



The CHALLENGE

MARCH 3-25, 2018

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

CREEKSIDE HIGH SCHOOL
MINISTRIES

The CHALLENGE

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

March 3- March 25, 2018

WHAT IS IT?

21 days and 21 ways to practice fasting and praying

•

An opportunity to listen to God, to learn His will,
and to let go of our own

•

A glimpse into normal daily life for many of our global
neighbors

•

An experience of being changed and causing change

•

A chance to live radically and love authentically

WHY DO IT?

You want to go beyond what is comfortable and convenient

•

You need to be reminded of the things you take for granted

•

You feel called to live differently as a disciple of Jesus

•

You desire a biblical perspective on your priorities

•

You long to grow in your intimacy with Christ

The CHALLENGE

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

March 3- March 25, 2018

Isaiah 58:6–10

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loosen the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

The CHALLENGE

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

March 3- March 25, 2018

THE COMMITMENT

I, _____, choose to accept the challenge of praying and fasting for 21 days because

I will be participating with _____
(friend or teammate) in this journey of discovering God's heart together.

We commit to encourage, challenge, and support each other during these 21 days.

The CHALLENGE

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

March 3- March 25, 2018

PRAYER

Lord, I confess that I am often blind to the pain and suffering that millions face around the world today.

Please open my eyes to see people as You see them, and allow my heart to be broken by the things that break Your heart.

I want to be faithful to the calling You have given me, to be quiet enough to hear Your still small voice, and to live my life modeled after Jesus' life.
May I be transformed as I take these steps out of my comfort zone and learn to love You and love all people as Your Word teaches.

I present myself as a living sacrifice. You are worth whatever I must do in order to pursue a deeper relationship with You.

Day 1

Fast from the INTERNET

March 3, 2018

Today we live in a media-saturated, Internet-connected, cell-phone-equipped world in which everything that happens anywhere is available everywhere. —RICHARD STEARNS, *THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL*

The Internet allows us incredible access to information, communication, and entertainment, usually for our own personal benefit, but it also allows us to learn about and be involved in different issues of global need. Lack of information is not the problem. The question is: does our increased awareness influence the way we care for our neighbors, or does it cause us to become detached and indifferent to the frequent images we see of human suffering? Today, give up your Internet access (on your phone, too!) and instead use another resource (newspaper, book, news magazine) to educate and engage yourself in the plight of our worldwide family.

Has the easy access to images and information about global concerns moved you into action or instead caused “compassion fatigue?”

JOB 30:24-25

- Prayer Points –

EL SALVADOR

Pray for the youth. Large numbers of the youth are involved in gangs. The Church finds that reaching the 15-30 age bracket is particularly difficult. New methods must be adopted or an unchurched generation will quickly emerge in El Salvador.

THAILAND

Thailand means “Land of the Free” yet most people are held captive in a complex web of Buddhism, traditional culture, spirit appeasement and even occult practices. Pray for spiritual breakthrough so that, in the Lord Jesus, the Thai may be free indeed.

IVORY COAST

As a predominantly Muslim nation in West Africa, there are opportunities to share the message of Christ among university students in the capital city. As the students study and are transformed by the truth of Jesus Christ, they are able to take the gospel to places inaccessible to North Americans. Pray for hearts that are open to Jesus and the courage to share the Good News.

Day 2

Fast from COMFORT

March 4, 2018

Around 11 million children live on the streets in India, according to UNICEF estimates.

A typical bed for some of the poor in our world might be a thin piece of foam or simply a light blanket on a hard floor or dirt ground. Millions of children grow up on impoverished city streets never knowing the shelter of a roof over their head and the comfort of a soft bed. But in their distress, many will cry out to God as their Comforter and place of Refuge. Feel what many of our global brothers and sisters feel every night and choose to sleep on the floor beside your bed just for tonight...maybe even without a blanket or pillow. Practice finding your true comfort in the shelter of God's arms.

How might years of sleeping on the hard ground affect your daily life?

MATTHEW 8:19-20

Day 3

Fast from POSSESSIONS

March 5, 2018

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. —JIM ELLIOT

Do you possess your possessions, or do they possess you? When we forget that our earthly treasures will one day pass away, it is easy to hold our belongings with a tight fist. But when we live like we believe that our real treasure is only found in Jesus, we can consider “everything else as rubbish.” What if our possessions had so little control over us that we would happily give someone the coat we were wearing, or the shoes off our feet, or even the keys to our car? And instead of feeling a sense of loss, we felt liberated. Choose today to experience the freedom of giving something away... maybe not just the stuff you don’t like or don’t need, but something you do like or do need.

How can you practice storing up your treasures in heaven, for “there your heart will be also?”

LUKE 12:13-21

Day 4

Fast from NECESSITIES

March 6, 2018

The wealthiest 20 percent of the world's population consumes 86 percent of the world's goods.

We in America have more than enough, yet we are generally unaware of our excess. What we often think of as a basic essential for everyday life, many people in our world would consider a luxury. Try redefining your idea of a daily necessity. Ask yourself what your true needs are and consider everything else an extra that you could potentially live without. Then choose five of your own supposedly “necessary” items that you will give up for today... perhaps toothpaste, coffee, your watch, makeup, and socks...? Or gum, chapstick, pen, lotion, and your backpack? Sacrifice some items that you'll notice are missing and practice saying, “I have more than enough.”

How do you respond to this statement by G.K. Chesterton: “There are two ways to get enough—one is to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less” ?

II CORINTHIANS 8:14-15

Day 5

Fast from SHOES

March 7, 2018

That bread which you keep belongs to the hungry... those shoes which are rotting in your possession, to the shoeless; that gold which you have hidden in the ground, to the needy. —AUGUSTINE

Most children in developing countries grow up barefoot. Whether at play, doing chores, or simply getting around, these children are at risk. Walking is often the primary mode of transportation in developing countries, and just wearing shoes enables people to fetch water or medical help from distances that aren't possible barefoot. A leading cause of disease in developing countries is soil-transmitted parasites, which penetrate the skin through open sores; however, wearing shoes can eliminate this risk. Many times children can't walk to school with bare feet, which means they don't receive an education...all because they don't have shoes (*adapted from tomsshoes.com*). In their honor, come to school barefoot today and "walk a mile in no shoes" throughout the day. Remember to bring a pair of flip flops for class (if needed) for being indoors.

If you counted all the shoes you own and averaged the cost of each, how much of an investment have you/others made on your feet?

LUKE 3:11

-Prayer Points –

EAST ASIA

Although this area appears to be flourishing in many ways, there is tension under the surface. Local Christians face persecution and there are deep strongholds within the culture of depression leading to suicide. Pray that the church continues to experience the growth and for the hope of Jesus to take root.

INDIA

With a population of over one billion people dispersed throughout 4,635 distinct people groups, speaking over 1,600 languages, and believing in at least twelve different official religions. Pray for the cultural barriers to be overcome by the Gospel and the Good News of Jesus to reach every village and town.

Day 6

Fast from WARMTH

March 8, 2018

Even a 2-degree drop in body temperature results in reduced heart rate, loss of coordination, and confusion. Adults cannot work effectively and children find it difficult to learn. For most, a warm coat solves the problem. — ONEWARMCOAT.ORG

Most of us own several coats and take it for granted that we have protection against the elements when winter sets in. But there are many people around the world and even in the U.S. who freeze to death every year. Let that sink in: People die because they can't guard themselves against cold weather. Choose today to align yourself with the crisis of not being able to keep warm by going without your jacket. Take inventory of your closet—count your coats, gloves, hats and scarves and see if there are any you might be able to give away. Grab a friend and see if you can find someone with whom you can share your extra warmth. Perhaps they might also need a cup of hot cocoa or some warm, friendly conversation?

How many coats do you have in your closet? How many do you actually wear?

LUKE 3:11

Day 7

Fast from RUNNING WATER

March 9, 2018

Water is life; because we have no water, life is miserable. —A VOICE FROM KENYA

Women and children in developing countries usually spend around five hours a day just fetching water. Imagine if you woke up today and all around you every fixture with running water was gone. If you had to make several trips, on foot, to your nearest river or pond, even the simplest tasks like washing your hands or drinking a glass of water would become very difficult. Additionally, your nearest body of water could be disease-ridden and may introduce deadly parasites into your body. The quest for clean water would begin to completely dominate your day. Choose to experience the reality of 1.2 billion people by relinquishing your water supply in some way. (Try filling up a large container of water and using only that today for drinking, brushing your teeth, etc.)

How much water do you think you use or consume on an average day? What if you found out it was all unsafe?

JOHN 4:4-15

Day 8

Fast from CELL PHONES

March 10, 2018

The average American young person sends and receives 3,339 text messages a month.

How did we ever survive without our cell phones?! For the next 24 hours, you can choose to experience life without being glued to it. Don't just turn your phone to silent— turn it off, leave it behind, and don't even check your voicemail. Cell phones are one of the many devices in our culture that promote instant gratification. Just like microwaves and fast food have taught us that we don't need to patiently wait for anything anymore, cell phones provide a quick fix as well. We don't have to be on time because we can call and say we're running late. We don't need to talk to people face to face or make plans ahead of time. We have a "way out" because of our cell phones. Today, practice having patience in a culture of immediate solutions for our every problem.

What do you think life is like for the millions of people without any device for instant communication?

PSALM 40

Day 9

Fast from SLEEP

March 11, 2018

**The more we pray for people, the more we will come to love them. So then, if we do not pray for people, can we say that we love them? —
RICHARD FOSTER**

Most of us already don't get enough sleep each night, but that is usually due to our own choices. There are those in our world, however, whose sleep is continually interrupted, painful, or full of fear. It is often during those long nights that their cries reach the ears of a Father who cares. We, too, can choose to spend more than the average three to four minutes per day in prayer to the One who sees, knows, and hears all needs. Tonight, set your alarm for a time in the middle of the night to wake up and seek God, not only on your own behalf, but to also intercede for hurting people or global concerns as He places them on your heart.

Is it easier for you to pray for general world issues or individual people you know? What could you do so that your prayers become more personal and specific?

PSALM 121

Day 10

Fast from FRIENDS

March 12, 2018

It's not that rich Christians don't care about the poor, it's that we often don't know the poor. — SHANE CLAIBORNE

Jesus spent a lot of time with the sick, the sinful, and society's outcasts. When he told His disciples that the poor would always be with them, perhaps He meant that the poor should always be with them...that if His disciples would show such unconditional love and acceptance, the poor would be irresistibly drawn to them. For Jesus, the lowly and the unlovely weren't charity cases; they were His friends with whom he would laugh and eat, and from whom he would learn. They weren't projects, they were people He loved deeply and knew intimately. Don't spend time with your usual friends today; instead choose to make a new friend—maybe someone easily ignored or judged. Discuss each others' interests, families, future hopes, etc.... just like you do with any of your friends.

How closely does your circle of friends resemble the wide range of people represented in Jesus' circle of friends? What might you do to broaden the scope of your friendships?

LUKE 14:12-24

Day 11

Fast from VANITY

March 13, 2018

Thirteen billion dollars is spent by Americans on cosmetic surgery every year.

How much time do we spend staring at ourselves in front of the mirror, whether in dissatisfaction or admiration, compared with time spent looking at God, His Word and His world? The beauty of creation is all around us, from sunsets and trees to pets and people, so instead of being distracted with our own reflections, may we desire to reflect the wonder of our Creator God. Discover the liberation of having little concern for outward appearances, and choose not to look in the mirror today. Instead of worrying what you might look like on the outside, ask God to reveal what He sees in you on the inside.

What could we do with the money we might save if we spent less on our “outward beauty which fades?” (1 Peter 3:3-4)

I SAMUEL 16:7

- Prayer Points -

GUINEA

The city boasts about 2 million people, and 85% of the population practice Islam with French as official language. Pray for eyes to be opened to the truth and that they would come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. As well as connections with the people in Guinea especially, The youth center, La Zone, that the youth entering this building wouldn't just be satisfied with English conversations, but that they would be drawn towards spiritual and eternal conversations.

HAITI

Hit by a devastating earthquake in 2010, Haiti continue to rebuild from this tragedy. Prior to the earthquake, Haiti was known as one of the world's poorest countries. Pray for the national church to be empowered as they their nation with the love, truth, and hope of Christ.

Day 12

Fast from HURRY

March 14, 2018

No hurry—in Africa! —BUMPER STICKER IN TANZANIA

Our days are so full of meetings, to-do lists, deadlines, and activities it's no wonder we can't often find time to reach out to the poor or lost. We seem to be running at a fast pace, sometimes late everywhere we go, which makes it difficult to be concerned about lives and plans other than our own. In many parts of the world, people seem to have a different notion of time that values relationships over schedules. Choose today to slow your life down so you can be more present in the present. Don't wear a watch, try to get somewhere 20 minutes early, or cut something out of your calendar completely. Practice "African time," focusing more on people than planners. See how God might fill your day in other ways.

How can you schedule more "breathing room" in your days and weeks to allow for an unplanned opportunity to minister to someone in need instead of racing by?

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-13

Day 13

Fast from SPEECH

March 15, 2018

The poorest of the poor suffer silently, too weak for activism or too busy raising the next generation of hungry. —A VOICE FROM HAITI

To be poor often means to be powerless, even to feel voiceless. Our world is so full of other noise and stronger voices that the quiet cries of the weak and hungry are easily drowned out. Many people have even put their hands over their ears to silence the sounds of suffering when it becomes too uncomfortable. But followers of Jesus have another choice; we are blessed with the ability to raise our voices and communicate the fears, pains, or longings of those who are weary or resigned to do so themselves. Next time you have the opportunity to speak out on behalf of the poor, don't waste it. But today, choose not to speak in order to gain a clearer understanding of what it might feel like to live without a "voice."

What will you say the next time someone disparages or diminishes the plight of the poor? How can you speak on their behalf?

PROVERBS 31:8-9

Day 14

Fast from CLEAN

March 16, 2018

It's amazing how much my definition of clean changed. —MIKE YANKOSKI, AFTER CHOOSING TO LIVE ON THE STREETS FOR SIX MONTHS

One of the first things non-Westerners seem to notice when traveling to a wealthy nation like ours is the high priority we place on cleanliness. Trash is collected in bins, restaurants undergo strict hygiene inspections, yards are pristine, pets are flea-free, and clothes are worn only once or twice before being washed. We have even been taught to associate “cleanliness” with “godliness” (i.e., good people live in clean neighborhoods, and bad people live in dirty neighborhoods; good people are bathed and well-dressed, and bad people are unwashed and wear dirty clothes). Today, choose to be “unclean.” Give up your shower, toothbrush, deodorant, etc., and identify with those who may rarely experience those luxuries.

What is God's definition of “clean” for His children? How can you place more emphasis on your inner purity and holiness?

LUKE 11:37-41

Day 15

Fast from YOURSELF

March 17, 2018

Sometimes it's easy to walk by because we know we can't change someone's whole life in a single afternoon. But what we fail to recognize is that simple kindness can go a long way toward encouraging someone who is stuck in a desolate place. —MIKE YANKOSKI.

Have you ever looked at your life and felt powerless to make significant changes in the world because you're "only one person?" What if, instead of being paralyzed by our own inabilities or overwhelmed by the world's great needs, we lived as though our little acts of kindness really mattered, because they do.

Mother Teresa was known for saying, "We can do no great things, only small things with great love." She was determined to see the face of Jesus in every person she met, remembering His words, "Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for Me." Choose today to do something "small" for someone with the knowledge that you are serving Christ himself. Maybe visit an elderly person, bring coffee to a teacher, or make lunch for a homeless friend & share it together.

What if you actually saw Jesus himself starving, or suffering, or sick? What would you do for Him?

MATTHEW 25:31-46

- Prayer Points -

TAIWAN

Taiwan is politically open but spiritually closed. Ministry is difficult and fruit is hard won. Only recently has Christianity started growing again after decades of stagnation. Pray for spiritual freedom for the Taiwanese, so that they can break away from their past to embrace Christ.

ALBANIA

The spiritual history of this nation is checkered. With a historical legacy of Islam followed by communism which did not tolerate religion, Albania has been hungry for the message of Jesus Christ. In recent years, there has been a revival and many people are flocking to the truth of the gospel. Pray for the church in Albania to passionately share Jesus' hope and equip new Christians for lifelong discipleship.

Day 16

Fast from NOISE

March 18, 2018

Become nothing before God, learn to keep silent; in this silence is the beginning, which is first to seek God's kingdom. — KIERKEGAARD

We are a noisy culture! For many of us, there's not a moment of the day that is completely silent. But today you get to experience peace and quiet, so turn off your iPod, Pandora, radio, etc., and get comfortable in the silence. Instead of filling every empty space with background noise, try listening for the "still small voice of God" in the quiet. The art of resting in stillness and waiting for God to speak is being practiced less and less. Learn to reflect and meditate on the Word of God...slowly...deliberately... See how long it takes you to quiet your mind and still your thoughts. Attempt to sit for at least 15 minutes with a clear head and open ears, saying, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9). How is Jesus calling to you today?

Does silence bother you? If so why?

1 KINGS 19:9-13

Day 17

Fast from PRIVACY

March 19, 2018

The person who tries to live alone will not succeed as a human being. His heart withers if it does not answer another heart. His mind shrinks away if he hears only the echoes of his own thoughts and finds no other inspiration. — PEARL S. BUCK.

Americans highly value their privacy and alone time. Chances are you've been blessed to have a space all to yourself. But many people around the world live in such tight quarters that they have no individual space, no space to call their own. Today, choose to be with someone as often as you can. Maybe this means asking a friend to walk with you everywhere you go, doing homework in a public place, spending time in your living room instead of your room, or carpooling with someone when you go somewhere. Give up your privacy and alone time so that by the end of the day, you know what close community feels like.

What do you think are the positive things that people experience by living in such close proximity with one another? What do we miss out on when we so highly value our privacy?

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12

Day 18

Fast from WASTE

March 20, 2018

Americans could fill the Rose Bowl every three days with the food they throw away.

While an absence of food ravages millions in poor countries, an abundance of food is thrown away each day by millions in affluent countries. We say things like, “Eat everything on your plate because there are starving children in Africa,” but does that actually change the way we buy, consume, or think about our food? Some researchers estimate that over a quarter of all food currently available in the U.S. will never get eaten and end up in the trash. Take stock of what is in your fridge, cupboards, and drawers, and choose to not let any of it go to waste. Or only take what you can eat, and to eat everything you take. Try not to throw any food away this week.

How would you explain the various reasons that millions of tons of food are thrown away each day in the very same world where millions of people are starving to death?

EXODUS 16:11-18

- Prayer Points -

CHICAGO

This part of Chicago is extremely diverse with no dominate ethnicity but rather the residents speak nearly 40 different languages and come from over 80 countries. Pray for the Family Empowerment Center as they seek to make meaningful connections with their neighbors and share the love of Christ.

LOS ANGELES

One of the nation's largest and most influential cities, Los Angeles is a place in need of Jesus' love and truth. The team will serve in a variety of communities, reaching out to the unengaged and unreached people in Hollywood, Downtown, Venice Beach, and Skid Row. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel and connect with people who are in need of the hope of Jesus.

Days 19-21

Fast from OVER-CONSUMPTION

March 21, 2018- March 25, 2018

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. —MATTHEW 4:4

In three days, you will be challenged to fast completely from food for 30 hours. One of the reasons for going 30 hours without eating is to show us that our bodies *can* go 30 hours without eating. They can go quite a bit longer. But, since we rarely have to miss a meal, our stomachs think we actually need the substantial portions we feed ourselves, and grumble every few hours to remind us. In the coming days, we will cut out additional food items each day so that our brains and bodies can relearn what we truly need, and so we can prepare ourselves for 30 hours with no food.

We don't do this to diet or test our discipline. We do it to learn spiritual hunger, humility, and dependence on God... To be controlled and filled by the Holy Spirit instead of by food. Just as Jesus was tempted "when He was hungry," we are often at our weakest when we crave something out of our reach, so ask God to teach you that HE is all you really need.

Day 19

Fast from SWEETS

March 21, 2018

In the U.S., we eat primarily for pleasure— only if it tastes good and we like it. But many people eat for basic survival, unconcerned with the flavor. Food, no matter how bland or unpleasant, is merely used to fill the void in their stomachs. Choose to forgo desserts in order to remind yourself that food was meant first for our nutrition and second for our enjoyment.

Approximately 25,000 people die each day of hunger-related causes, and we say things like, “I’m starving,” when we go more than a few hours without eating. We usually have three meals a day, plus snacks in between, and there’s rarely a time when food is farther away than the fridge or nearest supermarket. Today, eat only if you are truly hungry and just at mealtimes, no snacking in between.

During these days leading up to the famine, spend some time thinking about where your food comes from & thank God for always providing more than enough!

LUKE 9:10-17

Day 20

Fast from MEAT

March 22, 2018

It is estimated that the wealthiest 20 percent of the world's population eats about 80 percent of the world's meat. A large majority of the grain and corn grown around the world today feeds not poor people, but cattle, pigs, and chicken, which will then be consumed by the rich. Though meat does provide needed protein, most of us already get twice the nationally recommended amount per day. So, choose beans, eggs, and other staples to fill your stomach these next few days, and pass on the poultry and beef.

Day 21

Fast from CARBOHYDRATES

March 23, 2018

Climate changes, droughts, and natural disasters can completely wipe out an entire year's worth of food in a farming community. Families who rely on their annual crop of wheat or corn are left with very few alternatives if their harvest fails. Limit your own options today by choosing to go without any bread, pasta, or grain products. Try to mostly eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and nuts—a good menu to get your mind and body ready for a total fast.

30 HOUR FAMINE

Fast from FOOD

Saturday, March 24, 8:00 AM–Sunday, March 25 2:00 PM

About one in seven people worldwide do not have enough food to sustain them today, and yet, enough food is available on our planet to adequately feed each of its 7 billion inhabitants... if only it was evenly produced and distributed.

For 30 short hours, you can choose to taste the kind of hunger experienced by millions on a daily basis by opting not to eat anything between 8:00 a.m. today and 2:00 p.m. tomorrow.

During your time of fasting, be sure to drink plenty of water and juice. But more importantly, let your groaning stomach remind you to pray for others around the world whose stomachs are also empty and who unknowingly hunger desperately for Christ.

How wonderful it is that no one need wait a single moment before changing the world. —
ANNE FRANK

The CHALLENGE

FAST . PRAY . LOVE

March 3- March 25, 2018

May you be filled to overflowing with the goodness of God, the love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

NOW, go change the world.

Resources

Many of the thoughts, statistics, ideas, and quotes presented in these pages were gleaned from the following books:

The Hole in Our Gospel, Richard Stearns

Irresistible Revolution, Shane Claiborne

Crazy Love, Francis Chan

Compassion, Justice, and the Christian Life, Robert Lupton

Under the Overpass, Mike Yankoski

Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, by Ronald J. Sider

Freedom of Simplicity, by Richard Foster

Operation World, Jason Mandryk
and *The Bible*