

22 MARCH - 2 APRIL | 2 WEEKS

Prayer
& Fasting



CITY CHURCH

Kia Ora C3 City Church,

We are a Church of prayer and fasting!

We are so excited about this annual 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! 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 work, WE work; but when we pray, GOD works! 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. Fasting is a powerful medium. Fasting denies the natural in order to invoke the supernatural.

There's a call going out in the Spirit right now, that it's time to come together and seek the Lord afresh. We need His blessing, favour and power to be upon our Church, for without Him, we can do nothing. Let's make a goal to attend at least one prayer meeting, morning or lunchtime, 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 also become a life-long habit, and an embedded culture within C3 City Church.

God bless you as you seek the face of the Lord.

Love 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.

Juice Fast

Only consuming fruit and vegetable juices. You can create custom juices out of different combinations to add variety.

Soup Fast

Replacing all meals with a soup.

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. Join us at the prayer meetings:

City Church Tauranga & North (252 Otumoetai Rd)

Mon 22 March - Fri 26 March | 6.45am - 7.30am (Prayer Room)

Wed 24 March | 7pm - 8:30pm (Combined Prayer & Worship)

Mon 29 March - Thu 1 April | 12pm - 12.30pm (Prayer Room)

City Church Coast (Papamoa Rec. Centre)

Wed 31 March | 7pm - 8pm (Coast Prayer & Worship Night)

5. 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.

Things you can expect from fasting:

Yes it will be challenging. This will take discipline and focus on your part. Disciples are known by their discipline.

It is in sacrifice and commitment that down through the centuries, God's people have experienced an increase in faith and personal spiritual transformation.

We do know that during this emphasis we will draw closer to the Lord and that is where we establish an atmosphere conducive to the miraculous.

Setting this time aside for God and discipling the flesh will establish a sensitivity and clarity to the voice of God.

An awareness of God's presence and a call to prayer with an understanding that He is our source in every area of our lives.

Sometimes there is a spiritual resistance and you will have to push through. Remember fasting and praying unlocks the supernatural dimension.

Let's clarify - The fast is firstly dedicated to God. It is not about our expectations. It's part of our devotion to Him.

“I know of no other thermometer to
your spiritual temperature than this, the
measure of the intensity of your prayer”

Charles H Spurgeon

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 . . .



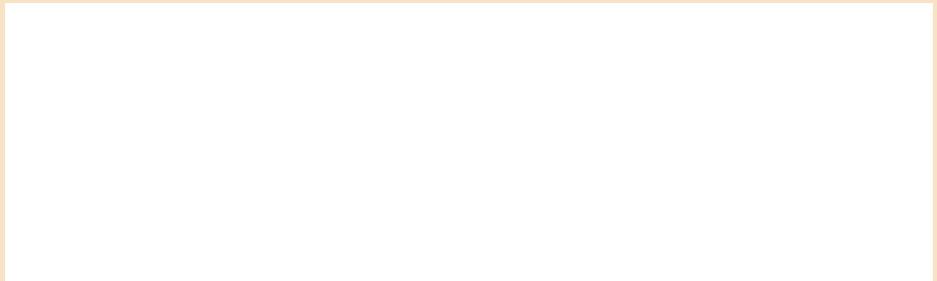
My Family

Restoration of Relationships • Household Salvation . . .



My Education / My Career

Excellence • Promotion . . .



My Church

Church Leadership • Locations • Provision • Discipleship Ministry • Increase Conference 2021.



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 . . .



Specific People or Circumstances



My house shall be called
a house of prayer for
all the nations.

Mark 11:17

Put aside those distractions!

Any parent loves it when their young child wants to just spend time with them. That child follows the parent around asking if they can help with whatever it is the parent is doing. They chat away, watching, learning, intrigued to find out more.

Has the Holy Spirit ever tried to disrupt what you're doing, prompting you to come and spend time alone with Him? But because you're busy you push that prompting aside, ignoring the invitation to "come and sit with Him".

Luke 10:38-42 (TPT) - "Jesus and the disciples ... came to a village where a woman welcomed Jesus into her home. Her name was Martha, and she had a sister named Mary. Mary sat down attentively before the Master, absorbing every revelation he shared.

But Martha became exasperated with finishing the numerous household chores in preparation for her guests, so she interrupted Jesus and said, "Lord, don't you think it's unfair that my sister left me to do all the work by myself? You should tell her to get up and help me."

The Lord answered her, "Martha, my beloved Martha. Why are you upset and troubled, pulled away by all these many distractions? Mary has discovered the one thing most important by choosing to sit at my feet. She is undistracted, and I won't take this privilege from her."

Spending time with God is never convenient for us, but it's always convenient for Him, in fact He invites us to do it. God just wants to spend "undistracted" time with you! Nothing else should ever take priority over sitting at His feet. Mary discovered the blessing in doing just that, choosing to come and sit.

"And the Lord spoke to me. He said, 'I didn't want anything, I just wanted to be with you'. I learned that day, very clearly, that time with Him is not to get something, it is not task-driven, it's because this is a relationship, and time together is so important. Recognising and responding to his presence is important." - Jenn Johnson (Bethel)

Daniel 9:3 -"Then I set my face toward the Lord God ..."

On My Knees

The intensity of our prayer flows from how low we are prepared to bow ourselves before God. The act of prostrating oneself on the floor in humility is birthed from having a heart of reverence, otherwise it would merely be an act of the flesh.

When we know Him as our Father, we will desire nothing more than to return to Him again and again on our knees, interceding and praying the heart of heaven. It's in prayer that we start to impact the world around us.

Matthew 6 (NKJ) - "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don't let us yield to temptation
but rescue us from the evil one."

"It's from our knees in prayer that we have the greatest effect on the world around us. Prayer is a lifestyle. We have to represent God's heart, we can't represent in action, that, which we haven't found in prayer." - Bill Johnson

Remain Resolute

Mark Inglis is an acclaimed NZ mountaineer, motivational speaker and accomplished cyclist, who is also a double amputee. After ending up with extreme frost bite while stuck in a snow cave for 14 days due to an extreme blizzard on Mount Cook in 1982, both his legs had to be amputated 14cm below the knee. To climb any mountain as an able-bodied person takes great stamina. Yet despite the adversity Mark faced when he lost his legs, he still went on to successfully summit Mt Everest in 2006 as the first double amputee person to do so.

What you put your faith in matters the most, not the size of the mountain or obstacle you come up against. Mark could've let the loss of his legs defeat him. Instead, he embraced it as an opportunity to find a way to conquer those mountains he loved climbing.

To climb a mountain requires resilience and a certain level of physical fitness, but primarily you must keep believing you can do it, despite how tired and physically fatigued you may get.

Jesus tells us that 'to conquer mountains, we just have to remain resolute in our faith, keep believing'.

The joy of climbing a mountain is found at the top. This is the place you get to celebrate, enjoying the most magnificent view, which you wouldn't see if you remained facing the mountain instead of conquering it.

Mark 11:23-24 (MSG) - "... This mountain, for instance: Just say, 'Go jump in the lake'—no shuffling or shilly-shallying—and it's as good as done. That's why I urge you to pray for absolutely everything, ranging from small to large. Include everything as you embrace this God-life, and you'll get God's everything. And when you assume the posture of prayer, remember that it's not all asking."

"Your faith may be just a little thread. It may be small and weak but act on that faith. It does not matter how big your faith is, but rather, where your faith is." - Billy Graham

Created for Influence

Before we can positively influence and lead others, we ourselves must pursue spiritual growth and development. How do we know if we're maturing and developing spiritually? Because our spiritual appetite will change as we hunger for more revelation and knowledge of the things of God.

A new-born baby's growth rate is influenced by the amount of milk it's having, and how it's getting fed. Without the right food or quantity, it's physical development will be stunted, causing setbacks in its ongoing growth and development.

Paul challenges God's people about where they are spiritually, telling them that "actually guys, by now you should be eating solids, not living on milk". Here they were still needing to be taught, instead of equipped to help teach others.

Hebrews 5:12-6:1 (NIV) - "by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity."

"God wants us to become influencers, people who bring change into the lives of others. To do this, we need to grow and keep moving forward. In the book of Hebrews, Paul's goal was to get everyone to become teachers and influencers of others, with the ability to lead other people.

Those who are using their gifts and spiritual life to lead others develop their senses. We don't grow by just hearing and learning. We grow because we use what we know, influencing others to progress. As we mature, our appetite changes. We are more interested in accepting responsibility than shifting it to others. We would rather serve than be served. We prefer to give than receive. We would rather embrace discipline than live without boundaries. We would rather learn significant truth than be entertained. We would rather deny ourselves than fulfill our desires." - Phil Pringle

Family Ties

The story of the prodigal son is one of love, mercy, and grace. The younger son leaves home to live an unrestrained life. After being frivolous with his inheritance he finds himself destitute and realises the only course of action he has left is to return home to his father, expecting nothing more than to be invited to stay as a servant.

As he approaches the family home, his father sees him from a distance and runs to embrace him. Then throws a big party to celebrate his return, sacrificing the most prized calf.

Even though the son had squandered his inheritance, and broken his father's heart, pursuing a different lifestyle, it was the father's love that embraced him.

Mercy gives everyone a second chance. Grace gives a reason to celebrate, rejoicing over that which was lost, now being found.

Luke 15:20-24 - "While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him ... the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So, they began to celebrate."

"The difference between mercy and grace? Mercy gave the prodigal son a second chance. Grace gave him a feast!" - Max Lucado

Living Water

Farmers rely on rain to keep their pastures lush and green. Once there is a shortage of rain, the ground becomes parched and cracked, making it almost impossible for anything to grow or survive. The only thing that restores life back to parched ground is a constant water source.

A constant source of life-giving water is also essential for a flourishing spiritual life. The Word of God is that source, replenishing and keeping us spiritually hydrated, so that whatever we do prospers, with our lives remaining fruitful in every season.

Psalm 1:3 (NKJV) - "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper."

"The person who has ... filled his mind and spirit with the Word of God, is like a tree planted by rivers of water. The Word of God is filled with rivers of life. Because of the steady stream of watery life into our man, he unfailingly bears fruit consistent with the seasons. The effort of a tree is not to bear fruit, but to find moisture with its roots. The rest follows easily." - Phil Pringle

Stay the Course

We've all encountered zippy lane changing drivers. They weave their way through heavy traffic, looking for any slight gap that will allow them to maneuver their way ahead of all the other cars, all because they are impatient, and want to get somewhere quickly.

It's so easy to become frustrated and impatient with the pace at which life seems to be traveling. Our dreams and desires seem to be stuck in a never-ending traffic jam, while age is the only thing accelerating. We become so impatient we either change lanes abruptly trying to maneuver our way ahead, or exit prematurely on the wrong off-ramp, hoping to find an alternative route to where we want to end up.

Psalm 119:1-5 (MSG) - "You're blessed when you stay on course, walking steadily on the road revealed by God. You're blessed when you follow his directions, doing your best to find him. That's right—you don't go off on your own; you walk straight along the road he set. You, God, prescribed the right way to live; now you expect us to live it. Oh, that my steps might be steady, keeping to the course you set ..."

Psalm 119 says "when we stay on course we will be blessed." Don't make the mistake of diverting elsewhere, or taking a rest stop, but stay on the road you're on, listening and following every direction God gives you, because His timing is perfect.

"By perseverance, the snail reached the ark" - Charles H Spurgeon

Wholeheartedness

Following Jesus wholeheartedly begins with a heart response of giving Him ALL of oneself. A wholehearted person has a different spirit from everyone else, they are committed, enthusiastic and passionate about their pursuit of Jesus, and what stirs the Father's heart. They know the rewards of dying to self, as Paul tells us in Philippians 1:21 "To live is Christ, and to die is gain". They are blessed because they obey God wholeheartedly.

Numbers 14:24 (NIV) - "God tells Moses, 'But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.'"

"God designed you to live whole before Him. Undivided. Completely and utterly given over to one thing. Becoming wholehearted requires a death we resist dying, and a full surrender we resist yielding. When you begin to steward a heart solely after Him, one of the first things you're bound to notice is that heaven will begin to respond to you."
- Jeremy Riddle

I Can

In the book of Exodus, we read the story of God appearing to Moses, telling him to go and speak to Pharaoh about releasing His people from slavery, leading them out of Egypt into a land flowing with milk and honey.

Moses pleads with God to find someone else to speak on His behalf, knowing that he gets tongue tied when speaking. So, God tells him to take his brother Aaron to do the talking on his behalf.

Moses focused on what he couldn't do well, while God focused on how great he would be.

It's not always academic qualifications or talent that qualifies a person for a heavenly assignment. God is the one who chooses who He will use and who He will promote.

Isaiah 55:8 says 'God's thoughts aren't our thoughts, and his ways aren't our ways'. If He wants to then God will use the most uneducated or unqualified person on the face of the earth to do something great for Him. All that He requires is that we do our best, and He will fill-up any deficit with His strength.

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV) - "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

"God only ever uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Don't doubt what He can do through you." - Christine Caine

Run the Race

Have you ever participated in or watched a Marathon? Spectators line the start and finish lines cheering the participants to victory. Most participants are successful in obtaining their goal and go home feeling elated with their victory. But some never make it over the finish line, having to pull out because of injury, or fatigue.

You'd be a tad mad to try and attempt to run a marathon without doing weeks and months of training prior. Athletes of all sporting arenas live disciplined lifestyles, that involve endurance training, stretching/strengthening muscles, while eating a nutritious food plan so that they can refuel their body to keep going. Their primary goal is to be as prepared as they can, so that they can accomplish their dream and goals.

Hebrews 12:1 (TPT) - "As for us, we have all of these great witnesses who encircle us like clouds. So, we must let go of every wound that has pierced us and the sin we so easily fall into. Then we will be able to run life's marathon race with passion and determination, for the path has been already marked out before us."

Prayer and fasting are disciplines that prepare and strengthen us to "run life's marathon well", ensuring we don't become spiritually fatigued. To run the marathon of life requires stamina, determination and vision.

- Stamina helps you endure if you get injured or disillusioned along the way.
- Determination reminds you to keep going and not give up.
- Vision is what keeps you focused, looking forward towards the finish line.

"Faith is lifeless unless you act on it. T.L. Osbourne says: "When the promises of God are believed and acted upon, they become the power of God". We can do all the things we have previously talked about: desire, decision, prayer, speaking faith, seeing the answer, but if we don't act our faith it is all to no avail." - Phil Pringle

An Audacious Worshiper

The original Greek word for worship is *proskuneó*, which means “to do reverence to”. To show reverence requires an action, a response, the most obvious would be to sing a song of worship. What if that response requires someone to be audacious in the expression of their worship?

Matthew 26:6-11 (NIV) - “While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. “This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.” Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.”

Perfumes in biblical times were a precious and expensive commodity. While the disciples were annoyed at the woman for wasting that perfume, Jesus was focusing on her for a completely different reason. He saw her eagerness to pour that perfume out, knowing how much it would cost her.

As soon as she came to Him, despite having an audience watching what she was about to do, she didn't hesitate in giving the best thing she had, by pouring all the perfume on His head.

What if Jesus hadn't responded how He did? Not everyone would be happy about having a whole jar of perfume poured over their head unexpectedly. Yet he told the disciples to stop harassing the woman, because He saw the beauty in her action, he saw her pure worship.

To worship audaciously costs us something. You can't be fearful of what man's reactions and responses will be, the only response we should be concerned about is Jesus'.

“Pure worship is costly.” - Jeremy Riddle

Clothed with Favour

Esther is a testament of what can happen when God's favour is on someone's life, and how He positions that person for heaven's assignment of influence and greatness.

Esther was a young orphaned Jewish girl, being raised by her cousin Mordecai, and suddenly finds herself sitting on a royal throne in the biggest role of her life as 'Queen Esther'.

It was because of God's favour on her life, that Queen Esther was able to influence the King's decision to reverse a royal decree that would've seen thousands of Jewish people slaughtered in just one day.

Esther 4:14 (NLT) "... you were made Queen for just such a time as this".

Some people seem to be clothed with more favour than others, but maybe favour is specific to a particular assignment. God knew He could trust Esther to follow Mordecai's instructions. She was fearless enough to risk losing her life, by approaching the King unannounced, with hope of putting into place a plan that had the potential to save her people.

- Esther followed her cousin's instruction. (Esther 2:20b)
- Esther was prepared to risk losing her life if it meant saving others. (Esther 4:15-16)

"God's favor is the guarantee of His presence and the provision of His power to accomplish His special purpose in and through your life. It's intended not for your convenience, but for His purpose, and it doesn't mean your life is going to get any easier. In fact, it almost certainly guarantees that your life is going to get harder."

- Steven Furtick

