

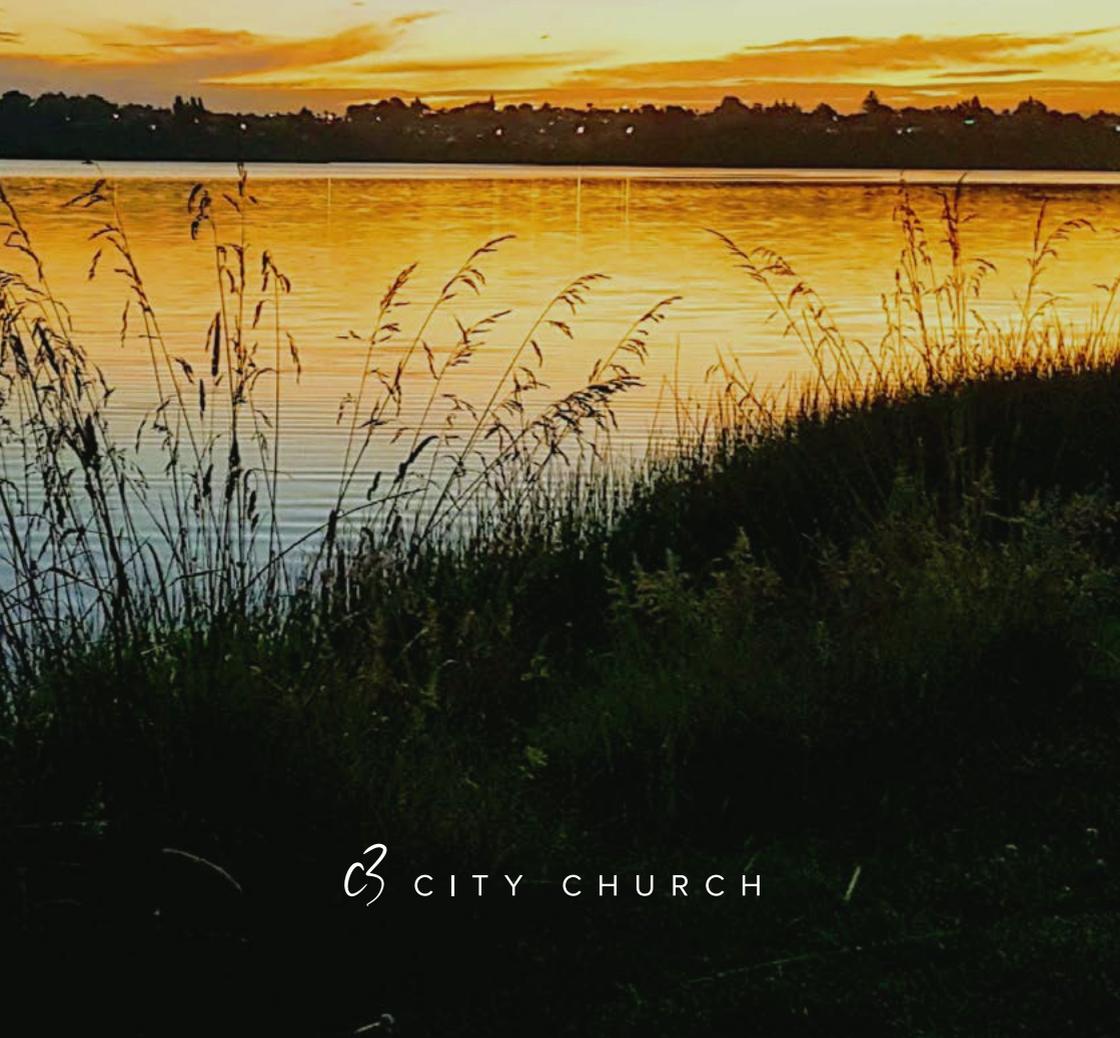
2 WEEKS

PRAYER AND FASTING

APR
8



APR
19



 CITY CHURCH

Hey City Church!

We are so excited about this upcoming season of prayer and fasting, because we know the outcome is going to be powerful and transformational - both for you as an individual, and also for C3 City Church!

When we work, WE work; but when we pray, GOD works!

Prayer and fasting involves a posture of humility before God. When we pray and fast, we position ourselves to seek God's face, and to hear His voice afresh. The old adage is true - the church goes forward on its knees.

James 5:16b says "...the earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."

When we pray to Jesus, we are declaring how much we need Him in our lives, family, church, city, nation and world. When we fast, we are showing the Lord that we want and need Him more than our next meal.

Let's make a goal to attend at least one prayer meeting, morning or evening, and come together to storm the Heavenly realms!

Our prayer is not only that this season of prayer and fasting will be a blessing to you, but that it will become a life-long habit, and also a strengthened culture within C3 City Church.

Ps Alan & Elena



What is fasting?

Fasting is deliberately abstaining from the normal routines of life. Its purpose is to spend focused time in prayer and the study of God's word, seeking to align our lives with God's will.

Ultimately, fasting is more about replacing than abstaining. It is filling our lives with God's word instead of with food, social media or entertainment. It is finding satisfaction and enjoyment in God and in God alone. Fasting helps us humble ourselves before the Lord and positions us to experience spiritual breakthroughs in our lives.

Mathew Henry writes, "Fasting is of use to put an edge upon prayer." Have your prayers lost their fervor? Has your devotional life become dull? Fasting has a way of mystically sharpening our souls and making us more sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

We recognise as we begin this two-week fasting and prayer commitment that as God's people we need to boldly ask him for breakthroughs in any challenge or opportunity facing us individually and corporately.

What is the great matter in front of you? A loved one far from Christ? A critical decision in the life of your family? A relationship that is falling apart? What great matters are in front of your church or ministry?

Take time to write down each needed breakthrough and lift them up to God in prayer.

Planning Your Fast

1. Pick your fast

Full Fast

Drink liquids only. Please consult your doctor first.

All-Day Fast

Abstaining from food one day or multiple days per week.

Daniel Fast

Eat only vegetables, fruit, water and juice (minimal amount of carbohydrates).

Partial Fast

Not eating one or two meals on a specific day or abstaining from certain kinds of food.

Activity/Media Fast

Forgoing a time-consuming activity such as entertainment, hobbies, television, internet, sports, etc.

2. Make prayer commitments & write them down

Begin with clear personal prayer needs as well as breakthrough for your church. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of your marriage or resolution of family issues? Are you facing difficulties? Pray and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance.

3. Feast on the word of God

Fasting is ultimately an expression of humility and dependence on God. It is about replacing the daily intake of food, entertainment and human contact with focused times of prayer, spending large amounts of time feeding on the Word of God and spiritual listening.

4. Open your life before God and Expect God to move

One of the great benefits of spiritual fasting is a heightened awareness of God's presence and power in our lives. Fasting has a great way of moving us towards a deeper spiritual dependency and away from willful self-dependency.

The greatest breakthrough will take place when you make time to examine your life and discover what areas most need breakthrough.

We ask that you fast for spiritual breakthroughs for your church family and its mission, vision and values as well as for yourself.

5. Join us at the prayer meetings:

City Church Tauranga & North

Tue 9 April – Fri 12 April | 6.45am – 7.30am (Prayer Room)

Wed 10 April | 7pm - 8pm (Combined Prayer & Worship)

Mon 15 April – Thu 18 April | 12.30pm – 1.00pm (Prayer Room)

Thu 18 April | 7pm - 8pm (North & Tauranga Prayer & Worship)

City Church Coast (Papamoa Rec. Centre)

Tue 9 April | 6.15am - 7am (Men's prayer meeting)

Wed 17 April | 7pm - 8pm (Coast Prayer & Worship Night)

Friday 19 April | 6.15am - 7am (Womens Prayer)

I am committing to pray for:

You can write down more details on each area below...

Personal Faith

Spiritual Revival • Physical Healing • Prosperity and Abundance • Generosity . . .



My Family

Restoration of Relationships • Household Salvation . . .



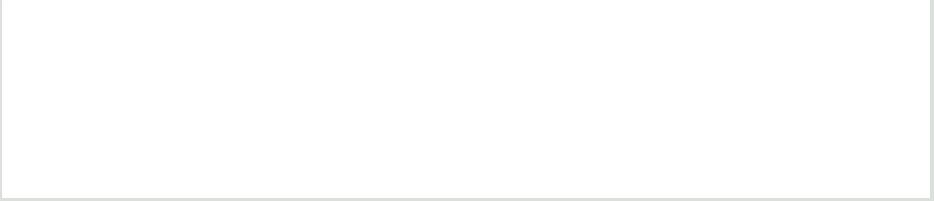
My Education / My Career

Excellence • Promotion . . .



My Church

Church Leadership • Locations • Provision • Discipleship Ministry • Increase Conference 2019. .



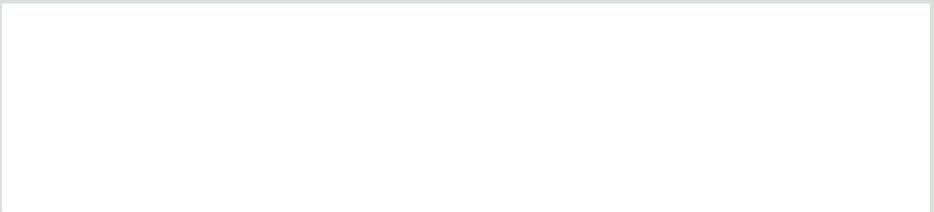
My Ministry

Connect Group Growth • Salvation of Colleagues and Classmates . . .



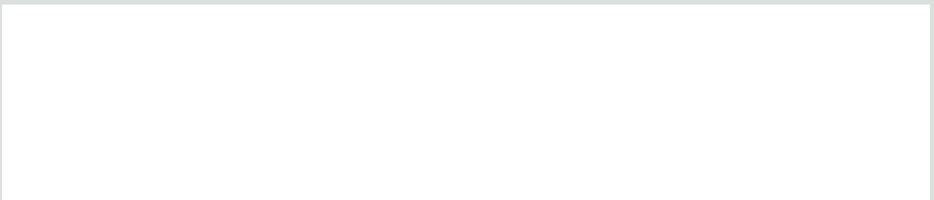
My Community

Local Government • Outreach Opportunities . . .



My Nation

Government Officials • Spiritual Revival • Economic Prosperity • Peace and Order . . .



An Assumed Practice

Fasting is not an option but an assumed practice for the serious-minded follower of Jesus. Fasting is a spiritual discipline that believers throughout history incorporated into their daily lives. Jesus did not say, "If you fast," but, "When you fast."

Matthew 6:16-18 — "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

Fasting thought:

"Jesus takes it for granted that his disciples will observe the pious custom of fasting. Strict exercise of self-control is an essential feature of the Christian's life. Such customs have only one purpose — to make the disciples more ready and cheerful to accomplish those things which God would have done."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Circle your fasting option(s) for today:

Full fast, All day fast, Daniel fast, Partial fast, Activity/Media fast.

Circle the area(s) you're praying for today:

Personal faith, Family, Education/Workplace, Church, Ministry, Community, Nation.

Notes:

Dependence

Fasting is a humbling experience that reveals who or what we really depend upon or are controlled by.

Psalm 69:10 — “When I weep and fast...”

Fasting thought

“More than any other single discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately — anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear. If they are within us, they will surface during fasting.

At first we will rationalize that our anger is due to our hunger. Then we know that we are angry because the spirit of anger is within us. We can rejoice in this knowledge because we know that healing is available through the power of Christ.”

Richard Foster

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Notes:

Real Hunger

Fasting is a struggle against the flesh and is emotionally and physically demanding; in this we discover what we really hunger for.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3 — “Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”

Fasting thought

“Do you have a hunger for God? If we don't feel strong desires for the manifestation of the glory of God, it is not because we have drunk deeply and are satisfied. It is because we have nibbled so long at the table of the world. Our soul is stuffed with small things, and there is no room for the great. If we are full of what the world offers, then perhaps a fast might express, or even increase, our soul's appetite for God. Between the dangers of self-denial and self-indulgence is the path of pleasant pain called 'fasting.'”

John Piper

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Notes:

Yearnings

Fasting is ultimately a yearning for something missing. Something was previously experienced but now is absent from our lives.

Matthew 9:14-15 — “Then John’s disciples came and asked him, ‘How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?’ Jesus answered, ‘How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.’”

Fasting thought

“Christian fasting, at its root, is the hunger or a homesickness for God. It tells only half the story of Christian fasting. Half of Christian fasting is that our physical appetite is lost because our homesickness for God is so intense. The other half is that our homesickness for God is threatened because our physical appetites are so intense. In the first half, appetite is lost. In the second half, appetite is resisted. In the first, we yield to the higher hunger that is. In the second, we fight for the higher hunger that isn’t. Christian fasting is not only the spontaneous effect of a superior satisfaction in God; it is also a chosen weapon against every force in the world that would take that satisfaction away.”

John Piper

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Notes:

Discerning

Fasting is a tool that aids in discerning the call of God in our lives. Fasting helps us slow down and hear God's voice.

Acts 9:3-6, 9 — “As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Saul asked. ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ he replied. ‘Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’.... “So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.”

Fasting thought

A discerning fast “involves focusing on our choices instead of on our foods and praying our decisions through to successful conclusions... this type of fast helps us receive God's wisdom to make our decisions. This type of fast is not for every minor decision in life, such as where to go for lunch or what minor purchase to make. A discerning fast offers help in weighty decisions such as choosing a mate, resigning from a job and other life-changing choices. Fasting brings more light into the application of good decision-making skills.”

Elmer Towns

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Notes:

Replacing vs Abstaining

Fasting is more about replacing than it is about abstaining – replacing normal daily activities with focused praying, confessing, feeding on the Word and worshipping the Lord.

Nehemiah 9:1-3 – “On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads...They stood at their places and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshipping the LORD their God.”

Fasting thought

“We tend to think of fasting as going without food. But we can fast from anything. If we love music and decide to miss a concert in order to spend time with God, that is fasting. It is helpful to think of the parallel of human friendship. When friends need to be together, they will cancel all other activities in order to make that possible. There’s nothing magical about fasting. It’s just one way of telling God that your priority at that moment is to be alone with him, sorting out whatever is necessary, and you have canceled the meal, party, concert or whatever else you had planned to do in order to fulfill that priority.”

J.I.Packer

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Notes:

DAY SEVEN

Sunday 14 April

Today's reading: Matthew 4

Cravings

Fasting has a way of revealing what our hearts really crave. It can reveal what our soul needs and how we satisfy those deepest wants.

Matthew 4:2-4 — “After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’”

Fasting thought

“Fasting can be an expression of finding your greatest pleasure and enjoyment in life from God. That’s the case when disciplining yourself to fast means you love God more than food, that seeking him is more important to you than eating. This honors God and is a means of worshiping him as God.”

Donald Whitney

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Notes:

DAY EIGHT

Monday 15 April

Today's reading: Psalm 73

Satisfaction

Fasting is rewarded because it is a cry from the heart of those who find their ultimate satisfaction in God and in God alone.

Psalm 73:25-26 —“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My heart and my flesh may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Fasting thought

“When God sees the confession of need and this expression of trust, he acts, because the glory of his all-sufficient grace is at stake. The final answer is that God rewards fasting because fasting expresses the cry of the heart that nothing on earth can satisfy our souls besides God. God must reward this cry because God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.”

John Piper

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Notes:

Fasting & God's Refreshment

Our fasting may be rewarded in the experience not only of spiritual replenishment but also of physical refreshment.

Isaiah 58:6,8,11 — “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: ... and your healing will quickly appear... and will strengthen your frame.”

Fasting thought

“Of fasting I say this: It is right to fast frequently in order to subdue and control the body. For when the stomach is full, the body does not serve for preaching, for praying, for studying or for doing anything else that is good. Under such circumstances God's Word cannot remain. But one should not fast with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work.”

Martin Luther

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Notes:

Suffering World

Fasting is turning your hunger into requests, prayers and petitions for the suffering around you. Today focus your prayers on those suffering close to you and those suffering throughout the world.

James 2:14-19 - What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

Fasting Thought

God always answers prayer, but I think there's something special about it when we go to intercessory fasting and prayer. I feel like it's because, when we fast and pray for someone else, we are literally doing what Jesus did (albeit in a smaller manner): laying our lives down as a highway for God to ride into the hearts of our sons and daughters. Father God loves and honors that heart that is enough like Jesus that it's willing to sacrifice its own comfort and hunger in order to see His will come forth in someone else's life.

Jamie Rohrbaugh

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Notes:

Fasting & the Presence of God

Are you being surprised in your fasting experience? God loves to surprise his children by strangely satisfying them with his presence.

Psalms 1: 1-3 — “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.”

Fasting thought

“The rewards of fasting are not often instantaneous but are experienced over time. They come as surprises, like in the midst of a worship service when my soul is stirred and strangely satisfied. Or when I am reading the Word and my inner being is lifted beyond this world with a fresh perspective. Or when I am in prayer and the groaning of my heart experiences a peace that is unexplainable. I have found the rewards ultimately lead to a more intimate and satisfying experience with the God who made me, saves me and fills me.”

Gary Rohrmayer

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Notes:

DAY TWELVE

Friday 19 April

Today's reading: Psalms 23

God's Guiding Hand

Fasting has its spiritual rewards. One of the rewards of fasting is experiencing the guiding hand of God in our lives.

Psalms 23: 3-4 — "...He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Fasting thought

"Every time I have fasted, I have found my worship experience sweeter. I found the illumination of God's Spirit brighter and my hunger for God's word stronger. Through my fasting God has guided me, comforted me, challenged me and corrected me. It is not that I have bent God toward me through fasting, but that I, through fasting, have bent my heart toward him."

Gary Rohrmayer

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Notes:
