



THE LUKE | HUMBLE



40 DAYS
OF SACRIFICE
LENTEN FAST

February 18 — April 5, 2015



40 DAYS OF SACRIFICE LENTEN FAST

On February 18th, we will begin our annual 40-Day Lenten Fast. As a community of faith, The Luke will participate in the Daniel Fast. Over the next 40 days (excluding Sundays), we make a conscious decision to abstain from certain foods as a sacrifice to God. While this journey will lead to a healthier life, its purpose is to draw closer to God.

The Bible teaches us that there is great power in prayer and fasting (Matt. 9:29; Isa. 58:6). So, as we fast we will pray fervently. The sacrifice of fasting empties us of the clutter in our lives that often dulls our ability to hear from God. I'm praying that your spiritual sensitivity is dramatically increased during this season.


We've assembled a roadmap for your fast, it includes a prayer focus and devotional for each week. Meditate daily on the suggested scriptures, as well as the scriptures you personally discover. Make sure you keep a pen and paper with you at all times, so that you are able to document what you hear God saying. At the conclusion of each week, I challenge you to write your own personal devotion and prayer.

I look forward to hearing your testimonies and watching God move miraculously in the life of our church. I encourage you to join me each Tuesday morning at 7:00 a.m. CST for our Prayer Believer's Conference call. The number is: 605-562-3000 and the access code is: 1065196#. Get ready for a very intimate walk with God!

Prayerfully yours,



Timothy W. Sloan

 @TimothySloan



THE DANIEL FAST



At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over. Daniel 10:2-3

During the Daniel Fast you will not consume any sugar or sweeteners of any kind, nor will you have any caffeine or artificial chemicals. Many people experience a physical detox during the first few days of the fast including headaches, fatigue, leg cramps and other typical symptoms.

You can reduce these effects by weaning yourself from these foods before the fast begins and also by drinking at least 1/2 gallon of filtered water each day before, during and after the fasting period. Anytime you have concern about symptoms you may experience, be sure to contact your health professional. Fasting should never be harmful to the body!

DISCIPLINE FOR THE FAST

Fasting is the voluntary abstinence for a time from various necessities of life such as food, drink, sleep, rest and so forth. The purpose of rejecting these things for a longer or shorter period of time is to loosen to some degree the ties that bind us to the world of material things and our surroundings as a whole, in order that we may concentrate upon the unseen and eternal things.

So many times in the life of a believer, we are challenged to constantly focus all of our attention on the things of this world. And consequently, all of our decisions are fully made based on what we can naturally see. Sometimes we allow what we can naturally see to cause us to miss what God is saying to our spirit. Jesus explains to his disciples who faced a challenge and failed in Mark 9:29 that “this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.” So fasting allows our physical self (flesh) to decrease that our spiritual soul may increase. So it is our prayer that the believers will join us in developing a discipline of prayer and fasting that we may become more in tuned to the things of God.

WHY WE FAST

There are several reasons for fasting:

Healing – Fasting is a way to cleanse the body so that it can repair (*Psalm 139:13-19*).

Protection – refer to Queen Esther. (*Esther 4:16*).

Clarity of God’s divine guidance – for Daniel, fasting gave him wisdom and protection.

For Missionary Purposes – You will have your own personal testimony after this fast.

Power – We will have power to overcome overwhelming circumstances (*Mark 9:14-29*)

“This is the confidence that we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of Him. I John 5:14-15



PREPARING TO FAST

- Prepare yourself mentally and physically
- Prepare to be blessed collectively and individually
- Pray and ask for God's strength along the way.
- Begin pre-planning your meals.
- A multivitamin is highly recommended.
- Consult with your doctor about your fast. Please, if you are on medications prescribed by your doctor, continue to take them.
- If you are pregnant or have a specific health condition, consult with your doctor.
- Suggestion: get a notebook or journal and chronicle your fast, including: your requests to God, your spiritual fast progress, revelations from the Holy Spirit concerning your individual life and that of our church body.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW WE WILL FAST

- Our period of fasting will begin on ASH Wednesday, February 18th and end on Saturday, April 4th. (Sundays are free days)
- We will be following the Daniel Fast: see attached listing of approved foods and beverages.
- *"Under Special Care"* – if you are under doctor's care, pregnant, or unable to miss a meal for health reasons, you can still participate in the fast by abstaining from foods such as sweets, carbonated beverages, breads, meats or any food that you feel "you must have at least a little of every day."
- We should be praying continuously throughout this fasting period and following our 40 Days of Sacrifice weekly devotional.
- While you are sacrificing meals during this fast and saving money, we ask that you prayerfully consider how much the Lord is placing on your heart to give sacrificially towards our Project Next Campaign. If you have not completed a pledge card, we ask that you do so during this fast.
- We also encourage you to connect with us on our Prayer Conference Call every Tuesday morning during the fast at 7:00am.

FASTING OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Parents, please prayerfully consider including your children on the Fast. It will be a blessed experience for them and it will begin to lay a foundation for their future. Your support and encouragement are recommended to maximize your child's success.

- Who? First Graders to Twelfth Graders
- Why? To grow spiritually in your personal relationship with God.
- How?
 - o Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner.
 - o Eat healthy vegetables, fruits, meats, breads, milk and cereal
 - o Eat a healthy snack between meals such as fruit, vegetables, etc.
 - o Drink water and milk only.
 - o Choose to refrain from video games, TV, secular music or all three.



ANSWERS TO COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FASTING

1. What is “fasting?”

Throughout scripture “fasting” refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. The spiritual purpose is to draw closer to God. “Fasting” reminds us that we can do without anything, but God!

2. How should I “fast?”

“Fasting” primarily means to abstain from food and liquids except drinking water. Some persons may be led to abstain from both food and all liquids, including water. Other persons may need to drink juices or milk to prevent sickness. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult your doctor. Use common sense and do not try to be an overachiever or super-Christian. To do so will not honor God and will not be considered “fasting.”

3. Is “fasting” important?

Yes. Jesus began His earthly ministry after fasting for 40 days (Luke 4). Fasting helps us draw closer to God.

4. Is there power in “fasting?”

Yes. Jesus said that some things can only happen by prayer and fasting.



THE DANIEL FAST

FOOD LIST

The Daniel Fast is a very healthy way to eat and is full of nutritious and healthy foods. However, if you have special dietary needs, you should consult your health professional before you start this fast. You can then modify the fast to meet your specific health needs.

FOODS TO INCLUDE DURING THE DANIEL FAST

All fruits. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Fruits include but are not limited to apples, apricots, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew melon, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon.

All vegetables. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Vegetables include but are not limited to artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, collard greens, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, ginger root, kale, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsley, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, spinach, sprouts, squashes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, yams, zucchini, veggie burgers are an option if you are not allergic to soy.

All whole grains, including but not limited to whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds, including but not limited to sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame. Also nut butters including peanut butter.

All legumes. These can be canned or dried. Legumes include but are not limited to dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, white beans.

All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water or other pure waters.

Other: tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs and spices.



THE DANIEL FAST FOOD LIST

FOODS TO AVOID ON THE DANIEL FAST

All meat and animal products including but not limited to beef, lamb, pork, poultry, and fish.

All dairy products including but not limited to milk, cheese, cream, butter, and eggs.

All sweeteners including but not limited to sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, and cane juice.

All leavened bread including Ezekiel Bread (it contains yeast and honey) and baked goods.

All refined and processed foods products including but not limited to artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.

All deep fried foods including but not limited to potato chips, French fries, corn chips.

All solid fats including shortening, margarine, lard and foods high in fat.

Beverages including but not limited to coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol.

When you shop for food remember to **READ THE LABELS** to make sure the only ingredients in packaged foods are suitable for the Daniel Fast. You will want to be especially aware of chemicals, dairy products and sweeteners - all of which are not allowed on the Daniel Fast.

For more information, lots of recipes, and answers to frequently asked questions, visit <http://DanielFast.wordpress.com>



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 1 – FORGIVENESS

Scripture: [Luke 15:11-32](#)

Devotion: Did you know that forgiveness is good for your health? Nearly everyone has been hurt or upset by the actions or words of another. If you don't practice forgiveness, you might be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you can also embrace peace, hope, gratitude, joy and healing. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Don't be like the brother found in Luke 15 but learn to let go of the past and be glad! Luke 17:3-4 tells us that if a brother or sister sins against you and repents, then we must forgive them no matter how many times it happens. This type of forgiveness mirrors the same forgiveness that God gives to us as found in Psalms 103. God loves us so much that He is willing to forgive us our sins against Him and others. He also promises us that He will not treat us the way that we deserve and when we ask for forgiveness that He will remove our transgressions far from us.

Whom have you failed to forgive for past actions against you? Have you spent more time being upset with that person than you should have? Take time to reflect on how many times the Lord has forgiven you, and consider this same forgiveness for the person that has done you wrong. This week make a list of all those who have wronged you and commit to forgiving them one by one.

Prayer: Lord as we commence this Daniel Fast, help us to first look introspect and see if there is anything in us that is hindering our pursuit of you. You are full of grace and mercy and have shown us that you are a forgiving God over and over again. Father, search my heart and expose any unforgiveness that I may have hidden within me. Everyone who has offended, upset, or caused harm to me in any manner, I release them from their actions against me, and I forgive them. Lord give me the strength to let it go completely and move forward in you. In the name of Jesus, I come asking you for the power to forgive and let things go. Lord, I thank you for your unchanging love in spite of my wrongs and I believe that you are going to help me to forgive others.



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 2 – PASTOR & HIS FAMILY

Scripture: Acts 6:1-7, 1 Kings 3

Devotion: Pastors and their families work very hard and sacrifice a lot in order to serve as examples to the congregation in word and deed. In addition to regular activities such as leading the church, preaching the word, teaching bible study, and leading prayer calls, many times they are called upon to do other things. As we saw in the “So You Want to be a Pastor” video, Pastor Sloan is a CEO, community leader, developer, counselor, coach, and more just within the church. But that isn’t even the beginning. First he is a husband, father, son, brother, and much more to so many others. So this week let’s pray for Pastor Sloan and his family that God continues to give them wisdom, good health, and success in all that they put their hand to without distractions. Just like the apostles solicited the help of others in Acts 6:4 so that they could focus their attention on prayer and the ministry of the Word, we too will join with our brothers and sisters in Christ to offer our support and prayers to the Sloan family.

Prayer: Dear God, I want to lift up my Pastor, Dr. Timothy W. Sloan and his family to you this week in prayer. Lord, give him wisdom and direction as he leads your church. Please keep him and his family humble and always relying on you to give him the perfect wisdom from above and direction that he needs. Help him to consider information offered by others and also to come to you in prayer as he evaluates things. Remind him of your servant Solomon who when he was to become king prayed only for your wisdom and because of his humility you granted even more than he could have ever imagined. Lord, we pray for our First Lady, Dr. Sonya Sloan as she continues to undergird him in ministry and fulfills her individual purpose in life. We pray a hedge of protection around the children, Sarah Julia, Soren Grace and Timothy John and also ask that you give them wisdom at a young age to know right from wrong and how to excel in everything including school. Finally, we pray according to Romans 15:32 that they may be kept safe from unbelievers and that the contributions that they make at The Luke may be favorably received by the Lord’s people there, so that they may come to us ready to preach and lead this congregation with joy, by God’s will, and be refreshed.



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 3: PROJECT A1:8 LOCAL AND GLOBAL MISSIONS

Scripture: Acts 1:8

Devotion: The desire to forget about things, people and situations we don't see daily in front of us is sometimes our greatest downfall. Like the old saying goes "out of sight, out of mind". Between our daily tasks, our own ambitions and our own desires, we oft times forget about those who are less fortunate than we are. Those who have no hope, those who have no peace, those who live without justice, and those with no Christ. We are reminded in scripture that as believers it is not only a privilege, but also our duty to reach out beyond where we are and become agents of change to the world we live in. We are given a power from God to become witnesses of the very same saving Grace that we to are recipients of. We are called to Witness to those far and near. We are commissioned to share the gospel of Jesus Christ, and support our brothers and sisters who are in need. Mark 16:15, compels us to go to the entire world and preach the gospel to all creation.

It is important that we resist the temptation to become so selfishly consumed that we forget the selfless sacrifice He made for each of us. For it is only by Grace that we have each been saved. (Ephesians 2:8)

Things you can do to be a witness to others:

- Give financially toward local and foreign missions
- Volunteer at a local shelter or food bank
- Share the gospel with someone who is unsaved

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for your Grace and your Mercy that's extended to us daily. Forgive us for the times when we were more concerned about ourselves than those who are lost and without hope. Burden our hearts with the desire to become your hands and feet to the world we live in. Help us to remember that you have placed your light within us to shine for the world to see and be changed (Acts 13:14). We thank you for Project A1:8, help us to be faithful to those you have called us to serve, both far and near. Father, as we share your goodness to others, we thank you for meeting every need in our lives. Hide us behind your cross, and covers us with your blood, in Christ Jesus Name we pray. Amen



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 4: PROJECT NEXT

Scripture: Isaiah 43:19

Devotion: During the best part of a street game of basketball, on lookers who felt they had something better to offer to the game would often yell “I’ve Got Next”! This declared to others that the teams on the sideline would be next to play the winning team. When someone would declare I’ve Got Next it was never said with thoughts that they would lose, but always with much confidence that the next game would definitely bring them victory.

It’s that same confidence that we can have in Christ for whatever He has next for you will always bring you Victory! Because Gods next move is always His best move. Now in order for us to experience the Next that God has for us daily we must:

1st Denounce fear and doubt – Trust, that if it’s Gods Vision He has the responsibility to bring it to past. (Mark 11:24; James 1:6)

2nd Be willing to sow - When we sow our time, our finances, and even our prayers towards what God has Next for us it shows that we have faith in what He’s promised. (James 2:14-20)

3rd Expect a harvest – Make the necessary preparation so that you are ready to receive what God has promised. (Numbers 23:19)

****Note:** If you have not yet committed your pledge card to support our Project Next Campaign, please do so at the church this week. Pledge cards can be found in the back of the seats or by requesting one from our 1st Touch Ambassadors.

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

Prayer: Father, we thank you for always being so faithful to us. We ask that you forgive us for walking in fear and doubt of your promise. Lord we know that you have a plan for us and that plan is not to harm us but to prosper us and to give us a hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). We thank you God for choosing us. Father we thank you for Project Next. We thank you that we have this opportunity to build and expand, as we fulfill the mission that you have given us. Cause us to be faithful with our time and treasure to that that you have placed in our hands. Father we believe you for greater. We love you Father with our whole heart and we stand in great expectancy for ALL that you have promised. Father we know that your next move is always your best move. We believe it and call it done. In Christ Jesus Name we pray. Amen.



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 5: CHURCH STAFF AND MINISTRY LEADERS

Scripture: Exodus 18:13-23; Numbers 11:16-17

Devotion: Dwight Moody says, “It is better to put 10 men to work than to do the work of ten men”. The first task of Jesus’ ministry was to choose 12 people who could 1) assist Him carrying out His assignment and 2) carry on His ministry after His death. Ministry is a team effort. In fact, the bible uses the metaphor of a body to describe how different yet how essential is each part to the full functioning of the whole (1 Corinthians 12:12-26).

Imagine the men and women who gave up everything to follow Jesus and fulfill His mission on earth. Today, among us, are men and women who have heeded God’s call to leadership and service. The Luke’s Church Staff and Ministry Leaders labor to offer ministry that is intentional, hospitable and creative so that God’s transformative power can flow uninhibited in our midst. The result of this kind of ministry is that we can Build Bridges for Future Generations and produce what Jesus calls, “greater works” (John 14:12).

Prayer: God, thank You for the staff of The Luke Church. Thank You for the countless hours that they commit behind the scenes, so that ministry takes place that is intentional, hospitable and creative. Thank You for being faithful to your Word to send laborers into your vineyard (Matthew 9:38). God we know that you never intended a staff to do it alone. You have called us “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” and given each of us gifts to serve the world (1 Peter 5:9). Thank You for our ministry leaders who invest their time and talent in ways that we may never see that make us uniquely ‘The Luke’. We see the fruit week after week as you add “to the church daily those who are being saved” (John 15; Acts 2:47). It is because of lay ministry leaders, ministry assistants and ministry administrators that we are able to worship freely and be transformed by the Spirit’s power. We pray for a refreshing, reenergizing and reinvigorating of their spirits. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 6: MULTIPLY

Scripture: Luke 14:25-33

Devotion: “Know that the LORD is GOD. It is He who has made us, and we are His, we are His people, the sheep of His pasture” (Psalm 100:3). The bible is clear that we are the LORD’s. This not only means that we eat where He feeds, but also that we follow where He leads.

God has a plan for every believer; that plan is called discipleship. To be a disciple simply means that we are followers, learners or students of Jesus: His life and His legacy. Disciples are charged to make disciples and by being disciples and making the disciples we have the opportunity to impact the world!

Prayer: God, we are so thankful that we don’t have to be conformed to this world, but we can be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). Thank You for finding along life’s journey and extending to us the grace to follow you. Our lives have never been the same! God, we want your heart. Help us to freely receive your love, grace, mercy and salvation...and just as freely as we have received it, help us to liberally give it to everyone we know (Matthew 10:5-8). In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.



PRAYER FOCUS & DEVOTIONALS

WEEK 7 HEALTHY LIVING (PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL HEALTH)

Scripture: Romans 12:1-2 (Physical); Philippians 4:4-9 (Emotional); Matthew 25:14-27 (Financial)

Devotion: Everything we have belongs to God, including our body, emotions and finances. It's not ours for the purpose of selfish indulgence, but rather a challenge to Godly stewardship. Here's the deal, God entrusts us with each of these with the intent of gaining glory from what we do with them. So, maybe you're not in the best of health, but you can begin making changes now. If you make the sacrifice, He'll handle the transformation. Emotions are often hard to get a grip on. Truthfully, they can sometimes be all over the place. God's got a plan though: rejoice in the Lord...Always; rid yourself of anxiousness; pray...about everything; and He'll give you the peace of mind you desperately need.

Finances are not simply a means to an end. They are a test of stewardship. God will supply all of our needs. We just need to make sure we manage them correctly so that we leave a legacy for generations to come. If we follow God's biblical prescriptions we can experience healthy living physically, emotionally and financially. Now it's your turn – Ask God what changes you need to make to become a healthier you?

Prayer: God, thank you for who you've created us to be and every provision you've made. Continue to cleanse our life of unhealthy habits and behaviors. Give us a mindset to please you in all that we do. Help us to continually make changes to our lives that are pleasing to you. Lord, keep our minds in complete peace when we're consumed by distractions. Help us to take captive our thoughts today and make them obedient to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). Bind our broken hearts and stitch them together with your thread of love (Psa. 147:3). Increase our resources and show us how to use our finances to build a strong foundation for our future (Luke 14:28). In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.