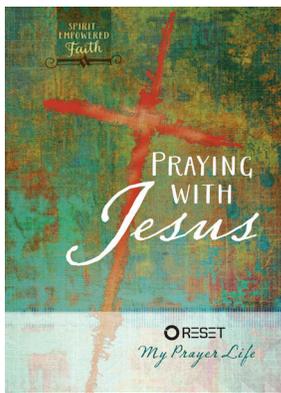




Power of Prayer and Fasting

This article, excerpted from *Praying with Jesus*, is entitled "Power of Prayer and Fasting" by Dr. Ronnie Floyd.



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The answer to our spiritual crisis will not be found in the ballot box but in the prayer closet. The answer to our personal and corporate dilemmas will not come through high tech, hyperbole, or hype. It will come through a fresh touch from the Lord, who wants to speak to us, move us, and manifest His mighty presence.

Read Joel 1. We are in the same condition as God's people during the time of the prophet Joel. The alarm is going off, and we must respond to it. It's time for the church to wake up, just as the priests and the ministers of the Lord in Joel's day were shaken out of their sleep over the sinfulness of Judah.

If we are to know God's supernatural power, we, too, must have spirits that are contrite and broken. It broke the priests' hearts that they could not make any offering at all to God.

God's judgment had been so mighty that there was nothing left to offer. They wept and wailed before the God of heaven. They humbled themselves through fasting. They demanded national repentance by calling for a solemn assembly to cry out to the Lord.

Their tears were expressions of honest grief, and in their pain, they interceded for the people of God. They knew this was God's gateway to spiritual power and His gateway to see spiritual breakthrough.



PRAY and Experience Scripture

“Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

Pray your own prayer of declaration. Tell God how much you need His help to change your spiritual condition—that apart from Him you can do nothing. As you pray, believe that Jesus is present, available, and sufficient.

Lord, my power and my strength are not sufficient—I need You. I need You to...

How do you read this passage from Joel 1? Do you see it as another fascinating but perhaps ho-hum history of an ancient people who never seemed to be able to get it together spiritually? Or do you read these verses as a prophetic rendering of where you live today? If we take God’s Word at face value, then these words from Joel will do something to challenge our hearts to take action.

They must touch us, break us, and drive us to a new desire to know God. When was the last time we were broken with grief over our own sins and alienation from our heavenly Father? When was the last time we confessed with tears that we were playing church games—just showing up so we could show off—while we knew we were little more than a sordid display of dead men’s bones? When did we last intercede on behalf of our bosses, our colleagues at work, or the members of our own families with sorrowful hearts? When was the last time we fasted and prayed over our own spiritual plights, the spiritual conditions of our churches, and the spiritual health of our country? When was the last time we sensed God’s calling us to repent of *anything*, especially our separation from the God who made us, loves us, and gave His Son for our eternal souls? When was the last time we were consciously willing to submit to His leadership and willfully to turn from sin when He called us to repent? When was the last time we called for a solemn assembly to cry out for God to forgive us and our brothers and sisters from our sins of racial prejudice, greed, lust, love of material things, and anything else that stands between us and God?

Have we ever been so humbled that we could hardly absorb the presence of God because we knew we were standing on holy ground? In our roles as leaders—and please remember, we are all leaders—have we ever been bold enough, tenacious enough, and spiritually concerned enough to weep at the altar, asking God to bring a mighty spiritual awakening to our lives and to the lives of those around us? If we don’t model spiritual humility, born from our own deep experiences with God; if we don’t model spiritual brokenness; and if we don’t model repentance from our self-centeredness and demand for control, we will never see a spiritual revival in our own lives or in the life of our nation.

LEARN to Encounter Jesus

“Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15)

Pause and meditate on the person of Jesus. Imagine that the resurrected Christ is standing before you. You see His nail-pierced hands, loving face, and glorified body. Imagine that as He stands before you, He gently asks the question, “Who do you say that I am?” Allow the Holy Spirit to move your heart with a response.



Then quietly whisper this prayer: *You are my Lord and I long to know You. Jesus, You are my...*

Now ask Him: *Because You are the Lord of my life, what other priorities, activities, or things do I need to change so that I might better know You?*

Be still and listen for Him to speak. Yield these things to **Him. Whatever Jesus asks of you, give it to Him.**

For instance: *I know there are things in my life that have become a distraction and are keeping me away from You. I am ready to surrender my...*

When you're ready, make your sincere declaration: *Lord, I want to know You more. I want to love You and serve You!*

As we exercise our spiritual gifts and direct others to this gateway to supernatural power, we will be on our way to personal and national revival. God's people are the keys to this awakening in our time. The church must rise up and lead on!

How do we do this? Joel 2:12–13 says: *"Even now—this is the Lord's declaration—'Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the LORD your God.' For He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in faithful love, and He relents from sending disaster."*

This will be the next great move of God! God's gateway is prayer and fasting. Coming humbly before God is God's gateway to spiritual power and spiritual breakthroughs. The stage is set. Desperation is at an all-time high in our generation. Most churches are missing demonstrations of major spiritual power. Most Christ followers are lacking the manifested presence of God in and through their lives. God has our attention. A remnant of us must be desperate before Him. We must take action now to pray and fast. When we do, we will ascend the holy hill before God. *May God have mercy upon us and bring on the next great move of God.*

SHARE with Others in Community

After you have sensed God's leading in your life, engage the strength of community—plan to tell another person about how God wants to bring change to your life. Your words might begin like this:

I sense that the Lord wants me to change in these ways...

I am committed to praying more consistently about...

I am committed to fasting and prayer as I...

LOVE Others in Community

Finally, ask God to make these changes and then show you how to more effectively demonstrate His love to others:

Change me, Lord, to become more like You. By Your Spirit, make me more encouraging, attentive, or compassionate, so that I might better reflect Your love. Change me, heavenly Father.

