

# Daniel Fast 2021

Daily Devotions

## SURVIVING



TO

## THRIVING

4th - 24th January 2021

Welcome to the Daniel Fast 2021.

*It might be called a fast, but these three weeks feel like a feast laid out before us.*

*Our Early morning prayer will take us through the first three chapters of Galatians embracing the life in the Spirit as we pray together for one another, our churches, town and world.*

*Our daily devotion, based around Psalm 77, will take us on a journey from surviving to thriving. We will discover that God so often uses disruption to get us moving and whilst it might head through a dark valley, greener pastures await. We can thrive even in this season.*

*Our evening readings in Daniel will encourage us in living for his kingdom even through times of disorientation, when circumstances are not what we would like them to be. In our exile, like Daniel, kingdom opportunities abound.*

*We need each other, more than ever. We aren't meant to journey alone so please keep connected through all the opportunities - Sundays, Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays - and especially joining to pray each day.*

*Full details: [burlington.church/danielfast](http://burlington.church/danielfast) and [iic.io/danielfast](http://iic.io/danielfast)*

*We believe more than ever that God is forging a special partnership between us. These three weeks are an important part of us growing together and seeing more clearly what God has for us.*

*So join us as we give God the first-fruits of 2021.*

*Looking forward to all that's ahead.*

*Every blessing*

*Harold and Simon*

PS We have a Daniel Fast Spotify Playlist of the songs that we are suggesting each day. Check it out here: [burlington.church/danielfastspotify](http://burlington.church/danielfastspotify)



# An Introduction to The Fast

This year we are asking you to consider how to 'Fast' in a way that really helps you to TURN DOWN the distractions of life to TUNE IN to God's voice. In these Covid times a change in your diet may not be advisable.

For this year's Daniel Fast we are asking you to think about.....

- What you need to GIVE UP?
- What you need to TAKE UP?
- Where you need to JOIN UP?

## GIVE UP

There are many ways to fast. We would like you to fast in the way that is appropriate for you. Perhaps you would like to join in the Daniel Fast as discussed here [www.daniel-fast.com](http://www.daniel-fast.com).

However, it may be more useful/sensible for you to fast from your favourite past time, a habit such as computer games or TV or one element of your diet such as caffeine, sugar or alcohol. Decide what you are going to do, tell someone else to hold you accountable and shape the fast in a way that helps you to position yourself to hear from God and grow.

## TAKE UP

Stopping something is only half of what biblical fasting is about. We need to 'take up' something so that we tune into God's voice.

Some suggestions include:

- Commit to reading the Bible and doing SOAP every day to allow God to speak through His Word;
- Commit to the journey with others. Could you commit to worship every Thursday night for example?
- Decide you are going to go for a walk with God every day. As you walk intentionally tune into God's voice;
- Spend time listening to worship music and resting in his presence;
- Take times of stillness where you ask God into the space;-
- Attach a pause to everyday things. For example every time you walk into your home give thanks for it, or every time you have a drink pause and thank God for his provision
- Read that Christian book that you have been meaning to and allow God to speak through it.

## JOIN UP

This year we would love you more than ever to commit to our community touch points. All the details and links to the zoom meetings can be found on our webpage [burlington.church/danielfast](http://burlington.church/danielfast)

**Everyday** - 6am prayer meeting - daily - [burlington.church/6amprayermeetingwithiic](http://burlington.church/6amprayermeetingwithiic)

**Mondays** - Monday Morning worship 9.30-10.30am: [burlington.church/mondaymorningworship](http://burlington.church/mondaymorningworship)

**Thursdays** - Evening worship and listening 7-8pm 7th & 14th January: [burlington.church/eveningworship](http://burlington.church/eveningworship)

**Fridays** - Evenings of worship and prayer - [iic.io/danielfast](http://iic.io/danielfast)

Additionally can we encourage you to join up with others in a variety of ways. Here are some ideas:

- Prayer triplets (or a few friends being accountable)- Could you ask 2/3 others to walk through the Daniel Fast together? Meeting for a walk weekly or doing a zoom call and encouraging each other through the fast?
- How will your community do something together.? Could you meet weekly on zoom to talk about what God is doing? To do the bible study?
- Stay in touch. The Burlington Facebook group really comes alive when we post verses, encouragements and stories of what God is doing amongst us. Even if you don't usually post I would love to encourage you to do so this year. It would be wonderful to hear what God is doing amongst us. We would also love to hear stories and encouragements that we can share on our Sunday stream. Please get in touch with Claire if you have something to share.

If you would more information or some support or help through this fast do get in touch with Claire at [claire@burlington.church](mailto:claire@burlington.church)

# Week 1

DISORIENTATION

## Honesty with God

SURVIVING



TO

THRIVING

## Day 1 - Monday 4th January

### Morning Prayer

*A significant part of our rhythm each day is our Early Morning Prayer (6am-7am) with IIC following the book of Galatians - Life in the Spirit.*

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 1

##### A time to flourish

Psalm 1 gives a beautiful image of what flourishing looks like. Those whose roots are deep in him are like trees planted by the river. 2020 has been a hard season and for many has felt like a drought of human connection. During the Daniel Fast we are going on a journey of moving from surviving to thriving. Today as we start the journey we want to use that image as an image of hope to encourage us. In these moments can we encourage you to read the verses again and look at the picture of thriving it presents. As you do can we encourage you to open your hands and to commit to the journey ahead.

**SONG:** Housefires - Come to the River

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 1:1-7

Daniel faced a massive disorientation. He was forced to live in exile in a very pagan Babylon. Despite the circumstances Daniel serves God faithfully and doesn't waver when hardships arise. He lives with hope, never compromising his standards, he keeps God central in his life and uses the influence that God gives him.

## Day 2 - Tuesday 5th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:1-9

#### The journey

We are going to spend time these weeks looking at Psalm 77. This is written by Asaph who was one of the three Levites who ministered before the Ark of the Covenant. His journey, as we will see, is the same as our journey. In Psalm 77 he is not in a great place. We don't know exactly what has happened, but the Psalm gives us great insight into what is happening internally during his moments of disorientation and how we can respond. Read the verses slowly. Do you recognise what he is feeling?

**SONG:** Cageless Birds - Mountain High

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 1:8-16

How easy would it have been for Daniel to behave like everyone else, to think like everyone else and to have the same attitude as everyone else? Daniel responded differently. He leaned into his faith to get him through this season. What or who are you leaning into?

## Day 3 - Wednesday 6th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:1-2

#### Honest with yourself

The first thing we have to do when change is happening is to notice the need, be honest about where you are, be honest about your own needs and feelings. The Psalms are full of lament, people's raw emotion and honesty about where they are. The great thing about the Psalms is that whilst they are honest they do move to a place of breakthrough, but to get there they start with honesty.

Every journey then from surviving to thriving begins with honesty. How honest are you about how you feel? Not what you say to others, or the image you project, or even the story that you tell yourself. God's journey is based on truth. So be honest today about how you feel.

**SONG:** Hillsong United - As You Find Me

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 1:17

What has God given you? Ask him to show you?



## Day 4 - Thursday 7th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:3-4

#### Honest with God

Notice that the raw honesty that the Psalm express is almost always directed at God. We must be honest with Him about how we feel. Try that today. Tell him how you feel. Really tell him. Shout, scream, cry, rage ...tell Him all that you feel ... even the things you are angry with Him about. Don't worry. It's Biblical, and God is big enough to take it, absorb it. And you can't stop Him loving you.

Often when we are in a season of change we can feel that if we express the emotions that we will be overwhelmed, so instead we lock the emotions deep inside. As we look at verse 4 he says "you kept my eyes from closing." God didn't allow him to be overwhelmed and it is the same for us.

**SONG:** Casting Crowns - Just Be Held

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 1:18-20

Daniel was beginning to thrive! He body was healthy, his mind was healthy, his spirit was healthy. No wonder He and his friends caught the King's attention. Is there an area of health that you need to work on?

## Day 5 - Friday 8th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:5-6

#### Honest with Others

The psalms were written and used in corporate worship. They shared these experiences and emotions. And we need to too. We need each other to help us “remember.” Remember who God is and what he has already done ... and so begins the crucial part of our journey: the pivot.

#### Pivoting our Perspective

In v 5 we see that he starts to look back and see what God has done. We need to do the same. When we are in seasons of disorientation we need to look at what has been. Asaph starts to see what God has already done in his life. We need that. To see afresh the ways that God has been faithful. All the ways that our pent up emotions have blinded us to. And we start to realise that the God who has been faithful in this season will be faithful in the next. He will do it again.

**SONG:** Elevation Worship - Do It Again

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 1:21

A strange land, a foreign power, a godless nation but Daniel entered the King's service. In fact he was already in the King's service \*(pun intended!). are you waiting for your exile to be over, or are you pressing in to serve the King today, in this moment and at this time?

## Day 6 & 7 - Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th January

What has God been saying? What are we going to do about it? Over the weekends we are encouraging you to spend time reviewing and considering what God has said this week.

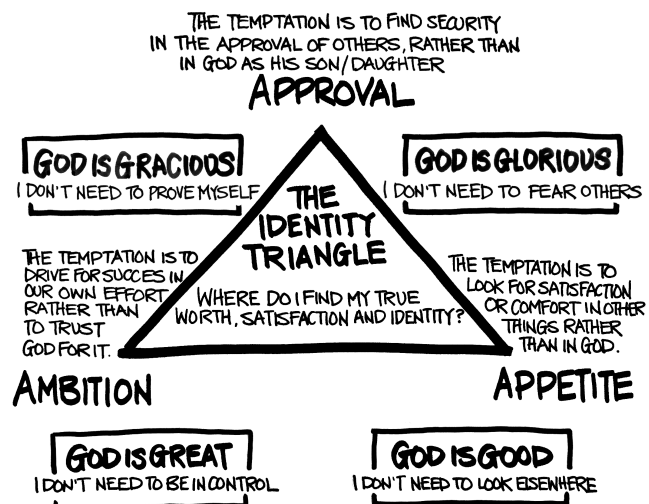
Let's use the Kairos Circle to help us review this past week:



A Kairos moment is a moment/verse/words from God or a situation where you know God is catching your attention. It is something God is using to speak into your life. Start by writing down a (or a number) of Kairos moments from this past week:

Now spend some time observing who God is? This image may help. What elements of God's character speak into your Kairos moment? Write these down and also some verses that confirm these things. From the truth about God we move to ourselves and understand the truth about ourselves (our true identity) in the light of who God is and who He says we are.

What is God asking you to do? From this we move to ask the great question **How do we now get to live?** It is a joy, not a burden. It is a freedom. Something we get to do rather than something we ought to do. Write it down and then share it with someone so they can ask you how it's going. (Accountability!)



## Week 2

PIVOTING OUR PERSPECTIVE

# Hearing from God

SURVIVING



TO

THRIVING

## Day 8 - Monday 11th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 8

#### Pivoting our Perspective

God hasn't changed, but our experiences can so easily leave us with a loss of perspective. God can feel small. He can feel distant. We can feel lost. We can feel alone. We need to regain perspective!

Use this passage and the song to regain any lost perspective. God loves you and is for you. God is big enough to take care of everything!

**SONG:** Bethel Music - Goodness of God

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 2:1-17

Daniel could have hidden away in fear. But he knew God's favour and leaned in to the gift and grace that God has given him. Where are you tempted to hide away in fear rather than step out with the gift that God has given you? Is there a courageous step that you need to make, even in a hostile environment?

## Day 9 - Tuesday 12th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:7-10

#### Wrong beliefs

It's so easy to ever so subtly begin to believe things (about God and ourselves) that are wrong. These false beliefs need to be challenged as we pivot our perspective. Even as we speak them out, like Asaph does in these verses, the power of them can be broken and we see the hold they have over us is broken.

Obviously in our heads we know that the answer to all of these questions he asks is "no!" But, if we are honest, which of these questions does your *heart* feel like the answer could be "yes?"

Identify the question over which your heart waivers. Ask God to help you. Say sorry for the lack of trust that it reveals. Receive his forgiveness and recall a Scripture that will help you stand on the truth in this area.

**SONG:** Jenn Johnson - Mention Of Your Name

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 2:17-19

Notice that Daniel went immediately to his friends, to his household of faith. He was not a loner. Who are your "friends?" What are you sharing with them? Is it time to gather them to pray to God on your behalf?

## Day 10 - Wednesday 13th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:11-12

#### Receive Hope

We have seen how Asaph starts to ask 6 rhetorical questions (v7ff). These questions are the outworking of his change of perspective.

He uses the questions to bolster himself, and fight off his unbelief. Can you hear him with fists clenched, shouting out the questions, boosting his faith?

“Will the Lord reject me forever? Of course he won’t!” He is redefining his belief in God, his focus is moving. He is pivoting as his focus returns to God. And suddenly, breakthrough! We see it in today’s verses. His mind is full and his heart is captivated again by God.

Can you see the journey? He has poured out his heart to God and found it replaced with God’s own goodness and might.

Think back over the last 10 days of this journey. Are you there yet? Don’t be afraid to go back. There might be more emotion to express, more wrong beliefs to stand against, more time to focus on who God is. God will lead you step by step. But the breakthrough of verse 11 and 12 IS yours!

Share your journey with someone today, and pray.

**SONG:** Hillsong Worship - What A Beautiful Name

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 2:2-23

Daniel’s first response in hearing from God was praise and worship. It was God’s doing. He had revealed the dream. He must get the credit. Find a moment to linger in praise and worship - it’s all God’s doing - before you rush into action.

## Day 11 - Thursday 14th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 103

#### Seal the deal

Soon we will look ahead to the coming year. We might be eager to get on with it, or fearful about what it might bring but either way we need to be rooted in God as we move forward.

Use today's Psalm to thank God for all that he has been doing in your life. What verse is speaking to you? How thankful are you today?

Try to be in his presence. Not to rush, make demands or seek outcomes. Just enjoy.

**SONG:** Maverick City - Thank you

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 2:24-45

Two things come together. Two things that so often come together in Scripture. Two things equally ready to come together in our lives. Daniels bold action (going before the King and God's sovereign intervention (in telling Daniel not just the interpretation but also the dream itself!) These two things are always related. We take bold action, God does something miraculous. Where would you like your bold action and God's miraculous intervention to come together? Go on then, be bold!



## Day 12 - Friday 15th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 62:5-8

#### Anchored in Hope

“I trust in you; ...No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame,” Psalm 24:2-3

Let the words of these verses deepen your hope and confidence in God. The future is certain. We are safe in His hands. Nothing can separate us from His love. He will never leave us or forsake us. We are already seated in Christ. He has gone to prepare a place and He will come back!

As we turn into next week, we will lean into the year ahead. But for today thank him for the covenant (certain & unchanging) relationship that He has with you.

**SONG:** Bethel - No longer slaves

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 2:44

God always has a bigger plan. When we are faithful now, God opens up new opportunities. At the beginning of the chapter Daniel was facing death, at the end he is promoted to be ruler over a super-power! God's got you! And He has a plan!

# Day 13 & 14 - Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th January

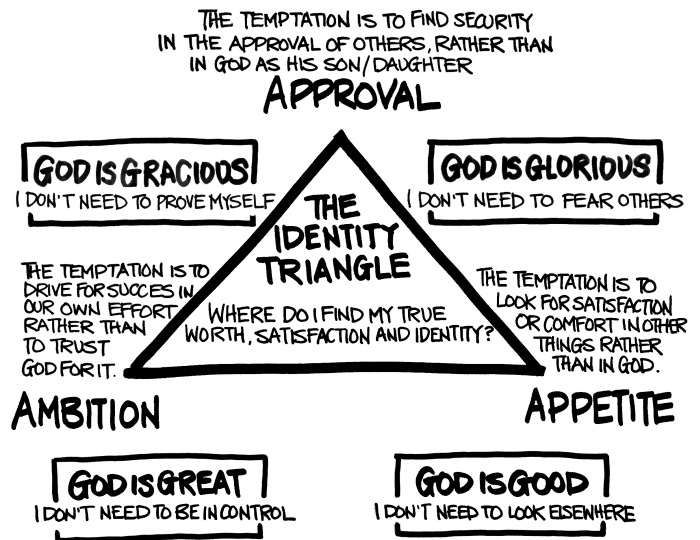
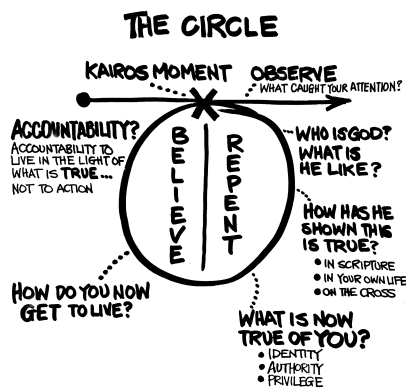
## What has God been saying? What are we going to do about it?

It's time to review the week again. Using the same process as you did last weekend use these pages to capture what God is saying to you.

My Kairos moments from the week are:

What am I observing about who God is and therefore who I am?

What is God asking me to do out of this? Who will hold me accountable this week?



## Week 3

WORSHIP & TRUST

# Hope in God

SURVIVING



## Day 15 - Monday 18th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:13-15

#### Acting on Hope

As we go into this final week, we see Asaph breaking into worship & trust. He's a long way from when we first saw him in verse 1, and so are we. Now the rekindled hope that we received last week leads to a renewed commitment of a life of worship and trust.

Here are a few words of today's song:

"Leaving the safety here at the shore, beyond the horizon I see there is so much more"

How ready are you to step out? To take a risk? To leave the harbour and sail the God-adventure of 2021? Pause. Don't rush on. Really think about that question. Use the song to help you reflect.

**SONG:** Tim Hughes - Pocketful of Faith

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 3

Daniel's friends go through the same experience as Daniel. Their bold action leads to God's miraculous intervention. Give thanks for your "Daniels." Those who have inspired you, set an example for you and blazed a Kingdom trail for you to follow.

## Day 16 - Tuesday 19th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Acts 13:1-3

#### Hearing the call

Asaph broke into worship. It's when we worship, when we lift God high, when we say that we are His and we will do His will and go His way that we hear the call. Paul & Barnabas were called to the work that the Holy Spirit had for them. He has "work" for you too.

Do you know what that work is? Where is God sending you?

It was in community that Paul & Barnabus heard and understood God's call on their lives. We need community too.

Discuss with others today where you think God might be sending you this year.

**SONG:** Elevation Worship - Available

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 4

Daniel has already be so faithful to God, but this takes it to the next level. Imagine delivering *that* message. But Daniel was ready. Nebuchadnezzar fell. What is the giant in your life that will fall whilst all you need to be is be faithful? Let hope arise that something so big that seems impenetrable and unstoppable can fall so quickly under God's mighty hand.

## Day 17 - Wednesday 20th January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:16-19

#### What stops you

We all have a sea to get across to get to where or what God is calling us too. Our sea is anything that stops us. Anything that gets in the way. Our sea can be internal things: doubt, fear, or external things: circumstances, business. Our sea is any obstacle.

Asaph tackles this head on. He reminds himself that God is the God who makes a way through the sea. God can make a way. Do you believe that? Are you able to pray in faith today that God can part your sea?

Yes, your sea is mighty. It does seemingly have power of you. Re-read Asaph's words. God is so much more powerful. He can lead a way through mighty waters. Quietly thank him. Trust him. Ask him what you need to do.

**SONG:** UpperRoom- Surrounded (Fight My Battles)

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 5

Belshazzar had not learnt from his father Nebuchadnezzar. That was his downfall. Is there a lesson that we are too slow to learn? Where do we see our sins repeating themselves? If Belshazzar had been repentant, the outcome would've been very different. Is there a repeating pattern that God is asking me to recognise today?

## Day 18 - Thursday 21st January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 77:20

#### God uses you

One of the biggest things that stops us is self-doubt. Not me, Lord! Moses and Aaron were both like that. But God chose them. He chooses you. We talk about believing in Jesus, but Jesus believes in you! Say that to yourself. And again, a bit louder. Here are his words over YOUR life:

John 15:16: “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.”

So, go on. Ask for what you need.

**SONG:** Passion - God You're So Good

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 6

There are always people who want to bring us down, especially as we pursue God's kingdom. Daniel's response was not to fight them, get bitter or angry or disillusioned. Daniel went to his room and prayed *with thanksgiving*. Right there is the secret of his success. An unchanging rhythm of prayer and thankfulness. As this Daniel Fast rhythm comes to a close what rhythms will you continue on into 2021?

## Day 19 - Friday 22nd January

### Morning Prayer

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### Lunch time (daily) devotion

#### Psalm 23

##### Greener pasture awaits

This most popular and most familiar Psalm tells the story that we have shared in. The Shepherd leads us through dark valleys to greener pastures. We got through the disappointment of Good Friday to the hope of Resurrection Sunday.

And so ... we go through the dark valley of Covid-19, knowing that he is with us, but we are headed towards greener pasture. We are moving from surviving to thriving! Whatever the twists and turns of this global pandemic, the breadth and depth of its impact and the length of its shadow over us; we can thrive!

Psalm 23:5b-6a "You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life."

So - forgive the mix of metaphors - go bloom this year where God has planted! And let the rest of us help you.

**SONG:** New Wine Worship - You Restore My Soul

### Evening reflection

#### Daniel 6:25-28

I bet Daniel had no idea of what was ahead when he was dragged off to Babylon. Little did he know that his faithfulness would eventual change the destiny of a whole empire. What began with 'small' decisions of faithfulness ("I will not eat *that* meat") grew to extraordinary implications. Be faithful this year with what's already in your hand, in your grasp and in front of you. Then watch what God will do.



## Day 20 & 21 - Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th January

**What has Good been saying?  
What are we going to do about it?**

It's time to review the week again. Using the same process as you did last weekend use these pages to capture what God is saying to you.

My Kairos moments from the week are:

What am I observing about who God is and therefore who I am?

What is God asking me to do out of this? Who will hold me accountable this week?

And now finally, we are reaching the end of the fast. Let's spend some time looking back over the whole fast.

What have been the key things God has said that you need to take into the rest of the year?

How will you live because of what God has said?