

SESSION 03

# To Amplify Our Prayers

# Overview

Fasting and prayer go together. Like two wings of a bird, together they take flight. You can pray without fasting, and you can fast without praying, but when you combine the two, there's a noticeable amplification of our prayer before God. This comes as no surprise, since fasting is a kind of praying with our bodies. When the requests of our hearts are coupled with the yearnings of our bodies, our prayers are purified of their dross and presented like precious metal before the Father, for him to do as he will.

Of course, “prayer” is an umbrella term for the medium through which we communicate and commune with God. Prayer involves both speaking and listening. And fasting is a key companion in both.

Fasting is an aid in *hearing* God.

It helps us to discern his voice through the noise and distraction of our lives. It sharpens our minds; in the fasting state, our minds are more alert, focused, and open. It makes it easier for us to hear how God is coming to us, to hear his will, and to hear his direction for our lives.

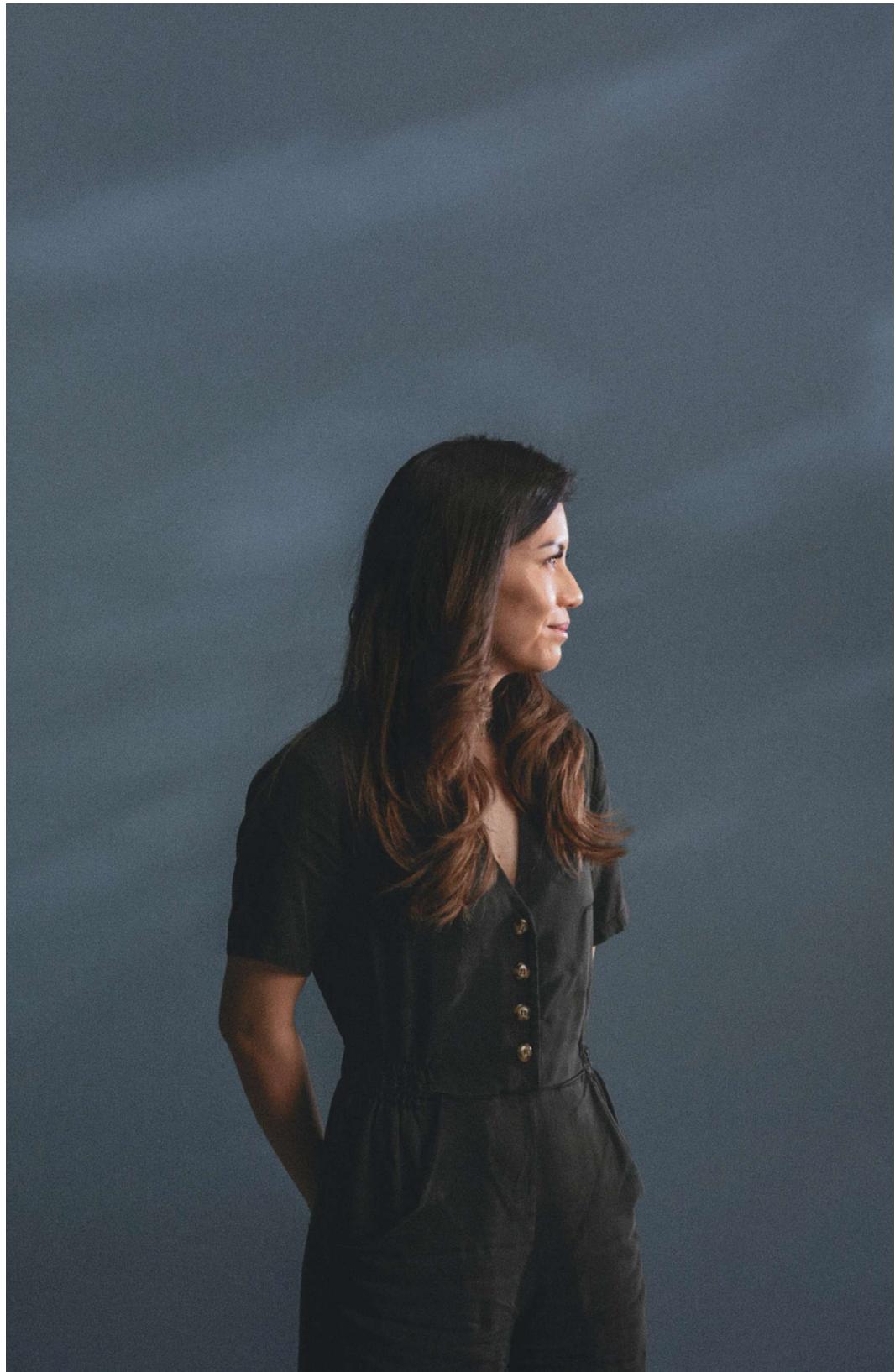
But fasting is also an aid to *being heard* by God.

It helps us to break through the walls that stand between us and the release of God's plans, purposes, and power. Story after story — in Scripture and church history — attest to this reality: When prayer and fasting link arms, it's often the tipping point in the struggle to release God's Kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven.

# Reflection Questions

When instructed, circle up in triads (smaller groups of 3-5 people) and discuss the following questions:

- 01 Did you notice any shift in your heart toward sin while you were fasting?
- 02 What's an area in your life where your willpower is failing and you are praying for the grace to change?
- 03 What's an area in your life where you are experiencing increasing freedom from sin and joy in God?



# Teaching

## Key Scripture

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

—Acts 13v1-3

## Session summary

- Over time, fasting becomes a calming and clarifying process, creating ideal conditions for hearing God’s voice.
- Fasting is a key aid in helping us discern God’s will for our lives, particularly when we’re facing major decisions.
- Fasting powerfully amplifies our prayers, bringing our bodies into conversation with God.
- While God’s ways are mysterious, Scripture is clear that God responds to prayer and fasting.
- Fasting isn’t about getting what we want from God, but bringing us into loving communion with him.

# Teaching Notes

As you watch Session 03 together, feel free to use this page to take notes.

## Discussion Questions

Now it's time for a conversation about the teaching. Pause the video for a few minutes to discuss in small groups:

01 Do you have any stories of clear answers to prayer?

02 What's an area in your current life where you are praying for discernment, seeking to know the will of God for your life direction?

03 What's an area in your current life where you are praying for a breakthrough?

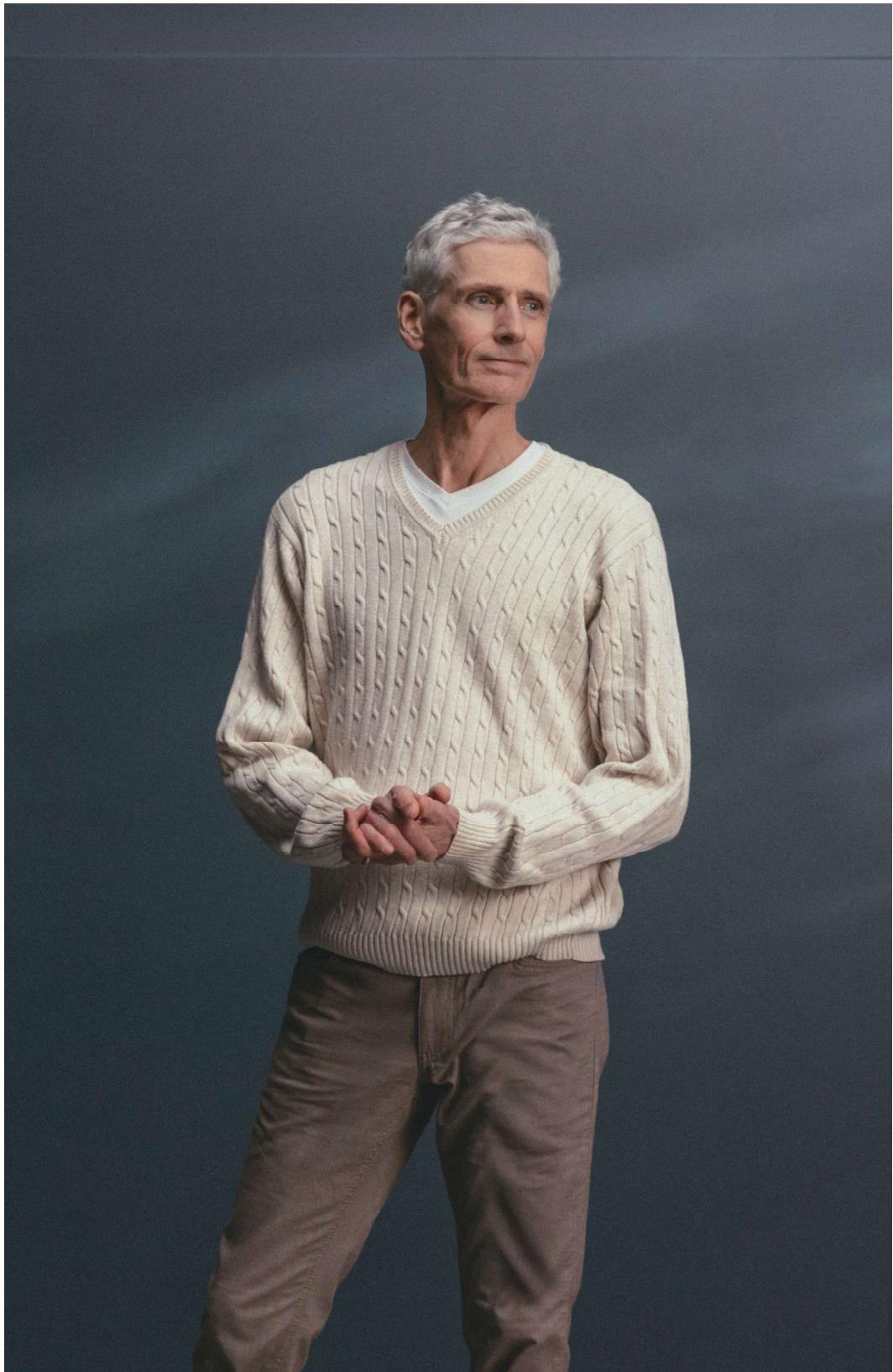
# Practice Notes

As you continue to watch Session 03 together, feel free to use this page to take notes.

## Closing Prayer

End your time together by  
praying this liturgy:

Empower us, Holy Spirit, and  
all our prayers, as we offer  
our bodies in harmony with  
our deepest yearnings.  
We need your in-breaking power,  
your grace, your listening,  
that your Kingdom and will  
may be done amidst us now  
and forever.



## Exercise

### Fast for one day this week, focusing on growing in holiness

- Pick a day that works for you; we recommend Wednesdays or Fridays.
- If possible, pick a day that works for your community to fast together.
- Fast until sundown that day, then eat a simple meal in gratitude.
- In the time you'd normally be grocery shopping, cooking, eating, or cleaning, give yourself to prayer.
- In your dedicated times of prayer, or each time a hunger pain comes, you may want to pray through a short list of specific requests you are holding before God, or simply pray, "God, speak to me. I'm listening."
- If possible, set aside time in the quiet to listen for God's voice and offer your prayers up to God. You may want to get up early, find a quiet park on your lunch break, or end your day with a nice walk. But find a time and place to minimize distractions and combine your fasting to prayer.

# Reach Exercise (Optional)

## Fast for a longer period of time

- If you have the desire and life space to increase the duration of your fasting practice, this could be an ideal week to do a longer fast.
- You may want to fast for a full day, eating dinner one night and not breaking the fast until the morning 36 hours later.
- Or you may feel invited by the Spirit of Jesus into a multi-day fast of two days, three days, or longer.
- Just remember: Unless there is a clear stirring in your heart from the Spirit to pursue a longer fast, the best practice is to “walk before you run.” If you’ve only ever fasted until sundown, try just going until the following morning as your next step in the journey.

ON YOUR OWN — REFLECT

## Practice Reflection

Before your next time together with the group for Session 04, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions:

01 How did it feel to pray while being hungry?

02 Have I sensed any direction from God's Spirit?

03 What am I longing for God to do with my heart, soul, mind, and body?

**Note:** As you write, be as specific as possible. While bullet points are just fine, if you write it out in narrative form, your brain will be able to process your insights in a more lasting way.

# Reflection Notes

# Keep Growing (Optional)

The following resources were created to enhance your experience of this Practice, but they are entirely optional.

## **Read**

*God's Chosen Fast* by Arthur Wallis  
Chapters 11-15

## **Listen**

Rule of Life Podcast on Fasting  
Episode 03

## **Bonus Conversation**

If you would like to slow down this four-week Practice to give your community more time to sit in each week's teaching and spiritual exercise, you can pause and meet for an optional bonus conversation in the appendix.