

# VINEYARD church

## PRAYER & FASTING

### DAY 1

#### Scripture Focus

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up."*

– Hebrews 12:1-3 (NLT)

#### The Weight of the Journey

In 2006, my best friend and I ventured into the wilderness on a hiking trip. Though we meticulously planned for our 22-mile loop trail in South-Central Missouri, reality had other plans. Our gear, though top-notch, was heavier than we anticipated. The trail was unforgiving, strewn with loose flint rocks that made every step precarious. The stream we counted on for water was bone dry.

After one night, we abandoned our plan, heading back to the car. I'll never forget the moment I heaved my heavy pack into the trunk of the car—it was a wave of relief and freedom. It struck me how easy it is to grow accustomed to burdens until you finally lay them down.

#### What Are You Carrying?

Life's burdens—whether they're emotional, spiritual, or psychological—can weigh us down until we forget what freedom feels like. Hebrews calls us to "strip off every weight," to turn over those heavy loads to Jesus, who bears them for us.

Take a moment to reflect:

- What weights are you carrying?
- Are there hurts, habits, or sins you've grown used to?
- Have you convinced yourself that life is just heavy?

Jesus invites you to lay it all down. You weren't designed to carry this alone.

#### Prayer

*Lord, search my heart and show me the weights I've been carrying on my own. I confess my attempts to control what I cannot. I give these burdens to You—every fear, every hurt, every sin. Help me to release my grip and trust You to take the lead in my life. Bring me into the freedom that comes from surrendering to Your way. Amen.*

*Roger Wilson*

Executive Pastor of Ministries