

# Personal Study

Week of August 4

Are you running on empty? Often, before God does a new work through us, He does a new work in us. Something has to happen, and usually something has to change. Prayer and fasting help us go from ‘running on empty’ to ‘running full-throttle’ as we re-focus on Christ’s mission with a new mindset and new energy. To help us, there is no greater gift than His Holy Spirit.

When we accept Jesus Christ, we begin to experience the very presence of God dwelling within us. God desires this for every person. As God’s Spirit gives us greater clarity and purpose, we will begin to notice a greater desire to receive what He wants to give us. As fully devoted followers, Christ empowers us to push back more and more darkness in our communities.

## Read Acts 13:1-6a, 38-52

As we position ourselves to receive what God wants to give us, Spirit-filled ministry follows. Notice it was “...after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:3,4a). To be on mission in uncharted territory means that God’s Spirit goes before us and empowers us.

1. Throughout Scripture (as well as, your own personal experience) what is the difference in being filled with the Holy Spirit, and not being filled with the Holy Spirit? What happens when Christ-followers are truly led (guided, directed) by the Holy Spirit?

## Definition of Prayer—

To position and prepare yourself (1) to share your heart with God and (2) to hear the heart of God. Like a cell phone, there is both a place to speak and to listen.

2. Think about ways you listen to God. Are you seeking to hear from God’s heart? How can we distinguish God’s voice (His truth) from something of our own notion (or some other spirit)?

Pastor Charles says, “If you can order at a restaurant, you can pray.” Prayer is simply telling God what you need and sharing with the Lord what is on your heart (your hurts, struggles, pain, even joys). How does this image help to simplify prayer for you?

During August, Christ Church will be fasting and praying for clarity and purpose as we move into the new place God wants to take us. For example, pray for greater outreach for all campuses, clearer focus as we expand space, our pastors and leaders to be led (guided, directed) by the Holy Spirit, for worshipers to become more aware of God’s mission in their work-place.

Fasting can be different for different people. Simply, it is doing without something that we are accustomed to (or that we really enjoy) for a designated time in order to better align with God’s movement in and around us. Without the distractions and diversions, we can better position ourselves to His Spirit. Start today. As we humble ourselves in prayer, God will motivate us to move toward the new place He wants to take us.

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