



# PRAYER & FASTING

FAMILY RESOURCE

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*"If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me."*

- God, Jeremiah 29:13 NLT

During this 21-day period, you will use this age-appropriate resource to teach your child about Prayer & Fasting. Each day, your child will take one slip from the “give up” cup to fast from. Then your child will take a slip from the “fill up” cup to complete. We hope and pray this resource will allow your child to give up something for God to get closer to Him.

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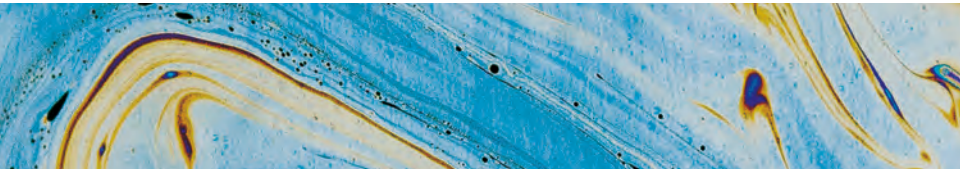
## Why Fast?

Fasting is one of the oldest and most prevalent spiritual practices in the Bible. Great leaders in the Bible fasted routinely, including Moses, David, Jeremiah, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Jesus and the disciples. Jesus expects that we will fast regularly. In Matthew 6:16, Jesus addresses fasting specifically when he tells the disciples, “When you fast...”. Notice Jesus says “when” not “if”. Jesus assumes that we will fast. Though fasting is assumed, it is not required. We don’t have to fast, we get to fast. Like all intentional spiritual practices, fasting should not be legalistic – we are not earning approval from God through fasting.

## The goal of fasting...

- **is to draw nearer to God.**
- **allows us to create space in our minds and hearts for more of God’s presence.**
- **helps us focus on God instead of our comforts and conveniences.**
- **reminds us that God provides every good and perfect gift.**
- **helps us open our heart to hear from God, no matter our age.**

The important thing is for your child to recognize the value behind personal sacrifice. By setting aside special times to disconnect from some of the extra-curricular activities and treats they enjoy on a regular basis, they learn how to connect to God in a closer way.



# Elementary Prayer & Fasting

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1. Cut out each *give up* slip and place in the *give up* cup.
2. Cut out each *fill up* slip and place in the *fill up* cup.
3. Pull 1 slip from the *give up* cup to see what you are going to fast from that day.
4. Pull 1 slip from the *fill up* cup to see how you are going to draw near to God for the day.

give <b>up</b> desserts & candy	fill <b>up</b> God, thank You for our family. Our family doesn't look like all other families. We are different and that's a good thing! Help us to remember that our family is a gift from you. Even when we don't get along, You want us to show each other patience, grace, and love. <b>Action Idea: Do something today to show love to someone in your life.</b>
give <b>up</b> tv, movies, & videos	fill <b>up</b> God, there are times when we don't feel like talking about what's wrong. We just want to be mad or sad or frustrated. Sometimes, life seems really unfair. Father, You are the only One who sees everything and knows everything. Please help me to trust You. Please help me to rely on You when I feel this way. <b>Action Idea: Talk to God about something that is troubling you today.</b>
give <b>up</b> sodas & special drinks (only drink water)	fill <b>up</b> The Psalmist says "...those who look to the Lord have every good thing they need" (Psalm 34:10b NIV). Father, it can be hard to focus on the good things we have when there's something we really want. Help us to look to You in moments of jealousy and discontentment.
give <b>up</b> chips & crackers	fill <b>up</b> Father, sometimes it's hard to be brave and courageous. Sometimes our fears can feel bigger than our faith. But we know that You are always with us. Help us to tell You when we're afraid. Help us to know You are with us.
give <b>up</b> 1 snack for the day	fill <b>up</b> God, thank You for all Your amazing creations. Thank You for the birds, the animals, the flowers and the trees, the lakes and the streams, and the sun that rises and sets each day. Thank You for creating a beautiful world for us to live in and enjoy. <b>Action Idea: Look for things God made today and thank Him.</b>
give <b>up</b> 15 min of free play time	fill <b>up</b> The Bible says in Colossians 3:12 (NIV) to "clothe yourselves with compassion." Lord, each day remind us to do what Your Word says—to be completely and fully loving and generous with others. Help us to be so compassionate that it's as if we were actually dressed in it.
give <b>up</b> desserts & candy	fill <b>up</b> Father, we ask You to help us forgive those who hurt us, upset us, or make us angry. You have forgiven us for so much, and we want to forgive others to show how thankful we are for Your grace.
give <b>up</b> tv, movies, & videos	fill <b>up</b> God, it's easy to give up. It's challenging to work hard. We pray that in the moments we feel like we can't keep going, that we would remember You are a big, strong, and loving Father. Thank you for being with us and for helping us when we ask.
give <b>up</b> video games	fill <b>up</b> In 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Paul tells us that each of us was created with a variety of gifts and talents. Father in heaven, thank You for the gifts and talents You have given us. Help us know how to use those gifts and talents to show others how good You are. <b>Action Idea: Write down your talents and hang it up in your room.</b>
give <b>up</b> video games	fill <b>up</b> In Galatians 6:9, the Bible says: "Let us not become tired of doing good" (NIV). Father, Your Word tells us to do good, even when it's hard. Help us to look for ways to be kind, generous and helpful, and to not grow tired in doing so. <b>Action Idea: Help someone today.</b>
give <b>up</b> sodas & special drinks (only drink water)	fill <b>up</b> Father, help us to be content with all You've given us. We know that the best way to be content is to remember all the things You've already done for us. If we had nothing else, Your love is enough. Thank You for the hope You've given us through Jesus.
give <b>up</b> chips & crackers	fill <b>up</b> Father, help us to be people who think before we act. Remind us to pause, take a deep breath, and consider our options before we make choices. We know that showing self-control helps us just as much as it helps others. <b>Action Idea: Stop doing anything for 1 minute.</b>
give <b>up</b> 1 snack for the day	fill <b>up</b> Father, Your Word tells us that You knew what our lives would look like before we were even born. It says that You have a specific plan for us—a good plan! God, give us the courage and the faith to accomplish all that You have set out for us.
give <b>up</b> 15 min of free play time	fill <b>up</b> God, thank You for the people in our lives who have shown us grace. You have given us people to love us and forgive us. You have also given us people who have supported us, accepted us and encouraged us. Help us to do those things for others too.
give <b>up</b> desserts & candy	fill <b>up</b> God, help us to show self-control in every situation. When we want to lose our tempers or give in when we shouldn't, remind us that, with your help, we can overcome temptation and make the wise choice.
give <b>up</b> tv, movies, & videos	fill <b>up</b> God, You know every part of us. You know our thoughts, our hopes and our fears. You even know the number of hairs on our head. You know us inside and out. Thank You for being a Creator who loves us completely. Give us the confidence to love ourselves the same way. <b>Action Idea: Write down 5 things you like about how God made you.</b>
give <b>up</b> video games	fill <b>up</b> Father, thank You for loving us enough to send us Your Son, Jesus, even when we did nothing to deserve it. Help us to not only love others, but to do something to show them we love them in every situation. <b>Action Idea: Get to know God by reading more about Him in the Bible</b>
give <b>up</b> sodas & special drinks (only drink water)	fill <b>up</b> God, you made me different from my friends and family—on purpose! You did this because You wanted me to be me. Show me all the unique ways You created me; help me to use those things so that others see what a big, loving, amazing Father You are.
give <b>up</b> chips & crackers	fill <b>up</b> Father in heaven, forgive us for any time we have mistreated someone because they are different from us. Forgive us for any time we have seen someone being mistreated and did nothing about it. Give us the courage to do the right thing and to stand up for someone else. <b>Action Idea: Be nice to someone who is different than you.</b>
give <b>up</b> 1 snack for the day	fill <b>up</b> God, when we're hurt, tired, angry, or anxious, it's hard to keep going. But we know that those are the times when it's especially important to fight the temptation to give up. We need You, God, to remind us that You are the source of our strength when we are weak.
give <b>up</b> 15 min of free play time	fill <b>up</b> If we lived in a world without generosity, it would be a very sad place. Help us to remember that although our lives aren't perfect, we are loved by a giving Father in heaven. Help us to show compassion to others to spread light and hope in the world.

