



**40
DAY**

**PRAYER
+ FASTING
GUIDE**

40-Day

Prayer & Fasting Guide

by

Dr. Rod Parsley

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40-Day Prayer & Fasting Guide

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INTRODUCTION

I have prepared this devotional guide to assist you during the forty days leading up to Resurrection Sunday. You will notice that this guide is arranged in a specific order. Each week, there is a verse or passage from Isaiah 58, Psalm 24, the Gospels, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Psalter (the book of Psalms), and the book of Proverbs. This pattern repeats itself for the six weeks leading up to Resurrection Sunday, with the last week shortened as we will have reached our forty-day goal.

Following each devotional page is a place to record your progress through the forty days. On this page, you will first recite the day's Scripture aloud and then check off the box when you are done. As you speak the Scripture for that day—loud enough that you can hear yourself speaking—I believe that God will do a work of illumination and transformation in your life.

Then, you will record what you are fasting that day, and check off that box. Here is a partial list of the many things participants have fasted over the years:

Coffee/Tea	Fast food	Meats
Soft drinks	Movies	Shopping
Social Media	Sweets	Nail Salon
Eating out	Desserts	Barber Shop

Use this list as a guide for ideas about what to fast, or as an inspiration that will lead to other ideas. Fasting serves notice on your body and your soul that they cannot have unlimited access to whatever they want; your spirit is in charge. Your spirit, under God's direction, now has the ability and the authority to restrain the soulish cravings and fleshly impulses of your soul and body.

Fasting will also heighten your sensitivity to spiritual things, including God's instruction and direction. Fasting will become even more effective when combined with an increased intensity of time and effort in prayer.

Then, lastly, the page contains an area for you to record what God is speaking to you from the day's devotional.

It is my prayer that you will become more aware of and responsive to the voice of God, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. I believe that you will also have a clearer understanding of the benefits God has prepared for you during this Resurrection season.

Dr. Rod Parsley
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Week One

Days 1-7

DAY 1

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:6: Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens....

Fasting is not, as so many Christians seem to think, some sort of hunger strike against God—trying to persuade Him to do something He would not otherwise be inclined to do. Neither is fasting an opportunity to make a more persuasive petition for something that we want for ourselves.

Isaiah 58 makes clear God’s purposes for fasting. The first two of these purposes are mentioned in the first half of verse 6: to “*loose the bonds of wickedness*” and to “*undo heavy burdens.*”

It is no secret that we are involved in warfare in the spiritual realm. Our warfare is not with people, but with principalities and powers that will do all they can to put people in bondage. Fasting—combined with prayer—is a powerful tool that can be used to overcome the evil influences that try to bind us to habits, addictions, destructive behaviors, and unprofitable patterns of thinking.

God also wants us to be free from anything that would burden us and prevent us from experiencing the joy that Jesus died and rose again to provide for us. These are important points upon which we can focus our fasting and prayer during this season of devotion leading up to Resurrection Sunday.

DAY 2

Psalm 24

Psalm 24:1: The earth belongs to the LORD, and its fullness, the world, and those who dwell in it.

If we believe the simple, sincere, and straightforward statements in the Word of God, we will acknowledge that God is the Creator of all things. Since He made it, He ultimately owns it. If He owns it, He can do with it whatever He wants. This concept is known as sovereignty. I can summarize this theological concept very succinctly: He is God, and we are not.

The psalmist here (David, according to ancient attribution) is setting forth a premise that will help us not only during Resurrection season, but also throughout the year: God is the ultimate authority. As His people, our task is simple enough: obey Him and do what He says.

This takes a great deal of pressure off us. We don't have to figure everything out ourselves. We just have to obey Him, since we belong to Him. In this, we are like the first Adam: as long as he obeyed God, he walked in God's blessing. God will protect us and provide for us as we walk in fellowship with Him. This should be our goal all year long.

DAY 3

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:19-21: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroy and where thieves do not break in nor steal, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Jesus was pointing out a clear distinction between earth and heaven in this verse. Many people, even believers, place more trust in earthly riches than they do in the things that heaven values. Treasures on earth are at risk, but treasures in heaven are protected.

There are no thieves in heaven. No scammers will try to steal your identity, your privacy, or your money. No bribes will persuade the officials there to do things that will compromise your liberty or security. No inflation will erode the value of all you have saved or set aside. Clearly, heaven's priorities are preferable to the best that earth has to offer.

The last statement Jesus made is the most important: your heart follows your treasure. Let us make sure that our most valuable treasures are measured in heavenly values rather than by earthly standards that will one day pass away.

DAY 4

Old Testament Reading

1 Chronicles 29:9: Then the people rejoiced because they had offered willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.

The context of this verse is a response by all Israel to a request by King David for an offering to build the Temple. The building project he announced was met with unanimous approval. Israel's support was measured by their willingness to give sacrificially to the cause. The Bible says they did it with their whole heart. They were not under compulsion or coercion, but they had a divine desire birthed in their hearts.

Every God-ordained project follows the same principles: a leader announces a goal, and God places it in people's hearts to support that goal. Everyone participates. Everyone contributes. Everyone benefits. God's name is glorified, His kingdom is increased, and His people are blessed.

DAY 5

New Testament Reading

2 Corinthians 9:6: But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

The principle of sowing and reaping is well attested in the natural world. If you want to harvest a crop, you must sow a seed. The more seed you sow, the greater the harvest you can expect. Anyone who has ever farmed, had a garden, or participated in a botany project knows that this is a universal truth.

What many people don't realize is that this same principle works in the spiritual world as well as in the natural world. The context of the above verse is that Paul is taking an offering from the Corinthian church. He uses the concept of seed and sowing to demonstrate the principle of giving to the kingdom of God. The same principles that apply to natural farming also apply to giving to God. Those who give a little will reap a little. Those who give more will reap more. Whether it is little or much, God will see to it that whatever is given will be multiplied.

DAY 6

Psalter Reading

Psalm 34:9-10: Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints; for the ones who fear Him will not be in need. The young lions are in want and suffer hunger, but the ones who seek the LORD will not lack any good thing.

What keeps us from lack is not an accumulation of material things, or winning life's lottery, or dependence on other people or the government. Our assurance of adequate provision comes from our faith in God.

The psalmist says that even the lion, historically recognized as the most formidable of predators, can suffer from hunger. Their great strength and size will not help them in the event of an extremity.

However, in contrast to that, those who trust in God as their ultimate provider will never be disappointed. If we ever need any good thing, we can depend upon God to see to it that we have all the provision that we could ever need.

DAY 7

Proverbs

Proverbs 3:9-10: Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your presses will burst out with new wine.

These verses remind us that we should put God first in every area of our lives, and especially in our giving. In fact, one of the feasts of the Lord celebrated in ancient Israel was the feast of First Fruits. It is documented in Leviticus 23:10-11:

...When you have come into the land that I am giving to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf bundle of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD so that you may be accepted.

According to tradition, once the first sheaf of grain was accepted, the entire harvest was accepted. When we give God the first and best of what He has given us, He promises to fill our storehouses with good things. As we return to Him the first of all He has blessed us with, He commits to multiplying what we have given Him. I encourage you to take full advantage of such an offer from God!

Week Two

Days 8-14

DAY 8

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:6 (continued): ...and to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke?

It seems incredible that slavery as it has been known throughout history is still occurring today. Ungodly men still strive for dominance over their fellow man, and sometimes this dominance is demonstrated by them putting other people in literal chains.

As heinous as this is, what is far more pervasive is the internal bondage that comes from oppression in all of its forms. The adversary of our souls attempts to keep people in bondage to all kinds of ungodly thoughts, behaviors, and addictions. These things bind men just as certainly as steel shackles around their feet and hands.

In Luke 4:18, Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah when He said His purpose was “...*to set at liberty those who are oppressed...*” As believers, our commission is exactly the same—to proclaim the good news of the gospel. As we do, the result will be freedom for those who have been oppressed, and liberty for those who have labored under the yoke of sin.

DAY 9

Psalm 24

Psalm 24:2: For He has founded it on the seas, and established it on the floods.

God is not only the Creator, He is the divine maintainer of all that we see and know in our universe. The systems that are at work in the natural world are the products of a supernatural God who planned it all and set it into motion. The more we find out about the world in which we live, the more we can see the divine nature of God in conceiving and fashioning it all.

Consider the events and processes that unfold all around us every day. The growth of plants, the water cycle, the migration of birds, the process of respiration or circulation—all of them speak of wisdom that is unimaginable.

Going further, think of the effects of gravity, the nuclear fusion that takes place in stars, and the forces that lead to the formation of planets. No wonder the psalmist said in Psalm 139:6: *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is lofty, and I cannot fathom it.*

The very same God who formed the universe and all that is in it—and who keeps it running more smoothly than the finest watch—also made you and me. He created us, and He will sustain us so that we will not fail to fulfill His purposes for our lives.

DAY 10

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:33: But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you.

You have probably heard the saying, “First things first.” Another way of saying it was popularized by author and entrepreneur Stephen Covey, who said, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.”¹

For those of us living in the natural world, surrounded by to-do lists, goals, deadlines, and time-dated responsibilities large and small, it can be easy to lose sight of eternal things. However, to neglect spiritual things in the pursuit of natural things is dangerous and can be deadly.

I encourage you during this special season of prayer and fasting to focus on eternal principles instead of only attending to natural duties. Keep God a priority in your day and watch Him involve Himself in every moment of your life, especially when you need His intervention. His peace, His presence, and His provision will all be available to you when you put His kingdom first.

¹ Covey, S. R. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people: restoring the character ethic*. New York, Simon and Schuster.

DAY 11

Old Testament Reading

Nehemiah 8:10: Then he said to them, “Go your way. Eat the fat, drink the sweet drink, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

The context of this verse involves a sense of grieving and repentance as the Word of God was read to the entire assembly of Israel after the exiles had returned from Babylon. People understood how far from God they had strayed, and they sought to return to Him with all their hearts. They were undone when they realized how far short of God’s righteous commands they had fallen.

Instead of a message of severity and condemnation, the priests had a word of encouragement for them: God was pleased for them to enjoy the benefits of His great grace. The priests also cautioned them not to forget to provide for those who were not as fortunate. The result would be joy instead of grief and rejoicing instead of sorrow.

We, too, should enjoy the benefits that God so graciously provides. However, it is also our responsibility to give some of what God has given us to those who have little or nothing. God will cause us to rejoice in our giving as well as in our receiving.

DAY 12

New Testament Reading

2 Corinthians 9:7-8: Let every man give according to the purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. God is able to make all grace abound toward you, so that you, always having enough of everything, may abound to every good work.

Here we see that *how* we give is at least as important as *what* we give. If we truly trust God, He will reward us for every act of obedience. We do not obey out of a sense of obligation; we obey because we know that we serve a good God, who is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (see Hebrews 11:6).

The attitude people have when giving is at least partly conditioned by their concept of God's character. If they see God as a hard and unforgiving taskmaster, they will have a hard time being cheerful in giving. On the other hand, if they realize that God is waiting to multiply their sowing back into their lives in an abundant harvest, they will be happy to comply with his requirements.

I encourage you to allow God to recalibrate your thinking about His nature and character. He is a good God, and He wants good things for you—so much that, according to our Scripture passage for today, that you “...*always have enough of everything....*”

DAY 13

Psalter Reading

Psalm 35:27: May those who favor my righteous cause shout for joy and be glad; may they say continually, “The LORD be magnified, who delights in the peace of His servant.”

Peace...other versions of the Bible translate the last line of this verse as: “...*who delights in the prosperity of His servant.*” There is no need to be dismayed about the term *peace* having more than one meaning. It is a translation of the Hebrew word *shalom*, which has several different meanings, including peace, prosperity, health, welfare, and happiness. It is a familiar Hebrew greeting—even today—in Jewish communities all over the world.

The truth I want to especially point out is that God is pleased when His servants prosper, or are at peace, or are in health. God is saying *shalom* to you. It is a blessing to hear that from your family members or friends, but think about the impact of the God of the universe saying to you, “Peace! Prosperity! Health! Well-being!”

I also want to make it clear that prosperity and peace go hand in hand. Times of conflict and turmoil do not lend themselves to increase. However, when the peace of God prevails, prosperity—spiritually, emotionally, and financially, will be the result.

DAY 14

Proverbs

Proverbs 8:20-21: I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, that I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, and I will fill their treasuries.

Wisdom is speaking in this passage, and it is giving instruction that will benefit all who heed it.

One lesson is that the wise walk in righteousness, and in the paths of justice. The corollary of this is that the unwise stray into the paths of unrighteousness, which leads to all kinds of wickedness. Righteousness leads to increase. Wickedness leads to destruction, which causes loss in every area of life.

There are those who may try to point out examples of people who have been ungodly yet increase in worldly wealth. They are not to be envied or emulated, because without repentance, their end will be loss instead of gain. Proverbs 13:11 says, *Wealth gained by vanity will be diminished, but he who gathers by labor will increase.* Allow wisdom to instruct you on the path of righteousness.

Week Three

Days 15-21

DAY 15

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:7: Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the poor who are outcasts into your house?

Rhetorical questions are communication strategies that are used for purposes other than to get what is usually an obvious answer. In this case, the answers to the questions the prophet raises are obviously, “Yes!”

Yes, it is God’s purpose for those who have more to share generously with those who have less. It is God’s purpose for us to feed the hungry, to find shelter for the homeless, and to help those who are experiencing hard times.

Instead of focusing on “me and we,” God instructs us to care for others, especially those who have no opportunity to help us in return. Listen to what Jesus said in Luke 14:12-14: *Then He said also to the one who invited Him, “When you prepare a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends or your brothers or your kinsmen or your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return, and you be repaid. But when you prepare a banquet, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, for they cannot repay you. You shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”*

DAY 16
Psalm 24

Psalm 24:3: Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in His holy place?

Even though it is not certain whether the psalmist was referring to a specific hill in these verses, it was customary for worshippers of the time to meet with God on the top of promontories or mountains.

“*His holy place*”—mentioned in this psalm—may refer to the Tabernacle, which was known as a meeting place with God since it was built at Mount Sinai after the children of Israel left Egypt.

However, now the “*holy place*” is not behind a veil in a building—it is wherever we meet with God.

Because of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, all believers have an invitation to come into God’s presence. We no longer need to wait upon a priest to sacrifice a lamb or a dove to enable us to enter into worship.

His presence makes any place holy, regardless of where it is. It could be in front of a burning bush in the wilderness or in a church building where the saints gather. If He is there, it is a holy place. Let us seek His presence with all our hearts during this season of fasting and prayer.

DAY 17

Gospel Reading

Matthew 7:11: If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Jesus had an unusual and difficult task in coming to the earth to represent a holy God to sinful men. Among other responsibilities, He had to explain spiritual concepts to natural people.

In many cases, they had no experience with or frame of reference for spiritual truth. Because of that, Jesus did His best to explain things about God and His kingdom in terms with which His listeners were already familiar and could easily understand.

In this verse, Jesus is comparing and contrasting God, who is the ultimate Father, with earthly fathers. A few verses before, Jesus made the point that earthly fathers would give their children the things they requested. Anyone in his audience who was a father or who had a father (all of them) would have understood that. Jesus then went on to illustrate that our heavenly Father will do that much and more for us, His children. When we have a need, we can trust our heavenly Father to provide for us.

DAY 18

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 1:19: If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land...

As you have probably heard me say, every promise of God is conditional. God says, “I will do *this*, if you will do *that*.” In order for us to receive the promise God made, we must follow the instruction that God gave.

In this case, the instruction is twofold—being willing and obedient. I will deal with the second one first. We must be obedient. The greatest demand God will ever make of you is simple obedience. I said it was simple, but I did not say it was always easy. The thing God wants and requires of us more than anything else is just to obey Him. Obedience has rewards, and disobedience has consequences. In order to enjoy the rewards, we must obey.

The second instruction is that we must be willing. It is possible to be obedient without being willing. We can be compelled to take actions that are contrary to our will, but God will not coerce us or threaten us. He simply gives us instructions and expects us to obey Him—and to do it willingly. Those choices are ours to make. As we do, we will enjoy every blessing that God provides.

DAY 19

New Testament Reading

2 Corinthians 9:10: Now He who supplies seed to the sower and supplies bread for your food will also multiply your seed sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness.

Our God has thought of everything necessary for us to survive and thrive. He has not left anything to chance. In the same way that He provided everything Adam needed in the Garden of Eden, so He has provided all we need to accomplish His will in our lives. This verse of Scripture is proof of that.

Everything God does begins with a seed. Seed, when it is sown, leads to bread. God gives us seed to sow and bread to eat, and everything in between. His provision is comprehensive and limitless. If we have a need at any point in our life, all we have to do is ask our heavenly Father for it, and He will provide.

There is one more point I want to make about this verse: God promises to provide seed to the sower. He does not say He will provide seed to the hoarder. The purpose of a seed cannot be realized unless that seed is sown.

The more seed you sow, the more God will multiply your seed. This is a fundamental principle in the kingdom of God, and one that will work for you every time you sow a seed, whether it is into natural soil or into the fertile soil of His kingdom.

DAY 20

Psalter Reading

Psalm 37:3-4: Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and practice faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.

This passage shows us that one action or decision leads to another. While this is not absolutely guaranteed (we live in a fallen world, after all), it is the way God intends it to be. Trusting in the Lord should result in doing good, which will cause us to dwell in the land He has provided for us, which should result in us practicing faithfulness.

Just as certainly, delighting ourselves in the Lord will result in Him giving us the desires of our heart. There are two meanings here. One is that God will give us what we desire. This is in harmony with other Scriptures which confirm that God wants to give us good things.

The other meaning is that God will place in our hearts godly and righteous desires. When we delight ourselves in God, He will give us desires that lead us to peace and righteousness. We will be motivated to do what He asks us to do instead of being tempted to follow fleshly impulses that lead to all kinds of negative outcomes. Be delighted with God's presence and His influence today.

DAY 21

Proverbs

Proverbs 10:22: The blessing of the LORD makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

There has been a great deal of debate in the body of Christ about whether it is God's will for people to be rich. The controversy is usually centered on material wealth. I don't see any reason to doubt that God wants His people to have more than enough, as this verse makes clear.

People often ridicule the notion of Christians having wealth, and they usually point to the example of Jesus, who (they claim) was poor. Jesus did not display the trappings of a wealthy lifestyle during His earthly ministry. However, those things are not the definition of wealth.

Many people who have an abundance of material possessions are not wealthy—they have accumulated a large amount of debt to acquire everything they have. In contrast to this, Jesus always had what He needed to accomplish His Father's will.

On one occasion, when He needed money to pay taxes, He instructed Peter to find it in the mouth of a fish! Whatever He needed, God provided. That is the true definition of wealth. The most wonderful thing about the wealth God gives is that it doesn't come with worry, anxiety, or sorrow. The wealth God has for you is worry-free. Enjoy it!

Week Four

Days 22-28

DAY 22
Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:7: When you see the naked, to cover him and not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Clothing has been a necessary part of the human experience since Genesis 3 when God Himself provided Adam and Eve with their first articles of clothing.

Nakedness has historically been associated with shame. The propensity for the modern world to shed its clothes is a sign of how far humanity has gone in the wrong direction. Under normal circumstances, people will seek to cover themselves instead of exposing themselves. This is normal and natural, and it is why believers are commanded to provide covering for those who lack sufficient clothing.

The second part of this verse commands us to help those in our own families as they have need and we have opportunity. How many times have family members been the backstop for others in their families who have experienced misfortune? This is also normal and natural. Families love one another, and that love is often expressed in giving.

Let us not help the world in need and overlook or neglect our own family members when they need our assistance. We may have a chance to speak to their hearts with the love of God as well as to their physical needs with a warm meal or a place to stay.

DAY 23

Psalm 24

Psalm 24:4: He who has clean hands and a pure heart; who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

This verse answers the questions the psalmist posed in the previous verse. Those who enter God's presence are the ones who practice righteousness. Our God is holy. His people should also be holy. The holiness that God requires is a matter of the heart, not of outward appearance or memorized traditions. The phrase "*clean hands and a pure heart*" symbolizes this inward holiness.

In addition, the psalmist gives two other conditions. Not lifting up your soul to vanity involves avoiding the worship of anything other than God. Whatever consumes more of your time and attention than God does is a candidate for idolatry in your life.

Swearing deceitfully means lying or trying to convince someone that you intend to do something that you don't or won't do. God always does what He says He will do. That should also be an unfailing characteristic of His people. When we say we will do something, we do it. This involves more than just our reputation—it also reflects on the character of the God we serve.

DAY 24

Gospel Reading

Mark 10:29-30: Jesus answered, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left a house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, who shall not receive a hundred times as much now in this age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, with persecution, and in the age to come, eternal life.”

Peter had just reminded Jesus that the disciples had left everything they knew to follow Him. Jesus responded by saying that nobody will ever give up anything for the kingdom of God without receiving an abundant return on their giving.

You can use the principles of arithmetic to determine whether any activity is from the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness. The devil subtracts and divides; God adds and multiplies. When you give anything for His cause and for His kingdom, He will always repay you.

Preachers of a previous generation had a phrase that summarized this. They would say, “You can’t beat God givin’.” What they meant was that regardless of what you gave to God, He would always give you more.

DAY 25

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 17:7-8: Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall not fear when heat comes, but its leaf shall be green, and it shall not be anxious in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

This passage echoes a well-known and familiar psalm. Jeremiah would have probably been familiar with it. Can you tell which psalm it is?

Psalm 1 is correct! I don't know if plagiarism was an issue thousands of years ago, but Jeremiah repeated some of the psalmist's thoughts nearly word for word. I don't consider that to be a problem, since the ideas contained in both these passages bear repeating.

When your trust is in the Lord, He will plant you and cause you to flourish regardless of what circumstances come your way. You will be beautiful and fruitful in all seasons because of the blessing of God upon you.

I encourage you to allow your roots to entwine deep into the fertile soil of the Word of God. As you do, He will establish you and sustain you in every circumstance of life.

DAY 26

New Testament Reading

Galatians 3:13-14: Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us—as it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—so that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

As I have often said, the curse of the law is that no one can keep it. The ultimate purpose of the law, according to the apostle Paul, was to be our schoolmaster to bring us to faith in Christ (see Galatians 3:23-25). Before we believed in Jesus as Savior, we were under the curse of the law—since we had no ability to keep it. That was before. Now, our lives are radically different.

The reason our lives have been so radically transformed is that the curse of the broken law came upon a substitute—the Lord Jesus Christ. He paid the penalty of sin so that we could receive the adoption of sons. Now, since the curse has been broken, all that remains for us is to receive and enjoy the blessing of God as a result of our faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. This is not just *a* blessing—it is *the* blessing of God, involving eternal life for all who will receive it.

DAY 27

Psalter Reading

Psalm 65:11: You crown the year with Your goodness, and Your paths drip abundance.

The psalmist in this verse uses language that reminds me of the conditions that must have existed in the Garden of Eden before Adam sinned. The Bible says God planted a garden with design and purpose to provide for the man He had created.

The earth brings forth abundantly after its kind. Everything that God created has seed within itself, so that it can reproduce and provide more. There are more acorns produced every year than all the squirrels in the world can eat. God placed abundance in every aspect of the world He created for us.

Our task is twofold. First, we have to access the wisdom that God has made available for us to gain the resources necessary to accomplish His will. Included in that is having more than enough to meet our own needs and those of our family members, since that is part of our world, or our domain.

Next, we need divine wisdom to know how to direct those resources to have maximum impact for the extension of His kingdom. Fulfilling our responsibilities may not be easy, but we cannot say that it is complicated. I urge you to focus on these two principles as we continue our season of prayer and fasting.

DAY 28

Proverbs

Proverbs 11:24: There is one who scatters, yet increases; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.

The world will tell you that the only way to increase is to scrape, skimp, and save everything you possibly can. According to the world's system, that is how it must be done. But once again, everything in the kingdom of God is diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive of the kingdom of the world.

How can it be possible that giving away from yourself leads to increase? It is possible when God tells you to give, and you obey Him, and He multiplies what you give and returns it back to you.

On the other hand, being miserly and stingy will lead to poverty—if not to material poverty, that attitude will certainly lead to spiritual poverty—a poverty of soul. Let us firmly and finally embrace the principles of the Word of God and reject the failed system of the world out of which God has called us. As you do, I see increase ahead for you!

Week Five

Days 29-35

DAY 29

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:9: Then you shall call, and the LORD shall answer; you shall cry, and He shall say, Here I am.

After outlining the purposes of fasting in the previous verses, Isaiah now explains the benefit of ministering hope to the hopeless. He is explicit: ministering selflessly to others has great benefits. One of those benefits is that you will have every confidence that God will hear and respond to the cry of your heart.

Faith can also be described as trust. As people living in a natural world, it takes faith to accept that there is a supernatural God who cannot be seen with natural eyes and is ready to hear your cry and meet your need. Paul (who was quoting Moses from Deuteronomy 30) said in Romans 10:6-8: *But the righteousness which is based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or, 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart."* Psalm 46:1 says, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble* (KJV).

If you have trouble, don't despair, because you also have God personally present when you call upon Him in faith.

DAY 30

Psalm 24

Psalm 24:5: He will receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This verse continues the same thought that we saw yesterday in Isaiah 58. It is this: there are benefits to living righteously. Again, we see the psalmist identifying not just *a* blessing, as if it were only some minor fringe benefit, but *the* blessing from the Lord.

This blessing includes everything it is God's pleasure to give His children. The blessing from the Lord is your inheritance as a child of God. Jacob may have deceitfully stolen his brother's blessing, but you don't have to go to that extreme—the blessing already belongs to you!

Righteousness and salvation are two aspects of the blessing featured here. "*Righteousness*" means that as a child of God, you are in right standing with God. The "*God of his salvation*" means the One who orchestrated your redemption through Christ from the time the foundations of the earth were laid.

Do you qualify? Clean hands? Yes. Pure heart? Yes. Avoiding idol worship? Yes. Received Christ as your Savior? Yes. Ask with confidence. God will hear and answer.

DAY 31

Gospel Reading

Luke 6:38: “Give, and it will be given to you: Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will men give unto you. For with the measure you use, it will be measured unto you.”

This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible, and it starts with a condition, given in the very first word—*give*. What an indictment against the selfish, self-centered, me-first, me-only generation in which we live!

In this kingdom (that is, the kingdom of God), the way to gain is to give. The reason this needs to be reiterated so often is because of the thousands of messages the world throws at you every day that say you are *first*, *best*, and *most important*. The world says the sun, moon, and stars all revolve around you. There is only one problem with that message: it is the opposite of the truth.

Our true purpose is never achieved until we give away from ourselves and beyond ourselves. That is when we receive a return on our giving that goes beyond our imagination. God becomes involved in our giving, and supernatural things are sure to happen. I believe you will see it unmistakably in the days ahead.

DAY 32

Old Testament Reading

Joel 2:26: You will eat abundantly and be satisfied, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; and My people will never again be shamed.

Shame has been part of the human condition ever since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, recorded in Genesis 3. We feel shame when we hurt someone else. We feel shame in a different way when someone else hurts us.

However, I have good news. The Lord Jesus Christ came to deal with our shame once for all by His sacrifice on the cross. Hebrews 12:2 says: *Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Since shame has been dealt with fully and finally, we can be free to enjoy the blessings of God in full measure. There is no need to apologize for God's blessing in your life. What you have is the result of God's grace. He has worked wonders for you. You don't need to feel self-conscious about any of God's benefits. Rejoice in them. Enjoy them. Tell those around you that the same benefits are available to all who put their faith and trust in Him.

DAY 33

New Testament Reading

Philippians 4:19: But my God shall supply your every need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Paul was addressing his friends in Philippi here, thanking them for sending him relief in the form of an offering to assist him in the work he was doing: spreading the gospel to regions that had not yet heard it.

No doubt some of the Philippians had given sacrificially to help him. He wanted them to know that they would not suffer lack or loss because of their giving to help spread the gospel.

This word does not just apply to the inhabitants of first century Philippi. It is equally applicable to all who support the work of the gospel today, regardless of where they live.

It is yet another confirmation that God stands ready to give back to all those who give to Him. The difference is that His measure of giving is “...according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” That is, by any estimation, an unlimited measure! We may have limits on what we can give to God, but rest assured He has no limits on what He can give to us.

DAY 34

Psalter Reading

Psalm 68:19: Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, even the God who is our salvation.

I like the language the psalmist used in this verse. The term *loads* is especially meaningful to me.

As a child, I accompanied my parents and my sister on many trips from our home in central Ohio to eastern Kentucky, where both of my parents were born. On the way, we would invariably see sights that still remind me of home.

One was a coal train. Car after car would be loaded to the brim with coal, coming from the coal fields to power plants along the Ohio River and elsewhere.

Another was logging trucks. They would navigate the twisting mountain roads in low gear, loaded with logs that would be turned into wood products of all kinds. When I read that God loads us with benefits, I see those images in my mind.

God doesn't want to just bless you a little bit. He wants to load you down with benefits. Salvation involves much more than having your sins forgiven and going to heaven when you die. Thank God for that, but God has much more in store for you during 2024 and beyond. Get ready to receive it!

DAY 35

Proverbs

Proverbs 13:22: A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

God's plan is that the inheritance of a good man is so abundant that it extends to the second generation beyond him.

In contrast, the sinner leaves nothing to those who follow him since it will be transferred into the hands of the righteous.

Here is one lesson from this verse: saving is not wrong. The only way to accumulate an inheritance (at least, in financial terms) is to have money left over after all your obligations are met. Ask God to give you wisdom in dealing with money. He will help you know how to save it as well as how to spend it.

Another point is that an inheritance involves more than just money. You can leave a legacy to future generations of faith, of righteousness, of honesty, of dignity, and of other values that have eternal rewards. This can be worth more than any financial benefits you could bestow.

One more point: don't be envious when you see the wicked appear to prosper. Tell them to go ahead and store it up. There is about to be a great transfer of wealth into the hands of the righteous who will use it to spread the gospel message around the world. I trust that you will be part of it!

Week Six

Days 36-40

DAY 36
Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58:10: ...and if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall rise in obscurity, and your darkness shall become as the noonday.

You have probably heard this old saying, or something like it: “The cream always rises to the top.” The problem is that few people these days have seen cream rise to the top of a pail of milk, since milking dairy animals is now mostly automated.

This verse declares that if you meet the conditions, you will not remain hidden in darkness. There are two conditions—giving to the hungry and satisfying the afflicted soul.

Giving to the hungry is self-explanatory. There is surely some kind of outreach near you that involves feeding hungry people. Satisfying the afflicted soul is best accomplished by proclaiming the gospel message to them. It is good to feed people naturally, but they will soon be hungry again. Feeding people’s spirits by giving them the living bread of God’s Word is even more satisfying.

When you become involved in these efforts, God promises that you will not be shrouded in obscurity. The darkness that has beset you and hindered you will have to give way to the light of His truth.

DAY 37

Psalm 24

Psalm 24:6: This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face.

The human body is wonderfully created. Each part has a specific purpose, and when all the parts work together, amazing things can happen. However, no part of the human anatomy is as expressive as the face. Since we are created in the image and likeness of God, it is no wonder that we should seek the face of God as well, since that is the most expressive part of His being.

We will encounter three notable things about the face of God when we seek Him. First, we will hear His Word. God speaks with His mouth, and every word of God has creative capability—it will accomplish what He intends. This is reason enough to find out what God has said about us in the Bible.

Next, we will feel God’s breath, or His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is active and operative on the earth and in our lives right now. He will energize us, empower us, and enable us to know and to understand things that we didn’t before.

Finally, we will see God’s smile. God is not frowning at us. His countenance is not like a thundercloud, waiting for us to make a mistake so He can throw a lightning bolt in our direction. We are loved, favored, and protected. God’s character is displayed as we seek His face!

DAY 38

Gospel Reading

Luke 11:9-10: “And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

The act of asking does not guarantee faith, but it implies that faith is at work. In this passage, the Lord Jesus Christ tells us that God’s children should not be bashful or backward about asking for what they want from Him. Since He is a loving heavenly Father, His purpose is to give us what we need and desire.

The context of this verse includes a reference to parents and children. Jesus is telling us that we should have the same confidence in coming before God that children have when asking their parents for something that is necessary for their well-being.

Conscientious parents will do everything they can to provide for their children. God is even more faithful than the most devoted of earthly parents, and His resources are unlimited. Let us confidently ask Him in faith for what we need. He is waiting to hear and answer our requests.

DAY 39

Old Testament Reading

Amos 9:13: Indeed, the days are coming, says the LORD, when the plowman will overtake the one who is reaping, and the treader of grapes the one who is sowing the seed; the mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it.

What a tremendous picture of abundance this verse paints! The prophet predicts that a day will come when the reapers will not have time to gather the harvest before another time of sowing overtakes them. Sowing and reaping will happen so fast that the seasons will all run together.

What day is the prophet proclaiming? I maintain that it is today! More wealth is being created now than at any time in history. One problem is that much of that wealth is being accumulated in the hands of relatively few people. Another problem is that God's people have been deceived into thinking that they can't have any of it.

The number one way to access the abundance that God has for you is to sow a seed into His kingdom. A seed may leave your hand, but it will never leave your life. God will cause it to go ahead of you and produce a harvest that He intends to use to bless your life. This is a fundamental principle of the kingdom of God. Sow a significant seed; get ready to reap a significant harvest!

DAY 40

New Testament Reading

James 2:26: As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead.

It may seem odd to include a Scripture verse like this at the end of our forty days of prayer and fasting, but there is a very good reason it is here. We have been reading, meditating, fasting, and praying. All of those things are necessary and part of an active devotional life. Our faith has been built up, our spirits have been edified, and our expectation has been heightened. But as James makes clear here, without corresponding action, our faith will be ineffective—dead, as he very bluntly says.

As we anticipate celebrating Resurrection Sunday, it has been our custom for many years to do two things on this special occasion. One is to proclaim the gospel in an unmistakable and powerful way, so that all who hear it will forsake sin and receive Jesus as Savior.

There are two occasions where the unchurched are more likely to attend a worship service than any other—Christmas and Easter. Let's believe God together that all who come will leave the service eternally different than when they came.

The other special part of our celebration is sowing a special seed. Many years ago, God spoke to me specifically about Resurrection Sunday. He said

that He had sowed His very best seed, which was Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb as a seed. Three days later, Jesus arose from the grave as the first fruits of a harvest of souls that continues to this day. God instructed me to challenge those under my influence to plant their very best seed as they celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In return for their obedience, God promised to give them a great miraculous harvest of increase in every area of their lives. He has been faithful to do just that for decades since God first gave me that word.

I want this word to become your word in 2024. Let your faith come alive as you sow your very best seed into God's kingdom, and anticipate His best harvest in your life, in your family, and in your community!

Thank you for joining me during these forty days of prayer and fasting. May God bless you abundantly!

~Pastor Rod Parsley

To Learn More...

To learn more about Pastor Rod Parsley and the many ministries he oversees—including World Harvest Church, Breakthrough Television Ministries, Bridge of Hope Outreach, Valor Christian College, and many more—please visit www.RodParsley.com where you can find updates, contact information, and 24-hour access to Prayer Partners.

