



Prayer & Fasting Guide

"God's Peace & Rest for the City"

28 - 29 November 2019

Prayer & Worship Night | 29 November

6.45pm-7.45pm, Level 3 Studios: Break fast together*

7.45pm-9.30pm, Level 5 Ballroom: Prayer & Worship

*Please **RSVP** by 21 November for food at tinyurl.com/PWNnov19

Thursday Evening | 28 November (after your evening meal)

Pray for God to show you the root of your anxieties and what your 'good portion' is.

Read and Meditate on Luke 10:38-42

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

Consider

In a fast-paced society like Singapore, we often find ourselves in Martha's shoes where rest eludes us and we are overwhelmed by tiredness and frustration. During such moments, we are tempted to think that it must be the workload or circumstances itself that led to the strain. However, just as Jesus loved Martha (Jn 11:5), he also loves her by astutely pointing out three observations in Luke 10: the condition of her heart, the effects and the cause of it. Martha was distracted with much serving and that led her into a state of anxiety and restlessness. Rather than asking her to stop serving or hope for a change in circumstance, Jesus's loving words to Martha were to reorient the affections of her heart and prioritise first things first: to come, hear and commune with Him. That loving beckoning from Christ is for us too.

Prayerful Reflection

- What are you serving in your life which has resulted in much anxiety and restlessness?
- Do you believe that communing with God, hearing Him through His Word and by His Spirit is your good portion? Do you believe it is the one thing necessary?

Friday Morning | 29 November

Pray for peace in your own soul.

Read and Meditate on Psalm 131 (NIV)

My heart is not proud, Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content. Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore.

Consider

In this psalm, David tells us 3 things: (1) What he is not doing, (2) What he is doing, and (3) What he wants God's people to be doing.

First, David says that he has dealt with his own heart. He has faced and defeated the giants of pride, haughtiness and selfish ambition. He has disciplined his heart against

pride (“my heart is not proud”)—which is an inflated sense of one’s importance. He has disciplined his eyes against haughtiness (“my eyes are not haughty”)—which is looking down on others as inferior to him. And he has disciplined himself not to chase things which are beyond his talent and ability (“things too wonderful for me”).

Second, David says what he has done. He has “calmed and quieted” himself. He has brought peace to his soul. To describe how content and rested his soul is, David says that he feels like a baby lying in its mother’s arms in total serenity. The implication is that if pride, haughtiness and selfish ambition are not controlled—a person will become like a screaming, hungry, angry baby!

Finally, how did David calm and quiet his soul? David wants us to know. It is a simple matter of trusting God. He tells us to “put [our] hope in the Lord”.

Prayerful Reflection

- Is your soul calm, quiet and content? In what ways are you proud, haughty and selfishly ambitious? What is causing your soul to scream out like a hungry, needy baby?
- What issues in your life do you need to trust God with (and put your hope in Him for)? Like a perfect parent, you can trust Him mature you and provide for your every need.

Friday Lunchtime | 29 November

Pray for the eternal rest of others in Singapore.

Read and Meditate on Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Consider

Many people in Singapore are labouring under heavy burdens. For many, work is tough. For others, family life is tough. For others, mental and emotional peace is hard to attain.

For others, their anxieties are spiritual. They do not have peace with God. They are burdened by the impossibility of having to be ‘good enough’ or ‘acceptable enough’. They frantically strive for righteousness as much as they hectically strive to ease their consciences.

Jesus’ promise is to give such people “rest”. Not just physical or emotional rest—but “rest for their souls”. This is eternal rest and quietness. It is His salvation.

Prayerful Reflection

- Pray for the many burdened, weary, labouring souls in Singapore—that they might hear the message of Jesus’s salvation and eternal rest.
- Pray for two people on your heart who do not yet have Jesus’ rest for their souls.

About Fasting

What is fasting?

Fasting is the act of depriving ourselves of some or all of the good gifts that God gives us which can easily replace him as first in our lives. Fasting demonstrates that we don't live by bread alone and that we seek him before all other things. It is not a hunger strike, or an attempt to arm twist God into getting what we desire. **Rather, it is turning our desires towards God, recognising we need him more than anything physical.**

When God is supreme over even the hunger in our hearts then he is truly supreme in everything. Psalm 73:25-26 says: *"Whom have I in heaven but you, and earth has nothing I desire but you. My flesh and my heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever"*. When we fast, we are saying, I want God more than all of these things.

How do we fast?

Fasting is traditionally denying oneself of food to pray during meal times or whenever we feel the hunger from our lack of food. There are water fasts (where nothing other than water is consumed during the period of fasting) or liquid fasts (where all types of liquids can be consumed), or fasts where other kinds of food are abstained from. We are encouraged to fast in a meaningful way, where we deny ourselves of something that is important in our regular diet which will remind us to pray. One way to supplement fasting of food is to also refrain from various forms of technology and/or social media.

The kind of fast that each person chooses to undergo should be done without any coercion from others, and done with a clear conscience before God. Those with medical conditions are advised to consult with a doctor before undergoing any fast.

Ways to prepare for this fast is to ask God for his Spirit to begin to soften your heart and the hearts of all at RHC.

What are we specifically fasting for?

1. For God to show you the root of your anxieties and what your 'good portion' is.
2. For peace in your own soul.
3. For the eternal rest of others in Singapore.