



CHICAGO TABERNACLE

A 21 DAY DEVOTIONAL ON

CONSECRATION

CONSECRATION

Consecration is an intentional “yes” from us in response to God’s invitation to be set apart. It is a choice to align our daily lives with the priorities of Heaven. Throughout these 21 days, we are stepping out of the normal rhythms of life to say, “Father, I belong to you first.” Consecration extends to our appetites, our schedules, our speech, and our ways, until every part of us begins to echo the heart of Jesus. As you fast and pray, you are not just giving something up. You are presenting yourself to God for His purposes in 2026 and beyond.

“Jesus told His disciples, “Some of these things only come out through fasting and prayer.”

Mark 9:29

in order to say “yes” to more of God. In fasting, we declare with our bodies what we confess with our mouths: we are set apart for Him.

Fasting is one of the primary ways we respond to God’s call to consecration. It is exchanging the needs of the flesh and our physical world for those of the spiritual. We humble the flesh by saying “no” to the earthly things we crave

CONSECRATION

Fasting is an opportunity to devote extra time, extra energy, and extra focus to the Lord.

There is no “formula fast” or one “right” way. Fasting is about the condition of the heart. Our goal in fasting is to grow in intimacy with the Father and to live more fully set apart for Him. While fasting in the Bible involved abstaining from food, some may choose to fast from things such as social media, TV, or the internet.

But the primary aspect of fasting is that it always makes room for an increased life of prayer; without the increase of prayer, a fast is merely a diet.

Pray about what God is calling you to fast during this time, and use this devotional guide to learn first-hand what consecration looked like in the lives of three bible characters: Daniel, Esther, and Mary. Each day will guide you to Scripture and to moments where these three modeled what a life consecrated to the Lord looked like.

Our hope is that this guide is only the beginning—that it launches you into a life of consecration in 2026 and beyond.

THEREFORE, I URGE YOU, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IN VIEW OF GOD'S MERCY, TO OFFER YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY AND PLEASING TO GOD—THIS IS YOUR TRUE AND PROPER WORSHIP. ROMANS 12:1



WEEK ONE

DANIEL

WEEK ONE

A HEART SET APART

READ

“Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king’s food.” *Daniel 1:8*

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

Romans 12:1

REFLECT

Daniel’s story begins not with lions or visions, but with a quiet decision in his heart. In a foreign land with new pressures and temptations, he chooses to honor God even in what he eats. That choice of consecration sets the trajectory of his whole life. In the same way, your 21-day fast begins with an inner resolve: “Lord, I am Yours. I don’t want anything in my life that dulls my hunger for You.”

Romans 12:1 echoes Daniel’s heart: we are urged to present our bodies as a “living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” Fasting is one way we say with our whole selves, “I belong to You.” You may feel weak or inconsistent, but God sees the direction of your heart. When you set yourself apart for Him, even in small ways, you are saying, “You are worth more than my comfort.” That is the soil where revelation grows.

RESPOND

1. In what areas of your life have you become comfortable with compromise?
2. What does “not defiling yourself” look like practically during this fast (media, food, habits, attitudes)?
3. How would your life look different if you truly believed that even small decisions of obedience matter to God?
4. What one specific resolve will you make before God as you begin these 21 days?

GOD HONORS SMALL DECISIONS

READ

“God gave Daniel favor and... they appeared better and healthier than all the others.” *Daniel 1:9-15*

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.” *Luke 16:10*

REFLECT

Daniel’s request about food seems small in the shadow of a vast empire. Yet God steps into that small decision and backs it with favor and visible results. The officials may have thought it was just a diet experiment, but heaven saw an act of consecration. Your fast may feel ordinary or unimpressive, but God sees the heart behind it—and He responds.

Jesus teaches in Luke 16:10 that whoever is faithful in little will be faithful in much. We often wait for a big moment to prove our devotion, but God watches our choices everyday. What you watch, what you eat, how you speak, how you steward your time; these are the spaces where consecration takes shape. As you surrender small comforts in this fast, expect God to meet you with grace, favor, and quiet transformation.

RESPOND

1. What “small” decisions might God be asking you to make differently during these 21 days?
2. Where have you underestimated the spiritual impact of your daily choices?
3. How have you seen God’s favor demonstrated in response to your small steps of obedience?
4. What is one practical small act of consecration you can commit to today?

WISDOM FROM ABOVE

READ

“God gave them knowledge and understanding... and Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.”

Daniel 1:17

“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”

James 1:5

REFLECT

The wisdom Daniel carries is not just the result of study or talent; Scripture says God gave it to him. Consecration opened a channel for heaven’s insight to flow through his life. Revelation is not spiritual trivia; it is God sharing His perspective so we can navigate real situations in His wisdom. During this fast, you are asking God not just for information, but for His mind.

James 1:5 assures us that God gives wisdom generously to those who ask in faith. He can show you how to handle conflict, finances, parenting, calling, and decisions in ways that go beyond your natural thinking. As you lay aside distractions and draw near to Him, make space to listen. Revelation often comes as a quiet prompting, a verse that comes alive, or a fresh way of seeing a familiar situation.

RESPOND

1. Right now where do you need God's wisdom most (relationships, work, decisions, inner life)?
2. How can you make intentional space to listen for God's perspective during this fast?
3. When has God given you insight that clearly went beyond your own understanding?
4. What would change if you truly believed God wants to give you wisdom generously?

SEEKING MERCY IN MYSTERY

READ

“He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery.” *Daniel 2:17-19*

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” *Phillipians 4:6*

REFLECT

When the king demands the impossible, “Tell me my dream and its meaning” Daniel doesn’t panic alone. He gathers his friends and asks them to seek God’s mercy for revelation. The answer comes in the night as a vision. Revelation is not earned by effort; it is received as a mercy from God. Fasting is one way we express our dependence on that mercy.

Philippians 4:6 instructs us to bring everything to God by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving. You may have mysteries in your life, whether it be a confusing situation, a painful story, or a decision where the path is unclear. Instead of just trying harder, Daniel models turning to God with others and asking for help. God wants to be invited into your “I don’t know” moments. This fast is an opportunity to say, “Lord, I don’t have all the answers, but I know You do.”

RESPOND

1. What “mysteries” are you facing right now that you can’t figure out on your own?
2. Who are the trusted friends you can invite to pray with you for God’s mercy and guidance?
3. How does it shift your heart to see revelation as mercy, not something you have to earn?
4. What specific mystery will you bring before God today, asking Him to speak in His timing and His way?

REVELATION FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

READ

“There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries... this mystery has been revealed to me... for the benefit of the king.” *Daniel 2:27-28, 30*

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” *1 Peter 4:10*

REFLECT

When Daniel stands before the king, he is clear: no human wisdom can do this, but there is a God in heaven who reveals. He also acknowledges that the revelation isn’t just for him. Revelation is for the king and the people whose lives are at stake. When God shows you something, it’s rarely just about you. Revelation carries responsibility.

1 Peter 4:10 says we should use whatever gift we have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God’s grace. Your fast is personal, but its impact is meant to be communal. God may give you encouragement to share, strategies to bless your family, or insight to serve your church and community. As He speaks, ask, “Who is this for?” The more we steward revelation for others’ good and God’s glory, the more He can trust us with.

RESPOND

1. Have you tended to treat spiritual insight as something mainly for your own encouragement?
2. Who in your life might be blessed by something God is showing you in this season?
3. How can you stay humble—like Daniel—when God uses you to bring clarity or encouragement to others?
4. What is one way you can intentionally serve or encourage someone with what God is teaching you right now?

FAITHFUL WHEN IT COSTS YOU

READ

“He went to his house... and prayed... just as he had done before.” *Daniel 6:10*

“Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” *1 Thessalonians 5:17–18*

REFLECT

A law is passed that makes prayer to anyone but the king a crime. Daniel doesn’t change his rhythm. He goes home, opens his windows toward Jerusalem, and prays as usual. His consecration is not seasonal or convenient; it is steady. Sometimes the clearest revelation we can live out is simple, stubborn faithfulness when obedience becomes costly.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17–18, we are told to “pray without ceasing” and to give thanks in all circumstances. Your fast may be pressing on areas where obedience feels hard; time, comfort, relationships, habits. The question is not just “Will I start well?” but “Will I stay faithful when it’s no longer exciting?” God uses these 21 days to train your heart for long-term steadiness, not just short-term intensity.

RESPOND

1. Where do you feel pressure to compromise your rhythms with God when life gets busy or costly?
2. What “as he had done before” practices do you have—or need—in prayer, word, and worship?
3. How is God using this fast to strengthen your perseverance and consistency?
4. What is one rhythm with God you want to continue after the 21 days are over?

FROM THE FIRST DAY

READ

“From the first day that you set your heart to understand... your words were heard.” *Daniel 10:12-13*

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” *Ephesians 6:12*

REFLECT

Daniel fasts and mourns for three full weeks. When the angel finally arrives, he explains that from the very first day Daniel set his heart and humbled himself, his prayers were heard. There was real spiritual resistance in the unseen realm, but heaven had been moving the whole time. Your fast may not always feel powerful, but Scripture assures you it is not ignored.

Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces of evil. God pays attention the moment you turn your heart toward Him. Even when you feel nothing or struggle, your hunger matters. The delay is not denial; sometimes it is warfare, sometimes it is God’s wise timing, sometimes it is Him deepening your roots. As you finish the first week, be encouraged: from day one, He has seen and He has heard.

RESPOND

1. How have you felt God's nearness—or apparent distance—during this first week of the fast?
2. Where have you been tempted to assume “nothing is happening” because you don’t see quick results?
3. How does Daniel’s experience encourage you to keep praying and fasting even when you don’t feel much?
4. Looking back over the week, what small signs of God’s work or stirring can you thank Him for today?

FOR WE ARE GOD'S HANDWORK CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS TO DO GOOD
WORKS WHICH GOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE FOR US TO DO



WEEK TWO

ESTHER

WEEK TWO

POSITIONED ON PURPOSE

READ

“The king loved Esther... and set the royal crown on her head.”

Esther 2:17

“From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.” *Acts 17:26-27*

REFLECT

Before the crisis ever appears, Esther is chosen and crowned as queen. From the outside, it may look like luck, beauty, or politics, but behind it all is God’s providence. He positions her before she ever understands why. In your life too, God has gone ahead of you, placing you in relationships, workplaces, and communities for reasons you may not yet see.

Acts 17:26–27 says God determines the times and places where people live so they might seek Him. Consecration for breakthrough often starts with recognizing that your life is not random. This fast is not just about your personal spiritual experience; it’s about saying, “Lord, use where I am for Your purposes.” When you see your placement as intentional, you can begin to ask bold questions about how God might want to bring deliverance and hope through you.

RESPOND

1. Where has God placed you right now (family, work, church, neighborhood) that might be more intentional than you realized?
2. How does seeing your position as part of God's plan change the way you view your daily routines?
3. When have you looked back and realized God had positioned you perfectly for something you didn't expect?
4. What is one place in your life where you can begin praying, "Lord, show me why You have me here"?

SEEING THE REAL BATTLE

READ

“There is a certain people... their laws are different... let a decree be issued to destroy them.” *Esther 3:8-9*

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” *1 Peter 5:8-9*

REFLECT

Haman’s hatred leads him to secure a decree to destroy the Jews. On the surface, it looks political and ethnic; underneath, it is deeply spiritual. It is a direct attack on God’s covenant people. In our lives, there are often “decrees” operating: lies, generational patterns, addictions, shame, or fear that seek to destroy what God loves. Fasting helps us see the real battle.

1 Peter 5:8–9 urges us to be alert because our adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, and to resist him, standing firm in the faith. When you begin to set yourself apart to God, sometimes opposition becomes clearer. This isn’t a sign that you should quit; it is a sign that you’ve stepped onto a battlefield. As God reveals the enemy’s schemes, He doesn’t do it to frighten you but to invite you into partnership with Him for deliverance.

RESPOND

1. What destructive “decrees” or patterns do you sense have been at work in your life or family?
2. How has God already begun to expose lies or strongholds during this fast?
3. What changes when you recognize that your struggle is not just against people or circumstances, but against spiritual opposition?
4. What specific “decree” will you ask God to confront and overturn during these 21 days?

HOLY GRIEF

READ

“There was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing.” *Esther 4:1-3*

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Matthew 5:4

REFLECT

When Mordecai learns of the decree, he doesn't shrug it off. He tears his clothes, puts on sackcloth and ashes, and cries out. Across the empire, God's people respond with fasting and lament. They let the weight of the situation touch their hearts, and they bring that pain before God. Holy grief is not hopelessness, it is honest sorrow in God's presence.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Sometimes we have grown numb to things that should grieve us; our own sin, broken relationships, injustice, spiritual apathy. Fasting awakens our hearts again. God can handle your tears, your anger, your questions. He would rather have your honest pain than your distant silence.

RESPOND

1. Are there areas where you've become numb or indifferent to things that break God's heart?
2. How comfortable are you expressing grief, lament, or strong emotion to God in prayer?
3. What situation in your life, family, or world are you grieving right now?
4. How can you turn that grief into prayer and fasting rather than despair or bitterness?

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

READ

“Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” *Esther 4:13-14*

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
Ephesians 2:10

REFLECT

Mordecai reminds Esther that her safety in the palace does not exempt her from responsibility. If she stays silent, help will come from elsewhere, but she may miss the purpose for which she was positioned. His words call her out of self-protection and into courageous obedience. Your life also carries a “for such a time as this” assignment.

Ephesians 2:10 declares that we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared in advance for us to do. In this fast, God may be pulling you from the comfort of the sidelines into the risk of obedience. You may be the one called to stand in the gap for your family, to speak up at work, to intercede for your city, or to serve in a new way. Consecration for breakthrough means saying, “Lord, here I am. Use me.”

RESPOND

1. Where have you been tempted to choose self-protection over obedience?
2. What “palace” of comfort or privilege might God be asking you to steward for others’ good?
3. How do Mordecai’s words challenge your perspective on this specific season of your life?
4. What step of obedience might be your “for such a time as this” moment right now?

FASTING INTO COURAGE

READ

“Do not eat or drink for three days... I and my attendants will fast as you do.” *Esther 4:16*

“ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” *2 Corinthians 12:9*

REFLECT

Before Esther goes before the king, she goes before God. She calls for a three-day fast for all the Jews and joins them herself. Fasting doesn’t guarantee an easy outcome, but it positions her heart to say, “If I perish, I perish.” True courage isn’t the absence of fear; it is obedience strengthened by God’s presence.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God says, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Your 21-day fast is forming courage in you. As you deny your flesh and draw near to God, He steadies your heart to obey in areas where you’ve been hesitant. He can give you boldness to confront patterns, have hard conversations, begin new steps, or break with old habits. Courage grows in the secret place.

RESPOND

1. Where do you need courage right now—in relationships, calling, holiness, or decisions?
2. How has fasting revealed your fears or insecurities?
3. What difference do you notice in Esther’s response before and after she calls for the fast?
4. What specific fearful situation will you bring before God today, asking Him for courage to obey?

STEPPING INTO THE THRONE ROOM

READ

“She stood in the inner court... he held out to her the gold scepter.” *Esther 5:1-2*

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” *Hebrews 4:16*

REFLECT

After the fast, Esther dresses in royal robes and steps into the inner court, risking her life. The king could reject her, but instead he extends the scepter and welcomes her. On the other side of her obedience, she finds favor. Fasting prepared her heart so that when the moment came, she stepped forward instead of shrinking back.

Hebrews 4:16 invites us to come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. In Christ, you are invited with confidence to God’s throne. Yet there are still moments when obedience feels like stepping into a room where you’re not sure how you will be received. This fast is training you to move toward God and His will, not away from it. Many breakthroughs begin with a single step of faith.

RESPOND

1. What “inner court” moment is in front of you—something that feels risky but right?
2. How has this fast been warming your heart toward God’s presence and His will?
3. When have you experienced God’s favor on the other side of a fearful step of obedience?
4. What step of faith can you take today, trusting that God’s scepter of grace is extended toward you?

WHEN GOD TURNS IT AROUND

READ

“The day... when the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite happened.” *Esther 9:1*

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” *Romans 8:28*

REFLECT

The very day set for the destruction of God’s people becomes the day their enemies are defeated. The story doesn’t just end in survival; it ends in celebration and honor. God loves to write “the opposite happened” over situations the enemy meant for evil. Your fast is not just about coping, it’s about partnering with God for real turnaround.

Romans 8:28 promises that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Sometimes God changes circumstances; sometimes He changes hearts; sometimes He changes you. But He is a God of reversals. The decree of death is met with a higher decree of life. As you finish this second week, dare to believe that God can still bring beauty from ashes, joy from mourning, and praise from heaviness.

RESPOND

1. Where are you longing for God to write “the opposite happened” in your story?
2. How has your view of breakthrough shifted during this week of focusing on Esther?
3. What would it look like to celebrate by faith even before you see the full turnaround?
4. What specific situation will you keep bringing before God, asking Him for His “higher decree” over it?

WEEK THREE

MARY

WEEK THREE

CHOOSING THE BETTER PART

READ

“Mary... sat at the Lord’s feet listening... Mary has chosen what is better.” *Luke 10:39-42*

“One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.”

Psalm 27:4

REFLECT

In a house full of good activity, Mary chooses a different posture. While Martha is distracted with serving, Mary sits at Jesus’ feet and listens. Jesus doesn’t rebuke Martha for serving, but He defends Mary’s choice as the “better” portion that will not be taken away. Closeness begins with choosing presence over productivity.

Psalm 27:4 echoes Mary’s choice: the one thing David desires is to dwell in God’s presence and gaze upon His beauty. As you enter the final week of the fast, the temptation may be to think of all you’ve “done” for God. But He is after your heart more than your performance. Fasting creates space to sit, listen, and enjoy Him. A life of steadiness is built on this one choice, made again and again: to value His presence above everything else.

RESPOND

1. Where do you identify more—Martha’s busyness or Mary’s stillness?
2. What keeps you from regularly sitting at Jesus’ feet (distraction, hurry, anxiety, guilt)?
3. How can you practically “choose the better part” in your schedule during this last week?
4. What might God want to say to you if you simply slowed down and listened?

LOVED IN THE WAITING

READ

“Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard... he stayed where he was two more days.”

John 11:5-6

“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!” *Isaiah 30:18*

REFLECT

Scripture is careful to affirm Jesus’ love for this family, and then tells us He delayed. That tension is familiar: we know God loves us, yet we watch prayers seemingly unanswered and situations stretching on. Closeness and steadiness mean trusting His heart when you don’t understand His timing.

Isaiah 30:18 says the Lord longs to be gracious to us and that He rises to show us compassion, yet He also waits for the right moment. In a fast, delays and silence can feel sharper. But remember that God’s delays are never a sign of indifference. They may be making room for a deeper revelation of who He is. For Mary and Martha, the delay led to a greater miracle and a deeper knowledge of Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life.

RESPOND

1. Where are you currently experiencing God's "delay" in your life?
2. How does it help (or challenge) you to know that Jesus' delay came in the context of His love?
3. What do you think God might be forming in you through this season of waiting?
4. How can you respond in trust rather than resentment when His timing is different from yours?

AT HIS FEET WITH YOUR TEARS

READ

“She fell at his feet and said, ‘Lord, if you had been here...’”
John 11:32-33

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” *Psalm 34:18*

REFLECT

When Jesus finally arrives, Mary doesn't pretend everything is fine. She falls at His feet and pours out her disappointment and grief. She brings her questions to Him, not away from Him. Jesus is deeply moved by her tears. Steady closeness isn't about never struggling; it's about knowing where to take your pain.

Psalm 34:18 tells us that the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. In this fast, God isn't just asking for your strength; He also wants your weakness, confusion, and sorrow. You can be fully honest with Him. The safest place for your tears is at His feet. There, He meets you not with condemnation but with compassion and resurrection hope.

RESPOND

1. What unspoken grief, disappointment, or confusion have you been carrying in this season?
2. Do you tend to withdraw from God or move toward Him when you are hurting?
3. How does Mary's response challenge the way you handle pain and unanswered prayers?
4. What would it look like today to bring your honest heart to Jesus without editing your emotions?

POURING OUT COSTLY WORSHIP

READ

“Mary took a pint of expensive perfume... and poured it on Jesus’ feet.” *John 12:3*

“But the king replied to Araunah, ‘No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.’” *2 Samuel 24:24*

REFLECT

Mary’s act of worship is extravagant. She breaks open costly perfume—worth a year’s wages—and pours it out on Jesus’ feet, wiping them with her hair. To some, it looks wasteful, but to Jesus, it is beautiful and deeply meaningful. Closeness with Him leads to a willingness to offer your best, not your leftovers.

In 2 Samuel 24:24, David says he will not offer to the Lord what costs him nothing. Your fast is a kind of perfume, a costly offering of your appetite, your time, your desires. But there may be other “perfumes” He touches—your plans, your resources, your pride. When you see His worth clearly, surrender becomes less about loss and more about love.

RESPOND

1. What “costly” things might God be inviting you to lay at His feet—time, money, reputation, dreams, habits?
2. How has this fast already challenged what you value most?
3. When have you experienced the joy of giving something up for Jesus and later realizing it was worth it?
4. If you saw Jesus’ worth more clearly, how might your worship and obedience change?

SEEN AND DEFENDED BY JESUS

READ

“Leave her alone... She has done a beautiful thing to me.”

Mark 14:6

“But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’”

1 Samuel 16:7

REFLECT

Not everyone understands Mary’s act of devotion. Judas criticizes her, framing her worship as wasteful and irresponsible. But Jesus steps in to defend her, interpreting her act better than she could herself. A life of consecration may draw misunderstanding or criticism, but you are not unseen. Jesus knows the story behind your sacrifice.

In 1 Samuel 16:7, God reminds Samuel that people look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. As you fast, some people may not “get it”—even other believers. They may question your choices, your zeal, or your priorities. Take comfort in knowing that Jesus sees every quiet yes, every hidden act, every unseen sacrifice. In the end, His affirmation is the one that matters.

RESPOND

1. Have you ever felt misunderstood or criticized for your devotion to Jesus?
2. How does it encourage you to know that Jesus sees and defends Mary's heart even when others misjudge her?
3. Where might fear of people's opinions be holding you back from full obedience?
4. What would it look like today to live for Jesus' "well done" more than for others' approval?

LEARNING TO ABIDE

READ

"Remain in me, as I also remain in you... apart from me you can do nothing." *John 15:4-5*

"Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers." *Psalm 1:1-3*

REFLECT

Jesus uses the picture of a vine and branches to describe life with Him. The branch doesn't strain to bear fruit; it simply stays connected. Closeness and steadiness are not about occasional spiritual highs but about ongoing, daily abiding. The goal of your 21-day fast is not just a powerful experience; it's a new pattern of remaining.

Psalm 1:2–3 describes the blessed person as one who delights in God's law and meditates on it day and night, becoming like a tree planted by streams of water. Through fasting, you've been creating extra space for God. The invitation now is to carry that posture into ordinary days. Abiding looks like regular conversation with Him, habitual trust, obedience in small things, and returning quickly when you wander. Fruit grows naturally where connection is consistent.

RESPOND

1. What habits in these 21 days have helped you feel more “connected to the Vine”?
2. How does Jesus’ image of abiding shift your focus from striving to staying close?
3. Where are you most tempted to live “apart” from Him—relying on your own strength?
4. What simple daily practices can help you remain in Him beyond the fast?

A LIFELONG PURSUIT

READ

“One thing I ask... that I may dwell in the house of the Lord... and seek him.” *Psalm 27:4*

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 3:13-14*

REFLECT

David’s lifelong desire is focused: to live in God’s presence and gaze on His beauty. Mary of Bethany embodies this same “one thing” heart at Jesus’ feet. Your 21-day fast has been training your heart toward a similar pursuit: not a quick spiritual event, but a life centered on knowing Him.

Philippians 3:13–14 shows Paul pressing on, forgetting what lies behind and straining toward what is ahead, to take hold of Christ. As this fast concludes, it is not the end of something holy but the beginning of a new way of living. You’ve tasted the goodness of setting yourself apart, seeking revelation, crying out for breakthrough, and drawing near in closeness. The invitation now is to say, “Lord, let this not be a moment, but a marker. Help me to keep choosing You as my one thing.”

RESPOND

1. What has God done in you over these 21 days?
2. Which practices from the fast do you sense He wants you to carry forward into everyday life?
3. How has your picture of a “consecrated life” changed during this journey?
4. What is one specific commitment you will make before God today as you step into life after the fast?



CHICAGO TABERNACLE

a place of becoming