

Pre-Election 2016 Fasting and Prayer Guide

This guide is a simple, non-comprehensive resource to use with your community to help focus minds and hearts on the greatest commandment for all Christians: Love God and love your neighbor. In the four weeks leading up to the 2016 presidential election, this guide will provide a topic and Scripture to pray through on each Tuesday, from October 18 to November 8.



We invite you to fast each Tuesday leading up to the election, in whatever way you are led to practice this discipline of abstinence. For help figuring out what to fast, ask yourself: What do I consume/do every day that I will miss if I give it up for 24 hours? How can I use the time I normally take for this thing and pray instead? Ideas to consider include: food, screen time, social media, etc.

Reflect on that here: What am I willing to give up in order to focus on prayer leading up to this election?

“Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12

Here are more resources as you prepare:

[Prayer topics](#)

[Scripture in a variety of versions](#)

[Can My Vote Be Biblical?](#)

Monday before beginning

Many people across the US and around the world are spending fruitless hours throwing hatred and shame at each other during this election. As people of faith, we see this not only as something Christ warned against (see Matthew 5:22) ungodly but also as a waste of precious time. We are not Americans first; we are first children of God. So instead of wasting time (and risking God's displeasure!) slandering others, we are called to a much more difficult task: to live like Christ, to be full of truth and grace, to act with justice and mercy, to follow the road of righteousness and love.

Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights to ready himself for the ministry God prepared for him. We are fasting for these four weeks not only in preparation for the elections, but also to ready ourselves for the ministry opportunities that will present themselves after the election. With a new administration comes new challenges—and new opportunities. We will have even more occasions to speak life-giving blessing, to be peacemakers, and to live the counter-cultural way of love with our neighbors and political opposites.

Let us prepare for these four weeks of fasting by praying and answering the following questions:

- 1) *Why am I fasting?*
- 2) *What do I believe about fasting and prayer?*
- 3) *What am I specifically asking God to do as I fast and pray?*
- 4) *From what will I fast?*
- 5) *What is my plan to follow through in fasting and praying? (For example: Will I fast all day on Tuesday? One meal, or all meals? All food and liquids, or just food? Will I set aside a specific time to pray? Where is a quiet spot at work/home/school where I can pray? Will I need to make meals for my family ahead of time so I am not tempted to break my fast?)*

Spend some time answering these questions before you begin.

Tuesday, Oct. 18

Prayer topic: Wisdom

Scripture Readings: Proverbs 1, Psalm 111, James 3, 1 John 4:7-21

*“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever.” Psalm 111:10*

*“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of
mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.” James 3:17*

*“So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those
who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.” 1 John 4:16*

Reflect on these Scriptures:

Pray for wisdom. Pray for wisdom in your own heart. Pray for wisdom in your home and for your family and friends. Pray for wisdom for the city, the state, and for the nation. Pray for wisdom for every leader—ones you like and ones you despise. Pray for wisdom for your enemies.

Write your own prayers here:

Tuesday, Oct. 25

Prayer topic: Prudence (acting with or showing care and thought for the future)

Scripture Readings: Proverbs 8, Isaiah 58, Philippians 2:1-18

*“I, wisdom, live with prudence,
and I attain knowledge and discretion.
The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.” Proverbs 8:12-13*

*“Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free
and to break every yoke?” Isaiah 58:6*

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus” Philippians 2:5

Reflect on these Scriptures and write your prayers for prudence here:

Tuesday, November 1st

Prayer topic: Discernment

Scripture Readings: Proverbs 15, John 7:10-24, Romans 12

“The mind of one who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouths of fools feed on folly.” Proverbs 15:14

“Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own.” John 7:17

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2

Reflect upon these readings and these questions:

What is the role of discernment in your life?

What does it mean to not be conformed to this world?

What does it mean to renew your mind?

How do you discern the will of God?

Tuesday, November 8th

Prayer topic: Courage

Scripture Readings: Psalm 27, Matthew 5, 2 Timothy 1:1-14

“I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” Psalm 27:13-14

Seeking to love as God loves takes immense courage. Will you pray for that courage for yourself, others, and even your enemies? Will you share that courage with others on this election day?

After the fast

Thank you for taking this journey. Below are a few questions for reflection and sharing. We encourage you to share your experience with us.* No matter what happens in this election, this time of prayer and fasting will be used in your life and the lives of others to put flesh on God's love in the world.

Take time to answer the following questions:

- 1. What did God show you during your fast?**
- 2. Look back at how you answered the preparation questions. Did anything change for you throughout the fast?**
- 3. Did this fast change the way you voted?**
- 4. What are a few things you will do after this fast to continue to grow in your relationship with God?**
- 5. Will you share with others what God showed you?**

* Leave a comment at the bottom of the [download page](#).

