
Use the message notes and [Discussion Guide](#) to dive deeper into this message from Pastor Eric Gilbert. This message premiered 1/12/2025 on [3trees.Online.Church](#) and the [3trees Church Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

You can download the [DISCUSSION GUIDE](#) here:
“Pursuing God with Purpose: The Power of Prayer & Fasting”

Key Scripture:

Joel 2:12–13 (CSB)

“Even now—this is the Lord’s declaration—turn to me with all your heart, with fasting [and prayerful] weeping... Tear your hearts...and return to the Lord...for He is gracious and compassionate...abounding in love.”

ILLUSTRATION

In the first century BC, a devastating drought threatened to destroy a generation in Israel. With no rain in sight, a man known for his unwavering faith. His name was Honi. Responding to the desperation of the people, Honi traveled just outside the city to be by himself, drew a circle in the sand, knelt inside it, and prayed with boldness:

“Lord of the universe, I swear before Your great name that I will not move from this circle until You have shown mercy upon Your children.”

Days passed. Honi kept praying.

Eventually, as his prayers ascended, raindrops descended—saving the nation from catastrophe.

This act of audacious faith earned Honi the title “The Circle Maker.”

The tale spawned a best-selling book by the same title.

- Within its pages, the author states:

*“Bold prayers honor God,
and God honors bold prayers.”
—Mark Batterson ¹*

¹ Mark Batterson, *The Circle Maker*

Main Points:

1. Private Devotion

Scripture References:

- Matthew 6:5–6 (CSB): *"Whenever you pray, go into your private room..."*
- Matthew 6:16–18 (CSB): *"Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites..."*

Highlight:

- Jentezen Franklin: *"Fasting is a constant means of renewing yourself spiritually."*

Reflection: Are your spiritual practices aimed at deepening your relationship with God or seeking approval from others?

2. Purposeful Discipline

Scripture References:

- Matthew 6:9–13 (NKJV): *The Lord's Prayer.*

Outline for Prayer:

- Honor: *"Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name."*
- Surrender: *"Your kingdom come. Your will be done..."*
- Request: *"Give us this day our daily bread."*
- Release: *"Forgive us our debts..."*
- Pursuit: *"Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

Highlight:

- Andrew Murray: *"Prayer is reaching out after the unseen; fasting is letting go of all that is seen."*
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3. Persistent Dependence

Scripture References:

- Matthew 6:7 (CSB): *"When you pray, don't babble repetitively like the Gentiles..."*
- Matthew 6:18 (CSB): *"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you."*

Reflection: In what areas of your life do you need to demonstrate persistent dependence on God through prayer and fasting?

4. Powerful Declaration

Scripture References:

- Matthew 6:10, 13 (NKJV): *"Your kingdom come... For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."*

Reflection: What bold prayers can you enhance through fasting as you trust God for the impossible?

Action Steps:

1. Dedicate time for private prayer and fasting.
2. Identify your purpose.
3. Maintain privacy.
4. Stay consistent.
5. Pray boldly.

ILLUSTRATION: *How to Experience Revival*

In the early 1900s, British evangelist Gypsy Smith was asked how to start a revival. He responded:

*"Go home, lock yourself in your room, kneel down in the middle of the floor, and with a piece of chalk, draw a circle around yourself. There, on your knees, pray fervently and brokenly that God would start a revival within that chalk circle."*²

Revival doesn't start out THERE.

- It begins in HERE—in our hearts.