

# SPIRITUAL GROWTH

## Practicing His Presence

SUNDAY, January 2, 2022

**Key Scripture:** Matthew 8:5-13

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

Last week, we were reminded of the importance of reading God's word. We learned that God's word is alive and active, and it transforms us. This week, continuing our series on Spiritual Growth, our focus is on prayer and fasting. We learned what prayer and fasting is and how to practice both. We see from the key scripture that in prayer we recognize Jesus as Lord, come humbly before Him and have faith that He is who He says He is. Fasting is to give up something that will allow you to spend focused time in the presence of God for a specific purpose. The very best thing is if what you're giving up is a sacrifice that reminds you of how important it is to hunger for God and to place Him above the thing from which you are fasting. Ultimately, prayer and (p)fasting invite God's presence.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think back to Sunday's message. What do you remember? Review your notes if you have them. If you're with a CV Life Group, talk with them about anything you found memorable or confusing.
2. What comes to mind when you think of prayer and fasting?
3. Read Matthew 8:5-13. What stands out to you about the centurion?
4. What is significant about Jesus' response?
5. What do we learn about prayer in this passage?
6. Read Matthew 6:16. What is the significance of the word 'when' (instead of 'if')?
7. Read Hebrews 11:6. What role does faith play in approaching and pleasing God?
8. If you're comfortable, share a personal experience of a time you experienced God's presence through prayer and fasting.
9. What's one thing you learned from Sunday's message and today's discussion that will help you become a better disciple of Christ, and help others do the same?

### NOW WHAT?

Join in prayer and fasting over the lunch hour for the next two weeks. We invite you to pray and fast with us in person Monday – Friday in the Theater from 12– 1 p.m. if your schedule allows. We will break the fast with the House Party on January 16.

