God has given us. I want to discover how to infuse them not just into my Sunday, but to create mini-Sabbath times throughout the rest of the week too.

Next post, I'll look at my first attempt at [creating some margin in my Sundays](#).

If you'd like to join me, I'd love to hear your thoughts on time and Sabbath. Just leave them below.

*Jane*

I'd like to thank my friend, artist Jennifer Bulp,, for allowing me to use her beautiful Sabbath collage.