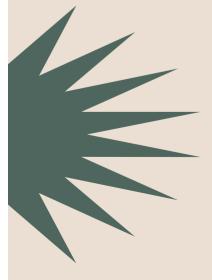




Journey guide for prayer and fasting



22ND - 28TH JANUARY 2024

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER AND FASTING

So as you head into this week, which we have set aside as a Church for prayer and fasting, we start with this question - 'what is fasting?'

A biblical fast is defined as abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. This is done in order for someone to focus on hearing God as they pray. It also a way to humble ourselves and make a sacrifice, to acknowledge that God is God and He comes first - even before food (Matt 4:4). We can also abstain from other things like TV; other forms of entertainment and social media - anything that draws our time and attention away from getting closer to God. What makes this of time of fasting rich is by taking this saved time to pray, read the Bible and worship God. If fasting is not coupled with prayer and Bible reading, then simply all that is being done, is a diet.

We would love for you to join us, in whatever way you can. So whether you decide to skip a day of meals, a single meal or use a work break to walk and pray, we are asking you to give time to this. You may want to give one thing or several things up for the entire week (consider a certain food or a meal(s) PLUS a social media/entertainment item) - whatever comes as a sacrifice of worship. Whatever you choose to abstain from, ensure that that space is being freed up to draw near to God.

It says in Hebrews 11:6 that God rewards those who seek Him and one of those rewards is that God promises to give more of himself, and for us to grow in our understanding as we experience Him. We know that without God we are very limited and so let's devote ourselves this week, and beyond, to discovering more of Him.

This guide, produced by Mosaic Church, provides you with a thought about an aspect of where we believe God is leading us this year. Alongside this, there are some prayer point suggestions that can be used to support the time that you spend talking and listening to God about what He is saying to you on these topics.

The Bible tells us that those who seek God with all their heart will find Him (Jer 29:13), so let's pursue God and continue to be transformed by Him from the inside out.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3: 14-19 (NIV)

"WE DON'T FAST TO EARN
SOMETHING; WE FAST TO MAKE A
CONNECTION WITH OUR
SUPERNATURAL GOD, WE ARE
CLEANING OUT THE "PIPE" THAT
CONNECTS US TO THE ANOINTING
OF GOD."

-MAHESH CHAVDA



WHAT TO DO WHEN FASTING AND HOW TO HEAR FROM GOD

DRAW, PAINT, SCULPT, PLAY YOUR PRAYER

For some of you incredibly creative people, a part of prayer and fasting might be to do something creative! This can be a fantastic tool to note down what you feel God might be saying. Begin by praying and asking God to speak to you; maybe put on some worship music and pray into the areas for that day and then just do what comes to your mind or is dropped in your heart. If you feel that it's for the Church body, bring along to Church so that it can be seen or shared with Pastor Amanda and Jason.





READING OR LISTENING TO THE BIBLE

The Bible is a key way in which God speaks to us, so spending more time in His word this week would be really good. During each day, why not take time to read the verse(s) multiple times in order for it to truly sink in. When approaching reading the Bible, it is often not about how much of the Bible you read at any one time, but more about asking God to speak to you as you focus on the verse(s) each day. You might do this alone, or you might connect with someone else in the Church and do this as a pair or small group, which is a great way to journey through this special week - in community, where you can encourage and sharpen one another in faith as you share what God is speaking to you about.

One of the difficulties that some people have is that they struggle to recognise if God is speaking to them. The starting place to tackle this is to know God does speak to you! He created you, He wants a relationship with you! He promises to speak, and asks us to listen. So for anyone not sure about this, take a look at the below as we consider the question, 'how do we know if it's God speaking to us?'

Firstly, more often than not it's a thought, picture or sense that is dropped into your heart or mind. This is because God is Spirit and He communicates with our spirit, which in turn brings about thoughts, ideas or promptings. When thoughts, ideas or promptings and not just you start to recognise this and not just dismiss it as you 'being silly', then the chances are you will hear God a lot more!

Secondly, don't over think it! Trust that if you have asked Jesus into your life, that His spirit lives within you and that He wants to speak to you!

Write, draw or tell someone what you think God has said to you. If you're not sure, talk to someone who perhaps regularly hears from God and check it out with them, but whatever you do, don't dismiss them!

Thirdly, it's OK if you don't get it right! This is not a test; this is not 'three strikes and you're out!'. It's a relationship and the more

It's a relationship and the more you spend time with someone, the easier it is to recognise their voice.

for some simple questions to ask yourself when you think you may have heard from God...

01

Does what I've got as a picture or written
down match up with what I know about the
character of God?

02

Does what I've heard/drawn or sense match up with the main messages of the Bible?

03

Does what I've heard/drawn/sense, tie in with what others are hearing from God or is what I've seen/heard is for just me personally?

04

Does what I've heard/drawn/sense bring loving challenge and/or encouragement to me, (or, if it's for someone else) that draws me/them closer to the heart of God?

05

Have I asked God for understanding/revelation of what I have been given so I can communicate it with others?

2024 - Going down, in order to go up

In 2024, the tallest skyscraper in the world is Burj Khalifa in Dubai and is 828 m (2,717 ft) high!

The only way a structure like this can safely be constructed is that if attention is first given to creating solid and well formed foundations, as everything else rests upon these.

We believe that 2024 is a year of excavating and cultivating deep foundations in order to us build up. Our willingness to put the work into our spiritual foundations will determine how much and how far God can rest us and build us up, both personally and us as a Church for His Kingdom. Kingdom building is just that - it is for Him, it is about Him and it's led by Him! It is being ready and willing to say yes to the things that God will ask of us, but this begins, and is determined by how we are anchored and secured to start with.

Some of us may feel that we've spent a lot of years already digging deep foundations in Him - Great! Keep going, and be open to the areas that God will reveal throughout this year, that you may have not realised, or perhaps at times have left alone and not touched, out of convenience of fear of discomfort in the excavation. Be brave this year to allow God to help you dig and excavate a little deeper.

Some of us may have only dug surface deep and decided that is where we're comfortable staying, and that we can start building from that place. Please don't be fooled! Growth will be limited if this is how we choose to live, and sooner or later we will discover that without deeper foundations, when the storms of life come along, we will struggle to stand and struggle to thrive. Choose to be courageous and intentional this year in allowing God to take you deeper, knowing that you can trust the One who will lead you in this.

Some of us may be right at the beginning of our journey and wonder how on earth we would even need a foundation in God. If that is you, wonderful! Welcome to the journey! Get ready for transformation!



THE WEEK OF FASTING...

Each day, we as a Church, are going to pray into the following areas as we consider concepts around foundations.



PRAY UP

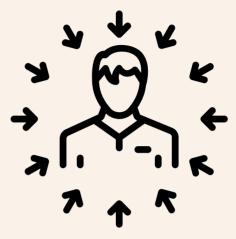
We're going to spend some time each day fixing our eyes on Jesus and God and who they truly are. The Bible asks us to enter His courts with thanksgiving and praise (psalm 100:4), so take some time to remember what He has done and His goodness in your life. Take time to focus on God who loves us and leads us, if we are willing to follow. Know that His heart is to bring freedom to our heart's, mind's and lives.



PRAY OUT

Foundation building is for a purpose. Foundation building is for our freedom and growth, but also for it to impact those around us.

With this in mind take time to 'pray out' each day for others. Pray for your neighbours, that you would be able to be used to have an impact in their lives this year. Pray for your work place. Pray for those in our Church, City and Nation. Pray for our leaders in Church who have responsibilities to carry. Pray for our schools and collages - that God's Spirit would move in power in these places.



PRAY IN

Each day take some time to pray for yourself. Create space to allow God to speak to you about the different areas of foundation building/digging that we are taking time to consider this week. Take time to pray about them. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the things that need to be worked on, or even dug out this year. and don't be afraid of this prayer - God does not come to overwhelm us with this! Choose to trust Him in the process, because His heart is that we would live in the full freedom that He calls us to!

Pray for your family. Pray, if you have children that you would be made aware of where they need to excavate this year, and ask for strategies on how to help support them with this. If you have a complicated and challenging family life, pray that God would help identify the roots of the damaged foundations, and help you to have Godly foundations.



ACTION

Take time to think, write and action any responses that you feel God is asking you to dig into.

Over the coming days, weeks, and months, pray over them - ask for wisdom and strategies from God on how to grow and be transformed in these areas. Intentionally create time to get together with someone from Church who will walk alongside you on this journey.



DAY ONE: FOUNDATIONS IN THE KINGDOM

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have - Jesus Christ.. 1 Corinthians 3:11

So what is a foundation? A foundation can be defined as an underlaying basis or principle. It can also be defined as the load bearing part of a structure - the thing that everything else is built upon.

In God's kingdom there are foundations - key principles that someone builds their life from. These include believing that Jesus is the Son of God. That He came to earth and died and was resurrected, and there are many more besides. These include many underlaying Kingdom principles on how God calls us to live - Living with a pure heart. Seeking God's kingdom first; forgiveness; living with integrity and by faith and not by sight, to name a few.

There are also competing cultural principles that people choose to live by. Some of these are in line with the Kingdom of God, such as 'Do not murder. Do not steal', but there are also many which in 2024 are not in line with living God's way. There are foundations that we can, intentionally or unintentionally, adopt due to how we choose to live within the culture we live in. Without realising it, people can begin to adopt these as their foundations or underpinning principles, and become confused and disillusioned with God when their lives become complicated. We need not look any further than the tower of Pisa to show us visually that properly formed foundations matter!

Today, why not take some time to really allow God to show you the foundations and principles that you are holding to. Perhaps many of those are in line with Him, but have the courage to also ask what foundations you live with, that are not God's best for your life. Once you have done this consider the following prayer points;



Acknowledge that God is the maker of Heaven and earth and that all good gifts come from Him. He is the source of love because GOD IS LOVE. Ask Him to fill you with His love today. Take time to reflect and talk to God about the fact that you trust Him in this process this year.



Take a moment to reflect on your need for Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you change the foundational principle(s) that are shown as not in line with God's Kingdom for how He is asking you to live. Ask for forgiveness and guidance with this.



Accept that God has work for you to do today. Know that He is with you and ask Him to guide and lead you to those around you. Ask God to show you where and how you need to make adaptions to how you carry Him at work to your colleagues; to your neighbours; to your wider family.



Take a moment to message someone at Church, to ask them if you can walk this journey together, even if you are doing this journey already as a couple or as a family whether in person or through online communication.

Actions...

Reach out to someone/a different family in the Church and arrange a lunch or dinner date together, where you can enjoy being together and getting to know one another a little better, in order to establish or build good foundations with them.





DAY TWO: BUILDING A GOOD FOUNDATION

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 1 Peter 5:10

When building a foundation, if they are deep, it often requires more than just an hour or two, or a day or two, to dig and build. In order to build something of height which will stand the test of time, intentional time must be given to digging the foundations first. For some of the world's largest structures, years and years have been spent below the surface, getting the foundations correct before there was any evidence of work above ground level. Foundations need to be broad and deep if they are to carry large and heavy things.

You only have to speak to someone who has had to dig foundations for an extension on their home to know that the digging and excavating is hard work! It is not always comfortable work! It requires determination and being intentional about it. It requires trusting in the process, even when it seems like the results will never be seen! Sometimes people circumnavigate this discomfort by asking someone else to do the work! This is not a bad option when it comes to creating physical building, however when we think about the foundations of our lives, we are not able to work on this same principle! There is no one who can come and do the work for us, and then we just turn up when its finished, So we have a choice to make. We can ignore the foundations all together; we can make a shallow inroads and 'hope for the best', or we can be mature enough to 'roll up our sleeves' (which in the Kingdom often looks a lot like surrendering our will to God) and commit to the work...and at times, potential discomfort, knowing and trusting that something healthy, whole and good will come out in the end.



Spend a few minutes reflecting on the fact that God is your good Shepherd. He is not asking you to go on this journey by yourself and in your own strength. He is guiding you; He walks beside you and will correct and support where needed; and His goodness and mercy follow you! Take time to reflect on this and then thank God that you are not alone and that His heart is that we would be transformed from glory to glory, and to live in true and full freedom!



Take time to ask God for His help and the help of others to become all that God has designed you to be. Ask God to give you the courage and knowledge of what needs to be uprooted and dug up. Lay these things down at the foot of the cross.



Pray for our Church community. Pray that as we individually allow God to excavate the things that are not of Him or in line with His Kingdom in our lives, that collectively we would see God move in power in and through Mosaic Church, for His glory and for the transforming work of His love in many more people's lives who are not yet in relationship with God.



Think and talk about actions that you could take each day, to help with the excavating of the untruths and non Kingdom thinking that may have been highlighted to you. This may look like reading and writing down the promises of God, and placing them somewhere where you will see them each day, to help you deal with any wrong thinking. If you are carrying hurt and that person or situation comes to mind, rather than dwelling on the injustice of it, pray for them (which is in line with Kingdom thinking) and ask them for a release from the hurt you may be feeling.



DAY THREE: WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING ON?

They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. Luke 6:48



The leaning tower of Pisa is one of the World's most iconic landmarks, however it didn't set out to be so! During its construction in the 12th Century, the ground on which the building was being built was not assessed correctly. As a consequence, in what would have been considered an extraordinarily tall building at the time, it was built upon wrong foundations - it was built on soft ground. It is only due to intervention in the 1990s that helped bring stabilisation to the building, so that year on year the lean would not become more pronounced, and it was more likely to remain standing! Jesus, throughout His time on earth was teaching about the Kingdom of God and Kingdom principles. One of the most well documented sermons He taught is known as 'the Sermon on the Mount'. Part way through this sermon, Jesus speaks about our foundations and how if we don't get the ground and foundation correct beneath us, WHEN (not if) floods come, they will reveal whether we have built our lives on firm foundations.

The length of years we have been a Christian is not always the right indicator of the condition of our foundations. Some of us may have been Christians many years, yet our lives, just like with the leaning tower of Pisa may actually be built on soft ground. How would we know? Usually an indicator will be by our response and reaction when floods (overwhelming problems) enter our lives.

If we are to fulfil the mandate that God has for us, we need to be people who, as it says in Hebrews 6:19, remain attached to the anchor which is God and build firm foundations.



Spend a little time acknowledging that all power and authority lies with God - That He is God Almighty and yet he exercises this through love.

Thank God for the miracle of your salvation and for all that He has done in and through your life to this point and that His heart is that you would be found to be on a firm foundation.



Take some time to talk to God about your foundations in Him. Ask God to help you with aspects of unbelief or struggle. Take time to repent where you have chosen not to trust, or just found it hard to trust God 'in the flood'. Ask that He would flood you with grace and echo the prayer of the Father in Mark 9:23-24 "Lord I believe; help my unbelief". Ask God to stretch your faith and increase your expectation in areas you are facing that appear impossible.



Pray for others. Pray for those you know are struggling in their faith or life. Pray that they would know the firm foundation of Christ and the soft ground that they find themselves on would be replaced with firm ground as they trust in God.



If you are journeying with someone who may be in the midst of a storm, why not ask if you can see them and pray for them?

DAY FOUR: LESSONS FROM NATURE ABOUT FOUNDATIONS

When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Ephesians 3:14-19



Nature can be a valuable visual lesson when it comes to learning about foundations. You can often see the root systems of trees that close to the surface of the ground, and in order for some trees to thrive for many years they require a taproot - a central root that digs deep, and continues to dig until it reaches a continuous supply of water and nutrients to help sustain health, strength and growth.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he prays and declares the wonderful words above - a prayer for the taproots of our lives to grow deep - to search out the daily water for life, which, as Jesus tells the lady at the Well in John 4, is Him! Jesus, and in turn Paul, states that we should remain connected to God in order to be fed and sustained. How do we do this? In our world today there are so many ways that can be helpful - books, podcasts, youtube channels...and the list goes on. These can be good, but nothing can replace spending time in the word of God and spending time with God - not just in speaking to Him, but by Him speaking to you and the you putting into practice the things that He may be highlighting to you, each and everyday.



Spend a few minutes thanking God that He is the bread of life and that He is the water of life. Thank Him that His heart is that we would be watered continually, so that we would thrive. Ask that He would refresh you once again and help you in growth this year.



Take time to be with God. Take time for Him to refresh you and to quieten your heart. Ask God to empower you and strengthen you through His Spirit. Repent where and if you have not made space for Him in your heart and life.



Ask God to meet the needs of your family and those that God has placed you alongside. Ask Him to use you as an example at home and work of just how high, how wide, how deep His love is for you those around you...even those challenging people! Pray that they may experience the love of Christ and that they would be transformed by it.



If you are someone who struggles to spend time with God, and in His word each day, actively take time and create a plan of where and how this can be done - let someone else know for accountability if that helps.

Pray and action something for friends or neighbours or family who may not yet know Jesus, to show this incredible love of God.



Thought...

DAY FIVE: GETTING THE PROCESS OF FOUNDATION BUILDING CORRECT

I will pursue your commands, for you expand my understanding.

Psalm 119:32

The internet can be a great source of information...and this includes tips on how to build good foundations! Interestingly, from the practical, we can draw out spiritual principles which are also really important when it comes to building the right foundation.

1) Assessing the condition of the ground before you begin

As has already been explored, working out 'where am I?' when it comes to the condition of the ground and foundation you presently stand on is an essential action to know what needs to happen in order to get the foundation correct.

2) Digging under a canopy of protection

Digging foundations at times, can work best when they are situated under a canopy of protection - protection from the elements. Protection from the things that may come along and try and take up residence in the foundations, that never had any right to do so. In Psalm 91:4 the Bible gives us a different image of covering when it speaks of God covering us with His wings.

3) Once you have excavated, ensure that you achor the foundations to the bedrock of Gods word, then seal it with prayer to ensure that there are no openings that allow things back in that shouldn't be in there.

If something is dug out, but nothing replaces it all you have done is created is a hole! God is not calling us to dig empty holes, but meaningful foundations! He wishes to uproot those things that hold us captive, things that we 'just live with', and things that aren't in line with the Kingdom, in order that we can be filled with His truth and grow into all that He has for us. This begins by us actioning Psalm 119:32 - we need to pursue (to chase down) the commands of God!



Thank God that we can boldly approach His throne without fear of condemnation. We can boldly approach and thank God that His banner over us is love, and that He watches over us, day and night. Thank God for His plans to prosper us and that we can live in hope as we walk into the future, knowing He goes before us and walks beside us, and has created statutes, not to confine us but to bring true freedom!



Take a moment to reflect on the three points above. Pray over how you feel about them, and ask God to lead you to where He wants you to be....which may well be different to where we think we are and where we think we should be!

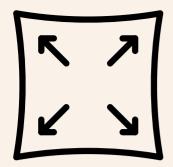


Take time to pray for the city of Coventry. Thank God that it's mandate is to be a city of peace and reconciliation. Pray that God would bring this about, where people find peace with Him and in turn peace in their minds; their hearts and with one another. Pray that we would see Coventry be a radically transformed City by God.



Take the 'assessment, above with someone else who knows God and is a trusted voice in your life (perhaps someone beyond your immediate family). Have a chat and pray about what comes out of your time together, for positive ways forward. Along with someone else from Church, take a prayer walk around the City. Pray for the peace of God and reconciliation with God to happen in our city and beyond.

Action...



DAY SIX: PREPARING FOR EXPANSION

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, 'Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.' And God granted his request.

1 Chronicles 4:10



Have you ever tried planting a tree in a pot intended for plants? What happens is that the tree will only ever grow to a certain size, and not look very much like a tree until it is taken out and placed into somewhere that gives it larger boundaries in order for it to flourish.

We are not trees, but at times we can be people who live a little like that tree - people who are trapped or limited. Sometimes we live in the fullness of what once 'fitted us', but without intentionally pursuing God in seeking out a bigger space. Without this expansion we can very quickly become stunted in our growth and in our faith.

Jabez was a man who desired a new day - he desired something greater than the space he found himself in - He desired to live blessed and with this desire he dared to call out to God and declare blessing over his life, and God granted him his request. Our foundations need to be firm and pure because God desires to expand us - He wants to enlarge our territory, both individually but also as a Church body. This may leave us feeling unsure sometimes; uncertain of this new space, but don't shrink back! Expansion may look and feel unknown and even uncertain to begin with, but push on because growth and expansion are not far behind! Like Jabez, declare blessing over your life and circumstances, because you are blessed!



Spend a few minutes reflecting upon the fact that God is the Great I AM. He was, He is and He will always be. In the midst of this though, He is also Emmanuel, God with us. God with you. He is the One who knows you intimately and desires to see you grow and move from glory to glory. Spend time thanking Him for this today.



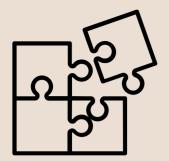
Ask God to show you if you have any areas of life that are like the tree in the plant pot - areas of life that are not flourishing or going deeper. Ask Him to help you and breath new life in these areas and help any excavating that needs to be done, in order to prepare for Spiritual expansion.



Pray for your street, neighbourhood,, city and nation. Pray as Jabez did, that God would bless us and extend our territory and influence for the Kingdom. Pray for opportunities and ways that you, and we, could see this happen in 2024.



Take a few minutes to think about one thing that you could do in your immediate neighbourhood that would help you connect with others - could it be a coffee date? Lunch? A BBQ? Think about what would work, and get planning and putting it into action as a way of blessing those around you - expand your world! Bring blessing to the world around you! Be Blessed!



DAY SEVEN: TAKE A STEP BACK

Nor do we boast and claim credit for the work someone else has done.

Instead, we hope that your faith will grow so that the boundaries of our work among you will be extended.

2 Corinthians 10:15



Jigsaws can be a little like marmite - you love them, or you hate them! Particularly with larger jigsaws, it is very easy to end up concentrating on just one area for a long time. If you're doing a jigsaw with other people, often you find that if people pick part of the picture to complete, they end up being super focussed on finding the pieces for their own section, and can sometimes forget to take a step back and look at the whole picture.

Going through the work of allowing God to excavate certain parts of life, while it is a personal journey, it is not intended to be done in isolation; not only because God did not create us to do life in isolation, but also because our journey links to a larger picture of journeying as a Church. As we expand and grow as individuals it will make it possible for God to use Mosaic Church in new and greater ways. Paul understood this and saw it in action in Corinth (take a look at 2 Corinthians 10:15). We are all individual parts of a bigger story. We are all a piece of the picture which is needed and so we all have a responsibility to make a decision to do the necessary journey and work, so collectively our faith and lives allow God to expand the boundaries of the work of the Church for God's Kingdom purposes.



Take time to thank God that God uses us to communicate His good news to those around us. Take time to acknowledge that although we share the good news, it is only God that can bring the increase. We can plant and water, but God alone causes growth.



Sometimes we can forget the good news that we carry, and the fact that we are part of both an individual story, and a bigger story. Church community can be hard work at times, but it can also be the greatest example of love. Pray for yourself that you would carry the grace, love, forgiveness and faith required to be a powerful and effective part of this bigger picture.



Pray for the Church body. Pray that we all would be able to carry a greater depth of love, grace, forgiveness and faith in order to see God's purposes fulfilled. Pray for yourself and others, that where there may be stumbling blocks, that God would bring about His healing and restoration so that we would all have clean hands and hearts.



Take time to re read and consider all that God has spoken to you about in this week. Set time aside to intentionally write down what you feel you need to do, or the things you need to remember, in order to move forward in this year of digging....and then pray 'Let's begin...'

Action...



THOUGHTS THOUGHTS TROM THIS WEEK...



THINGS GOD HAS HIGHLIGHTED I NEED TO PUT INTO ACTION...



PRAYER& FASTING. JAN 2024.