

CCBC Pause

Prayer and Fasting 2023

# immovable

DEVOTIONAL

ENGLISH





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## Dear CCBCer,

Welcome to IMMOVABLE, a week of prayer and fasting with CCBC. This comes in line with CCBC's 64th-anniversary theme, ROOTED. It's a picture of a tree battered by various challenges to its growth—forest fire, strong typhoon, pests, and diseases—yet it has overcome. Now it remains a towering symbol of strength and stability.

This is a vision of what CCBCers ought to be: a bastion of strength that comes from being rooted in Christ.

One of the ways toward rootedness in Christ is prayer. Just as roots connect with the life-giving nutrients of the soil, prayer connects us with the Spirit of Christ that brings grace and life.

Inasmuch as prayer (and fasting) is a very private exercise, we do it as a community of Jesus-followers. Just like individual trees grow deep roots along with the rest, CCBC becomes a forest of faith.

Let this week of prayer and fasting be a period when we prepare ourselves as a church for the challenges that will be ahead of us. May we learn to grow in grace, love, and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.



I want to encourage you to NOT do this prayer and fasting ALONE. Invite your small group friends or join one in doing prayer and fasting. Through your chat groups or online or onsite meetings this week, share and encourage one another to keep on to their fast.

The devotionals in this booklet are based on Ephesians 6:10-20. These are written to stir our minds in our personal meditation. It is a call to “stand firm”--to be immovable in our faith in Christ; to be vigilant and to be ready to engage as soldiers would engage in battle.

Join the Breaking of the Fast fellowship on Saturday, July 29, at 7:00 AM at CCBC as we prepare to launch toward a new chapter in the life of CCBC as a church. As the LORD renews each of us, may our whole church community be renewed. God be with you.


-Rev. Jorge de Ramos

# **This week of praying and fasting, may we:**

- Be closer to God as we become attuned to our hunger for His presence,
- Find the guidance we need amidst a world of clashing issues we find ourselves in the middle of,
- Break free from spiritual strongholds that hinder us from running after God purposes for our lives,
- Repent from sinful desires, thoughts, and behaviors, and
- Humble ourselves as a CCBC Family before our loving and holy God.

## **How to make the most of this devotional guide:**

- Set a time and quiet place for the next 6 days to meet with God as you do devotions for at least 30 minutes.
- Bring your Bible, journal, and this devotional guide.
- Set your mind to worship by singing or being quiet in your heart and mind. Follow CCBC's Spotify account for the worship playlist.
- Pray for God to speak to you as you meditate and pray.
- Read the Scripture passages carefully. Observe and note what words or images resonate with you. Use the reflection questions as a guide.
- Jot down your thoughts. Turn them into prayers. Do the suggested activities and discover other spiritual practices you may not be as familiar with yet may help us connect with God.
- Gather with your family or set time online or face-to-face with your small group to discuss and encourage one another as we journey together one day at a time.



# **What is prayer and fasting**

# Fasting Guidelines

Fasting is a vital part of your life as a Jesus-follower. It's the voluntary abstinence from food or something for a specified duration of time in order to earnestly seek God or to be more intimate with Him as we spend extended time reading His Word and spending time in prayer.

Biblical fasting is not just refraining to eat food but it's abstinence from food with a spiritual goal in mind. It goes hand in hand with prayer and is also a form of worship. Luke 2:37 says that fasting is a way of serving God, while Acts 13:2 says that fasting is ministering to God.

*"Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord."*

-Joel 1:14

Throughout history, God has called on His people to humble themselves through prayer and fasting. As a CCBC Family, we practice prayer and fasting to deepen our intimacy with God. Fasting is a spiritual weapon God uses to advance His kingdom, move nations, spark a revival, and ultimately bring victory to His people.

Prayer and fasting are the only disciplines that fulfill the requirements of 2 Chronicles 7:14.

*"If My people who are called by My Name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sins, and heal their land." -2 Chronicles 7:14*

If you fast, you will find yourself being humbled. You'll discover more time to pray and seek God. As He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sins, you will experience true blessings from God.

Let us begin this fresh season in our CCBC Family life with consecration and being set apart for the Lord and His purposes.

# Why Fast

## 1. God Expects Us to Fast

*“And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their renewal in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face.” -Matthew 6:16-17*

Jesus said “When you fast,” not if you fast. This means that fasting, like prayer, is not an option. Fasting is something that is part of the Christian life.

## 2. Jesus Fasted

*“And after He fasted forty days and forty nights. He then became hungry.” -Matthew 4:2*

When He began His ministry, Jesus fasted for 40 days. He knew he was going to need spiritual strength to fulfill His purposes. Fasting may make you feel physically weak, but you will become spiritually stronger and more prepared to do God's work.

## 3. The Early Church Fasted

*“Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” -Acts 13:3 (See also Acts 14:23)*

The church fasted for Saul (Paul) and Barnabas whom the Holy Spirit had set apart for His mission. Later, Paul and Barnabas appointed leaders in various churches and then fasted and prayed before commending these leaders to the Lord.

## 4. Fasting Demonstrated Humility Before God

*“But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer kept returning to my bosom.” -Psalm 35:13 (See also 1 Kings 21:27-29; Ezra 8:21)*

Humility allows you to expect the grace of God who delights in answering your prayers. When you humble yourself in prayer and turn from your wicked ways, God promises to hear and answer according to His perfect will.

5. **Fasting Makes Us Sensitive to the Leading and Power of the Holy Spirit**

*“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led about by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days; and when they had ended, He became hungry.” -Luke 4:1-2*

We are prone to forget our priorities. Fasting is a visible reminder to us that God takes precedence over all our needs. It lifts up the matter at hand to God who is able to bring about awesome works that bring Him great glory.

6. **Fasting Brings About Personal and National Spiritual Revival**

*“If My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” -2 Chronicles 7:14*

*“I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” -Daniel 9:3*

Fasting prompts revival to an individual and to the country. It brings spiritual and physical healing that will change and prepare us for greater things in God's kingdom.

7. **Fasting is Good for Our Health**

Fasting improves our physical condition. Many impurities in the body are burned up when the body is denied food, thus, clearing the mind, cleansing, and healing the body. Even people who are underweight and fast for spiritual purposes have been known to gain weight after completing their fasts. Many Bible teachers say that a 3-day fast is especially beneficial for spiritual cleansing and also for breaking addictive habits.



# Preparing to Fast

## 1. Set Your Objective and Commit to a Type of Fast

Why are you fasting? Is it for spiritual renewal, guidance, freedom from spiritual strongholds, repentance, or humility and grace in a difficult season? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading to know the objectives for your fast. Once you know the reason you have for fasting, you must make a commitment. Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake.

- ▶ Choose the type of fast you will commit to (e.g., full fast, water-only fast, one meal per day fast).
- ▶ Determine how much time each day will be devoted to prayer and God's word.

## 2. Be Expectant

Be reminded that the Lord listens to a prayer from the heart. Be true and contrite as you expect results from our God.

## 3. Prepare Spiritually

The very foundation of fasting is repentance. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended and forgive all who have hurt you. Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.

## 4. Prepare Physically

Adjust and lessen your food intake on days leading up to the prayer and fasting week. During the week, limit your vigorous physical activities. You need to conserve physical energy and you need to devote more time to prayer and reading the Bible.

## 5. Be in Faith

Be strong and vigilant in prayer as you dedicate more time to fellowship with God. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Be clear and specific about your faith goals in your personal life, family, finances, church, the country, and the nations. Believe that God is faithful and will answer your prayers.

# Caution!

In spite of the absolute safety and benefits of fasting, there are certain persons who **should not** fast without professional supervision. The following may opt for other fasting options:

- ▶ *Persons who are physically too thin or emaciated*
- ▶ *Persons who are suffering or have a history of anorexia, bulimia, or other eating disorders*
- ▶ *Those who suffer weakness or anemia*
- ▶ *Persons who have tumors, bleeding ulcers, cancer, blood tissues, or who have heart diseases*
- ▶ *Those who suffer chronic problems with kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, or other vital organs*
- ▶ *Individuals who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer any other blood sugar problem such as hyperglycemia*
- ▶ *Women who are pregnant or nursing*
- ▶ *Pre-pubescent children*

# Different Types of Fasting

- ▶ **Full or complete fast**

To fast completely from solid and liquid (food and water). Extreme care should be taken, especially if the person has underlying medical conditions.

- ▶ **Liquid fast**

To have water, juice, or soup only for a period of time.

- ▶ **Partial fast**

To eat only certain kinds of food or have just 1-2 meals a day.

- ▶ **Object fast**

To fast from specific items like smartphone, gaming console, apps, social media, watching television or Netflix, etc.

- ▶ **Marital fast**

Married couple agrees to abstain from physical intimacy for a period of time. (1 Corinthians 7:5)



# **Daily Devotional**



# Day 1: The Struggle is Real

## Pause and Read:

*“A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.” -Ephesians 6:10-13*

*Every morning, we wake up to war.* On any given day, there is a battle that every Jesus-follower has to prepare for and engage in. Our enemies are unseen and the war they wage is spiritual. Unless we acknowledge this truth and go in the strength of the Lord we are going to struggle through, won’t know what hit us, and live defeated lives. We are called to take a stand.

But what are we up against?

There is *“sin that dwells within”* (Romans 7:20), those *“passions of the flesh, which wage war against [our] soul”* (1 Peter 2:11). Our fight is against Satan, our decisive enemy, who is constantly scheming and *“prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour”* (1 Peter 5:8). He studies our inclinations and adapts his temptations to them. He desires to see God’s people fall, sifted like wheat (Luke 22:31), overcome by his accusations and lies.

It will not take mere moral resolve or courage to defeat these evil forces. We rely on the Lord who is our source of strength and has already provided all that we need to stand firm. For in Jesus’ death and resurrection, all the guilt and shame brought upon by sins past, present, and future were laid on him.

No longer can the devil provoke and accuse us; it is through Christ that we were freed from condemnation (Romans 8:1) and made righteous before a holy God (3:22). The disarmed and defeated Satan has no ability to separate God's love for his people because of Christ (8:37-39).

So when you find yourself relying on your own strength and are overcome by temptation, when you desire entertainment instead of prayer, lack faith in what Scripture says, and avoid community, or choose to harbor bitterness instead of forgiveness, take heart. The conquering does not rest on you.

In our battle against sin, the Lord will strengthen us, help us, and uphold us (Isaiah 41:10). His grace is ever sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9). Put on Jesus, our armor, to defeat the lure of sin and walk in his victory. We may be surrounded but with Christ with us, we can stand and fight.

## **Pause and Reflect:**

Am I aware of my sinful tendencies or areas of weakness that the enemy can use against me? When I know I've sinned against God, do I run to the cross or hide in shame and distraction? How can I draw closer and respond to God in light of these realizations?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Pull out your journal and begin taking an inventory of these sinful tendencies and areas of weakness.
2. Write down your confessions with the help of the Holy Spirit.
3. When you're done, with a gesture of open hands, surrender them before the Cross where God exchanges our brokenness for His grace.

Take hold and memorize this verse: *"Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces."* -Psalm 34:5

# Notes:

Tap or click to add text

A person with long dark hair is seen from the side, holding an open book and reading. They are positioned in front of a window with light-colored, patterned curtains. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from the window, creating a warm and focused atmosphere.

# Day 2: Belt and Breastplate

## Pause and Read:

*“Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.” -Ephesians 6:14*

Do you remember when you first came to know Christ? Many of us started out excited about our faith: we asked forgiveness for our sins, read the Bible every day, and served in the church wholeheartedly. Those were great times.

Then as the years went by, somehow, we forgot our First Love. Some of us are now only going through the motions while feeling bored with our spirituality. Maybe we’ve become distracted by unimportant things. We might even be backslidden without knowing it!

Every day, we struggle with intense temptations to indulge in worldliness. How can we continue living victoriously for Christ? How do we go back to Him and His ways when we’ve walked so far off?

In today’s passage, we see the Lord has given us the complete combat gear to win our battles. God’s Word, the belt of truth, holds this full armor together. We will effectively wield our spiritual weapons by believing and loving the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17). They teach us to reject demonic lies (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12; John 8:44). Moreover, the Scriptures are the final authority on how to be righteous (Psalm 119:1-8).

But what is righteousness? It’s a lifestyle of obeying God’s commands we see in Scriptures (Ephesians 5:8-10; 1 John 3:10). Righteousness is the breastplate in our armor that protects our hearts from temptations (Psalm 119:9).

Our obedience to Christ also keeps us at peace, knowing that following Him will spare us from sin’s damaging consequences (Psalm 72:7). Finally, godly living guards our

relationships with others even when they've sinned against us (Ephesians 4:26-27).

But we need a powerful motivation to be holy. After all, worldly pleasures are quite enticing, aren't they? In the midst of temptation and suffering, only a deep knowledge of Christ based on the Scriptures will help us obey Him (Ephesians 4:20-21; 2 Peter 1:3).

God's Word, therefore, empowers us to pursue righteousness by reminding us of the Gospel. They also reveal to us the Lord's wonderful character traits that we can trust despite life's uncertainties.

Do you want to return to your First Love? Do you want to remain ablaze for God? Delight in the Scriptures to know Jesus more, not merely to get blessings. The more we know Him, the more we will love Him. The more we love Him, the more we will have the courage to obey Him. God promises that when we do so, we will become more than conquerors through Jesus Christ who loves us (Romans 8:37)!

## **Pause and Reflect:**

Where am I spiritually, am I moving further from or closer to God? Are there habits I should take up, continue or change to grow in the Lord, strengthen my faith, and love the word?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Take out your Bible and read through the many passages used in today's devotion.
2. Then pick the verse that speaks to you the most and read that whole chapter where that verse comes from.
3. If you have time now or later in the day, read more chapters following your initial chapter. What do these passages tell you about God and His character?
4. Be in awe of who He is, pray a couple of these verses, and just worship God for how He introduces or keeps deepening our knowledge and experience of who He is.

# Notes:

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# Day 3: Sandals and Shield

## Pause and Read:

*“For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.” -Ephesians 6:15-16*

Have you experienced climbing a mountain? Imagine if you use your ordinary slippers to hike a 1,000-foot mountain. Would you last through the first 10 kilometers with just slippers on?

Picture a rally in EDSA where protesters clash and were throwing things at policemen and the policemen were not ready and did not bring their shields. How many would lose their lives in that riot?

These two stories remind us of the importance of being prepared and having the proper gear. The gear not only protects us but also ensures we persevere and endure. As you dive deeper on God’s Word today in Ephesians 6, imagine yourself in wartime.

In fact, the pages of the Scripture from the beginning of the Bible show us how God created a beautiful world but darkness came in and the rest of the story focused on how God pushes back the darkness to redeem the earth. God is at war and being part of God’s family, you are at war too.

From today’s passage in Ephesians 6:15-16, what armor should you put on for the battle? First are the shoes representing your readiness to share the Gospel of peace. Do you experience the Gospel or Good News daily in your Christian walk? If you experience the forgiveness, grace, and freedom that is in Christ in your daily fight against sin, it would be natural and a joy to share this news with others.

Second, the shield of faith. Can you rely on the strength of your faith as your shield against the lies, deceit, and temptation of the devil? Are you placing your faith in Jesus in all aspects of your life?

Perhaps you are at a point in your life where you are considering which path to take in your education, looking for a job, praying for a spouse, expecting a child, or retiring. In this new season, how is your faith growing? Are you fully surrendered or doubtful that God will be with you as you face your new season? As you join this prayer and fasting week, do you place your full trust and confidence in Jesus?

God invites you today to put on your shoes and hold tight to your shield. Rekindle the joy of the Gospel so you may overflow and share it with others. Surrender, strengthen, your grip on the cross, and put your confidence in Jesus. Hold on to the truth of His Word as you battle the lies and deceit of the enemy.

## **Pause and Reflect:**

How am I experiencing the Gospel? Do I delight in the Gospel in my daily life even when difficult circumstances come my way? Does that delight translate in sharing the Gospel with those around me? How about those who have never heard the Gospel?

What areas in my life am I allowing the enemy to throw lies, deceit, temptation, and doubts? How can I strengthen my faith?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Schedule a talk or call with your family, trusted brothers and sisters in God, or small group within the day.
2. During the conversation, take turns in sharing what encouragement you're receiving from God today about exercising your faith or opportunities to share the Gospel with others.
3. Share also what discouragements you're experiencing in your personal, family, Church, or societal situations.
4. Encourage one another and pray for each other.

# Notes:

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# Day 4: The Helmet and the Sword

## Pause and Read:

*“Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” -Ephesians 6:17*

In the war we are in, the battle is fought inside of us. Our hearts and minds are the battlefield, the piece of territory the devil is trying to conquer... again.

We were all once separate from God on account of our being sinners. Not only were we sinners we were God's enemies (Romans 5:10). We saw things then not from the perspective of God but from the perspective of his enemy, the devil.

Our minds and hearts were held captives by God's enemy and we did not have the capacity to understand the Gospel and all the things of God (1 Corinthians 1:11-14). In 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV) Paul said, *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* The Gospel is inaccessible to our captive minds nor do our captive hearts desire it.

God, because of His great love and amazing grace, helped us through the Holy Spirit to understand the Gospel. Later in the same chapter, Paul said in verse 6: *For **God**, who **said**, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.* By the power of his Word, God had broken the chains that bound our minds and hearts. We are now free to understand and desire the things of God and see reality from his perspective.

Being on God's side has gained us a new enemy, God's enemy. Satan wants to recapture what once were his – our minds and hearts. *Learning to love yourself is*

*the greatest love of all, or follow your heart* – these are the sayings that the world has embraced that are actually contrary to what Scripture is saying.

We need to protect our minds from these lies which Satan uses to lure us back to think like the world again. We need to keep on the helmet of our salvation to protect our minds. As Paul urged the Roman church in Romans 12:2: *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

The only and greatest weapon we have to assault the enemy is *the sword of the Spirit*, the Word of God. The Word of God is not only *the* weapon but our best protection from the unrelenting assault on our faith by the enemy through the lies the world is trying to feed our minds. We need to immerse our hearts and minds in the Word because our lives depend on it!

## **Pause and Reflect:**

How much time am I spending reading and trying to understand the Word of God? Is it as much time as I spend browsing through social media or watching entertainment?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Going home, during break time at work, or in the idle hours of the day, go for a prayer walk.
2. Walk in an area where you have a semblance of nature: a park, under an open sky, a lane of trees. Be sure that it's a safe hour, not too hot, and that it's not a totally abandoned area.
3. Pray and ask God to remind you of the time you first followed Him as your Lord and Savior. Recall the journey it has been since then and count the times He has kept on rescuing you. If God has always been faithful to carry you through the war, will He not keep on remaining faithful now?
4. Take time to listen to Him, too. Be sensitive to passages, lines from worship songs or hymns, and words that He's going to remind and impress on you.

# Notes:

Tap or click to add text



# Day 5: Pray in the Spirit

## Pause and Read:

*“...praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...” -Ephesians 6:18*

In our spiritual battle, the end goal of the enemy is to lure us to sin against God and turn our back on him. The enemy is tempting us to yield not to God's voice but to the dictates of our flesh.

When Jesus was in the wilderness to be tempted, he was at His most vulnerable. He fasted for a considerable number of days which made him extremely hungry but He had the power to turn anything into something else by just uttering a command no matter how faint His voice is through His parched lips.

Satan was very much aware of this, so his appeal was both to Jesus' divine power and to His flesh. His end game was to cause Jesus to listen to His flesh, which by then maybe screaming very loudly for something to eat. He is luring Jesus to use His divine power by telling the stones to become bread; for the voice of the flesh to prevail over the Spirit's, that was the enemy's goal.

He may be at his most vulnerable then but He was also at His most formidable. Jesus was fasting and communing with His Abba Father in Heaven. Jesus was in prayer.

No matter how loudly the flesh was crying out for bread, the voice that He listened to is the one that came from His Father's mouth, *Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God* (Matthew 4:4).

How have you been soaking in God's presence and listening to him in prayer? Whose voice is loudest when you are at your weakest?

## **Pause and Reflect:**

Do I have such a prayerful heart and mind that in whatever situation, being so conscious of the presence of God, I can always depend on Him in prayer?

Is the presence of God so real to me that it affects the way I act and speak in any given situation?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Ask God to remind you of specific people that are in situations of need now. Ask for His help to give you awareness about areas of need in the communities around us, the country, and in the nations.
2. Write them down in your journal and make a list.
3. Throughout the day, whisper prayers to those needs that you've become aware of.
4. To those people God has reminded you, be sure to not only let them know you're praying for them but that you take time to call or message them and pray with them.

# Notes:

Tap or click to add text



# Day 6: The Warrior in Battle

## Pause and Read:

*“And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.” -Ephesians 6:19-20*

In the spiritual battle that rages on there are only two sides, God’s side and Satan’s. There is no middle ground.

We were once all on Satan’s side and were dead in our transgressions and sins (Ephesians 6:1-3). But when God made us alive through Christ we were pulled to God’s side and so became Satan’s enemies. Paul called these enemies of God and ours as the rulers, the authorities, and the powers of this world (Ephesians 6:12).

Being a child of God now, we suddenly find ourselves living in a hostile world. Whether we like it or not, we are all behind enemy lines as the enemy intensely opposes us.

In this war no one who claims to be a follower of Christ can be passive or uninvolved in the fight. Jesus said in Matthew 12:30: *Anyone who isn’t with me opposes me, and anyone who isn’t working with me is actually working against me.*

As far as Jesus is concerned there is no such thing as neutral: you’re either with Him or against Him. Neither is there such a thing as being passive: you’re either gathering with Jesus or you are scattering. You’re either fighting evil or you’re letting it prosper by your inaction. You are then not with Him but against Him.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians, he called himself an ambassador in chains (Ephesians 6:20) because he was in prison and his hands and feet were bound by metal shackles. But this did not take him off the fight.

Paul warned his readers to pray for all the saints: *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere* (Ephesians 6:18). Paul knew how powerful a weapon prayer is and so he urged the readers to pray as one of their active participations in the battle that rages on.

In verse 19 Paul asked that they also pray for him. He did not ask them to pray that he be set free, nor that he be healed of the blisters that the abrasiveness of the shackles was causing. He asked instead that they pray that God would arm him with the Gospel to proclaim and that he be granted the courage to do so. He wants to be immersed in the thick of the fight as he knew that through the prayers of the brethren in Jesus, he was immovable wherever and however he may be.

## **Pause and Reflect:**

What actions am I taking to advance the cause of the Gospel?

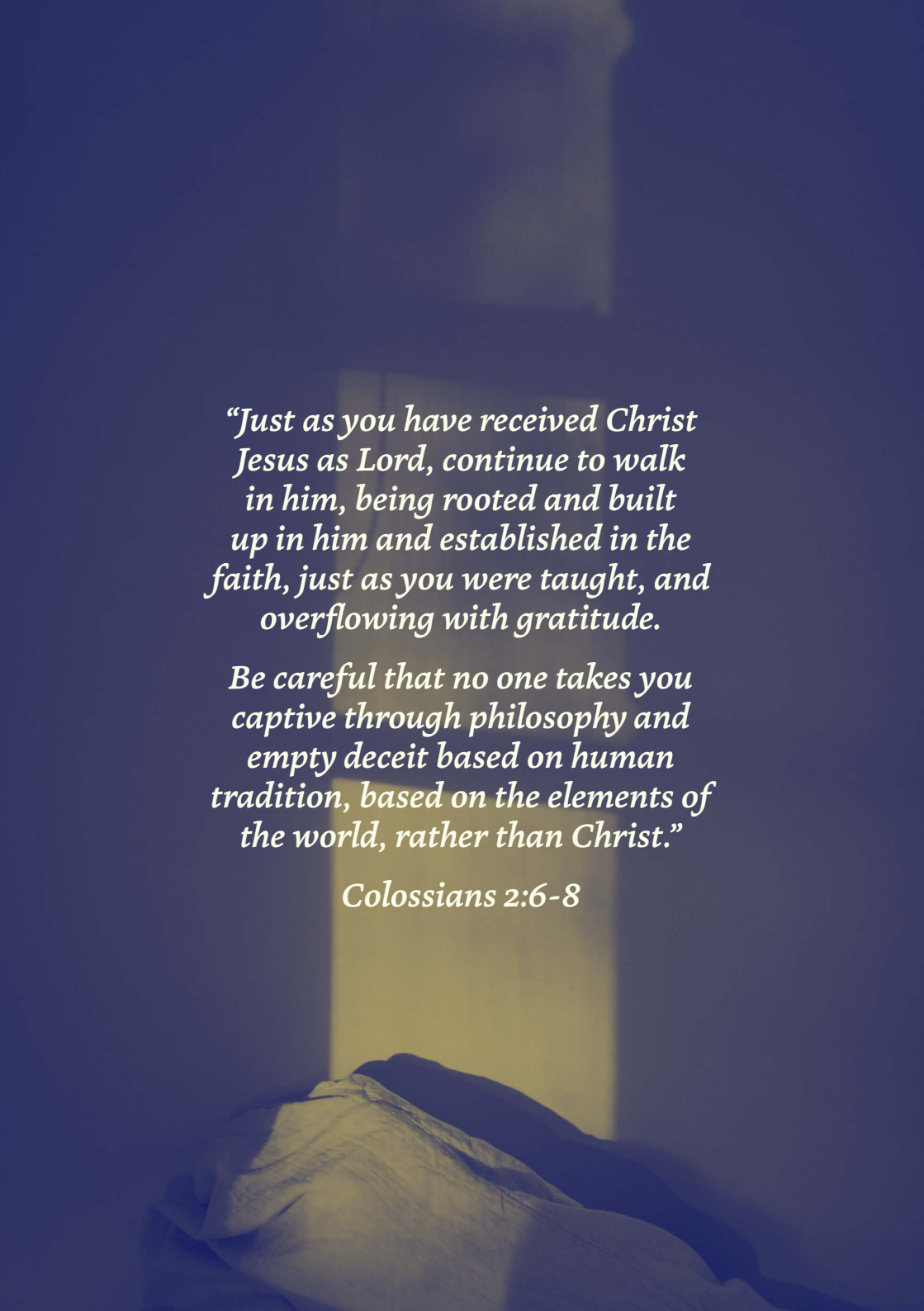
What keeps me from proclaiming the Gospel to my officemates, classmates, neighbors, etc.? Is it my cause or God's that I am advancing in the way I live?

## **Pause and Connect:**

1. Take time to join the rest of the CCBC Family in the Breaking of Fast Prayer Gathering.
2. Together, consecrate yourselves for God and His purposes in the coming new season of CCBC.
3. As you slowly break your week-long fast, remember and record how God met you in your desperation, suffering, or sin.
4. Prepare yourself and make time for tomorrow's celebration together with the rest of our community.

# Notes:

Tap or click to add text



*“Just as you have received Christ  
Jesus as Lord, continue to walk  
in him, being rooted and built  
up in him and established in the  
faith, just as you were taught, and  
overflowing with gratitude.*

*Be careful that no one takes you  
captive through philosophy and  
empty deceit based on human  
tradition, based on the elements of  
the world, rather than Christ.”*

*Colossians 2:6-8*

## **Breaking the Fast**

### *1. End Your Fast Gradually*

Depending on your type of fast, it is not ideal to eat solid food immediately after you fast. Abrupt reintroduction of solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative, even dangerous, consequences. Try several snacks to smaller meals. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.

### *2. Continue to Pray*

Build from the momentum you gained during the fast. Let it transform your prayer and devotional life. Practice and discipline yourself with the habit of prayer throughout the year.

### *3. Pursue Greater Intimacy with God*

When you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, and as you consistently meditate on His Word, you will experience a heightened awareness of His presence and hand at work (John 14:21). A regular fast has been greatly rewarding to many Christians. Some do them every week.

### *4. Experience the Joy of God's Presence*

Bask in the fullness of joy in the Lord as you abide in His glorious presence.

# Notes:

Tap or click to add text



