

A graphic for "21 Days of Prayer" featuring a teal background with a white dotted pattern. In the center, there is a golden illustration of hands clasped in prayer. The text "21 DAYS OF PRAYER" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters, with the "21" being significantly larger than the other numbers. Below the text, there are three small golden icons: a grid of dots on the left, a cross in the center, and a circular icon with a cross on the right.

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

FASTING WITH KIDS & STUDENTS

At McLean Bible Church, we see fasting as a way to set aside food—or something else important to us—for a time so we can focus on God in a deeper way.

Fasting isn't just for adults—it's for kids too! While biblical fasting is generally better suited for older kids who can grasp its meaning, teaching them about it and involving them in age-appropriate ways can build a strong foundation for spiritual growth. Including your kids and students in this discipline may stretch your family in new and challenging ways, but the impact will be well worth it.

During the 21 Days of Prayer, we hope you'll engage your kids and students in this practice at home. Here are a few simple ways to introduce fasting:

PUSH BACK A MEAL

A simple step toward refraining from food is to skip a regular snack time or, instead of skipping a meal entirely, consider delaying it by 30 minutes or an hour. When hunger begins to set in, gather your family and talk about how much we need God—even more than food! Pray together, expressing your dependence on Him.

QUIET HOURS

Consider setting a time each day to turn off the TV, close the laptop, and power down phones and tablets. Instead of being on devices, use the time to pray together.

TIME AWAY FROM TOYS

Encourage kids to pick a toy, game, or activity to fast from for a week. When they miss it, remind them to turn their thoughts to God. Offer to sit with them during those moments and pray, saying something like, "God, help us to love You more than the things we have. We're thankful for all You've given us."

SKIP THE SWEETS

One of the most accessible ways to introduce fasting is to take a break from candy, desserts, soda, or other treats for a set time. This fast is simple but impactful because it helps kids and students let go of something they enjoy without a major disruption to routines. Use the moments when you'd typically enjoy a treat to pray together as a family, thanking God for His goodness and asking for His guidance.

FOR OLDER KIDS AND STUDENTS

If you have older kids or teens, you might encourage them to fast from social media, streaming platforms, or their favorite apps for a set time. Consider having them take an hour each day to turn off their phone or device. When they feel the urge to scroll or watch, guide them to pray instead, asking God to help them fix their eyes on Him.

It won't be perfect, and that's okay! The goal isn't perfection—it's intentionality. As you lead your family in this practice, you're modeling a deeper reliance on God and teaching your kids the joy of drawing closer to Him.

Our MBC staff team is here to support you every step of the way. If you have questions or need ideas for making fasting and prayer meaningful for your family, our MBC Kids and Students teams would love to help!

Let's trust God to do great things in the lives of our families as we pursue Him together during these 21 days.