

Welcome. We are glad that you have joined us for another time of 40 Days of Focus. Traditionally, we have used this time as a season of personal reflection and revival through prayer and fasting. This year we have expanded to also include our mental and physical well-being. Consider yourself on a journey, if you will. On this journey we will focus on making and maintaining positive change in our lives. Get ready for 40 days that will change your life.

This publication is a **guide** for those who want to engage in 40 days of focused conversation with the Lord.

Please join with other determined saints for 40 days of concentrated prayer and fasting, exercise and healthy eating, and expansion of our mental and intellectual capacity. We expect the Lord to do great things while we're in the process and when we reach the end.

A word about fasting...

When we fast we make the personal decision to deny ourselves some form of physical pleasure in order to heighten spiritual awareness. Most often, fasting is associated with going without eating for a specified period of time. However, one can also fast from listening to music, watching television, Facebook® or any number of pleasurable things. **It's about sacrifice.** Please note that there is no magic associated with such activity, it is our way of humiliating our flesh and increasing our sensibility to God. Most often Christians accompany their prayer with fasting as a sign of worship, repentance, or intensely seeking God's guidance. According to Wayne Grudem fasting...

- Increases our sense of humility and dependence on God
- Allows us to spend more time in prayer
- Increases our ability for self-discipline
- Heightens our sense of spiritual and mental alertness to the presence of God

Here's the plan for study, prayer, and fasting

- Set aside a specified time everyday to spend with God
- Read the prescribed passage of Scripture for the day
- Take time to meditate/think about what you have just read. You might seek answers to questions such as (but not limited to) 1)What is God's role in this passage?; and 2)What is my role in this passage?
- Journal/write your thoughts of thanksgiving for that day concerning that Scripture
- Participate in the specified corporate prayer times (when/where applicable)
- Choose a specified time and manner in which you will fast and pray
- Don't count Sundays in your 40-day count
- Watch God reveal Himself to you. God Bless

### **Theme: Confession**

We start our Lenten journey by purposely and purposefully admitting and acknowledging our mistakes, missteps, and misunderstandings before God.

Day 1 - *Leviticus 5:5*

Day 6 - *I John 1:8-9*

Day 2 - *James 5:16*

Day 7 - *Psalms 32*

Day 3 - *Hosea 5:13-15*

Day 8 - *Psalms 51*

Day 4 - *Luke 15:11-32*

Day 9 - *Proverbs 28:13*

Day 5 - *Luke 18:9-14*

Day 10 - *Matthew 6:7-15*

### **Theme: Repentance**

Once we recognize the problem we can make the conscious decision to make a positive change in our lives.

Day 11 - *Isaiah 45:20-25*

Day 16 - *Matthew 9:9-13*

Day 12 - *II Corinthians 5:16-17*

Day 17 - *Acts 11:15-18*

Day 13 - *Isaiah 1:18-20*

Day 18 - *Psalms 51 (again)*

Day 14 - *Revelation 2:1-7*

Day 19 - *James 4:7-10*

Day 15 - *Revelation 3:1-6*

Day 20 - *Job 42:1-6*

### **Theme: Forgiveness**

God's desire is not to punish us, He wants to let us off the hook. His intentions are to cover us with grace and mercy through forgiveness.

Day 21 - *Hebrews 4:14-16*

Day 26 - *Isaiah 43:25-26*

Day 22 - *Matthew 11:28-30*

Day 27 - *Ephesians 1:3-8*

Day 23 - *Psalms 55:22*

Day 28 - *Hebrews 10:15-18*

Day 24 - *I John 1:8-9 (again)*

Day 29 - *Daniel 9:7-11*

Day 25 - *Acts 3:17-20*

Day 30 - *Colossians 1:11-14*

### **Theme: Rejoicing**

We have felt the sorrow and grief of our sin...admitted our shortcomings...experienced the relief of forgiveness. Now it is time to look forward to our season of rejoicing.

Day 31 - *Philippians 4:6-7*

Day 36 - *Matthew 5:3-12*

Day 32 - *I Corinthians 15:54-58*

Day 37 - *I Peter 1:6-7*

Day 33 - *II Corinthians 2:14-16*

Day 38 - *Psalms 34:1-10*

Day 34 - *Psalms 118*

Day 39 - *Psalms 5:11-12*

Day 35 - *I Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Day 40 - *Psalms 126*

### **A word about mind and body...**

Our body is a temple; not only in the spiritual sense, but as well as what we think and eat. Our mind and body must be on the same accord as our spiritual being. What we think, breathe, eat and take into your body has an effect on how we live every day. Often times with the hustle and bustle of life, we fail to rejuvenate our minds and bodies. We are constantly moving without taking the time to choose healthier eating options or clear our head for purposeful thinking. When we think, exercise and eat like our body is a temple we begin to promote and produce a healthier lifestyle which reduces our risk of disease and illness and helps us to combat feelings of depression and anxiety.

### **Here's the plan for your focus (Mind)**

- Set aside some time daily for your mental being
- Focus on the activity set for each day. Complete the activity at a time that is convenient for you.
- Choose a motivational book to read within this 40 day period that will add something new to your life.

Jot down your thoughts after your daily meditation, on day 40, re-read your thoughts, notice your thinking pattern. Have you changed your pattern of thinking? Did you relax more? Did you breathe and exhale? Have you become more relaxed and calm?

**Theme: Meditation (Days 1-10)**

Focus on breathing. Sit still, with your back straight and take 10 deep breaths. Notice your breathing pattern. Try not to think about anything. The thoughts will come and allow them, but they will soon leave because your focus should be on your breathing and nothing else at the time.

**Theme: Relaxation (Days 11-20)**

Take 30-60 minutes to do absolutely nothing. Either sit or lie down, don't think, don't answer the phone, don't watch television, simply relax.

**Theme: Focus (Days 21-30)**

Read or write daily motivation for your life. Jot down those things you want to change, delete or add to your everyday life. Set goals for your life that will help free you from the bonds that keep you tied.

**Theme: Determination (31-40)**

Include all the above in the remainder of your days. Practice breathing daily, relaxing and stimulating your mind with positive motivation. Feel your mind with thoughts of happiness, steps for reaching goals and process for completing.

**Here's the plan for your focus (Body)**

- Follow the plan for the specified day
- This can be done at anytime, make it fit with your daily schedule
- Record your workout times
- Try eating something new and healthy everyday

This can be done individually or with family and friends. The more people you get involved, the more exciting and challenging it can be for all who are seeking a healthier lifestyle.

**Theme: Eating (Days 1-40)** - Eating right is a big part of healthy living, trying a few of these changes will not only help your body but ease you into a healthier eating pattern.

- **Salad Sunday** - Add a healthy salad to one of your daily meals. (*do not load your salad with meat, excessive croutons or dressing, try to incorporate more veggies*)
- **Meatless Monday** - Subtract meat from your daily meals. (*i.e.- veggie soup, egg salad, tuna, etc*)
- **Tasty Tuesdays** - Try a new fruit or vegetable (*i.e. - star fruit, kiwi, blueberries, kale, etc.*)
- **Water Wednesdays** - Increase your water intake. Set a daily goal for drinking water on this day. (*i.e. – Rather than your usual 16 oz a day, challenge yourself to 30 oz or more*)
- **Throwback Thursdays** - Take your favorite meal and substitute some of the items with healthier choices (*i.e.- Spaghetti- rather than using ground meat, use veggies, turkey ground*)

*meat or meatless crumbles)*

- **Fantastic Friday** - Eat one of your favorite meals or desserts, however, lessen the amount. (*i.e.- rather than eating the whole slice of cheesecake, share with someone or save the other half for another day*)
- **Shake Back Saturday**—Eliminate adding the extra shake (*i.e. salt, pepper, season all, tobacco, etc.*)

**Theme: Moving (Days 1-40)** - Exercise is an important part in healthy living. The more we exercise, the more our body begins to be focused, fit and trained for daily activity.

- **Set it off Sunday** - Choose an activity and include with your family. (*i.e.- bowling, walking, skating, tennis, frisbee, yard work, house work, etc*)
- **Move over Monday** - Spend time today stretching. Try to stretch for at least 20 minutes. This is an important part of working out.
- **Take over Tuesday** - Challenge yourself to a power hour of *activity* (*walking, jogging, treadmill, zumba, etc*) whatever you choose; the activity must be an entire hour.
- **Walk it out Wednesday**-Engage in walking activity. You can walk for 30 minutes or complete a mile or two, as long as you are moving.
- **Transition Thursday**- Change your daily routine; add some type of activity to your day. (*i.e.- take the stairs rather than the elevator, park far from the entrance of buildings, wall pushups at work or while in the home, jog to your vehicle rather than walk, etc*)
- **Fun and Fit Friday**-Meet with other families or friends for lunch or dinner. Make healthy choices, and choose an activity afterwards and get involved (*i.e. – bowling, putt- putt golf, neighborhood walking, etc.*)
- **Siesta Saturday**- Take time to rest. Although exercise is good, your body also needs rest. Relax, read a book, listen to music, or simply sit quietly.

***\*As with any eating or physical activity, please consult your physician on plans that are best suitable for your dietary needs. These are only suggestions to help your lifestyle.***

### **Concluding remarks...**

What a journey! I'm more than sure that you and the Lord have had some interesting and revealing conversations over the past 40 days. If you're anything like me, you have learned more about yourself and have certainly seen more of the Lord.

How miraculous. I'm convinced that the greatest miracles in our lives have little to do with altering the cosmos on our behalf; but they occur when God allows us to see more of who He is and how He operates.

I am more than sure that this 40 Days of Focus has rekindled your spiritual flame as well as rejuvenated your mind and body.

Please don't allow all of the insight from this journey to fester and rot. Make it a part of who you are as you go about the marketplace of life.