
DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER ~ 23-JUN-21

Welcome to “the cowboy church’s” day of fasting and prayer. I trust that as you engage with the LORD in this way that you will grow deeper in your relationship with Him.

Often, we approach fasting as a way of showing God how serious we are about the things we are asking from Him. We think that because we are giving up food, time, etc. that He will pay closer attention to us and our requests. Not True. Fasting is not a means of manipulating God to give us what we ask for. Really, it isn’t even about asking for things in prayer. It is about sitting with God, in His divine presence, and allowing Him to lead and guide our time into His thoughts, attitudes and, *possibly*, actions. It is a time for praise and worship, for scripture meditation and for prayer according to His desires and His will. Through the time of fasting, our prayer focus should be one of aligning ourselves with the will of God and deepening our relationship with Him.

Here are a couple of websites that may give added information along with some practical tips for fasting. I may not agree with everything on these sites but there is a wealth of practical information that can be helpful when you add fasting to your life regularly.

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/personal-guide-to-fasting.html>

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/fasting/7-steps-to-fasting.2.html>

On the following pages you will find some Scriptures to read and focus on during the day. Included are some reflection questions to interact with. Following the “Scripture” section, you will find some prayer guides for your times of prayer during the day.

SCRIPTURES

I would like to encourage you to spend time with the LORD in Psalm 103 this time. This is another of David's psalms that can help us to focus on the LORD and His interactions with us as His children. I have broken it into four different sections with reflection questions to ponder. Begin each section with a praise time built around the instructions in v1.

Psalm 103:2-5 – *Praise and thanksgiving for God and His blessings*

- What are some specific benefits from the LORD that I have seen this past year?
- Where or when, in my life, have I seen His lovingkindness and compassion towards me or towards those whom I love?

Psalm 103:6-14 – *The LORD's actions towards His children*

- Spend some time thanking God for the places and times in your life when you have seen the “acts of God” and have encountered His grace and forgiveness.
- An Interesting cross reference to this is Exodus 33:12-16 – Moses' prayer.
 - Why does Moses ask to be shown God's ways – v13?
 - Does that match with why I want to see God and His actions?

Psalm 103:15-18 – *The fleetingness of humanity/The eternalness of God*

- How does it make you feel when you consider the fleetingness of this life?
- Does the perpetuity of God's lovingkindness towards those who fear him bring you comfort or distress vv17-18? Why?

Psalm 103:19-22 – *Bless the Lord!*

- End your time of Scripture meditation with an extended time of praise for who God is and for His actions towards us (what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do).

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PRAYER

Below are some prayer guides for during the day. You can choose to do all these during one mealtime or spread them out through the entire day. Whichever way you decided to fast, whether it was one meal, the whole day, or just spending some extra time in prayer, you can use and adapt this simple guide to help you along your way.

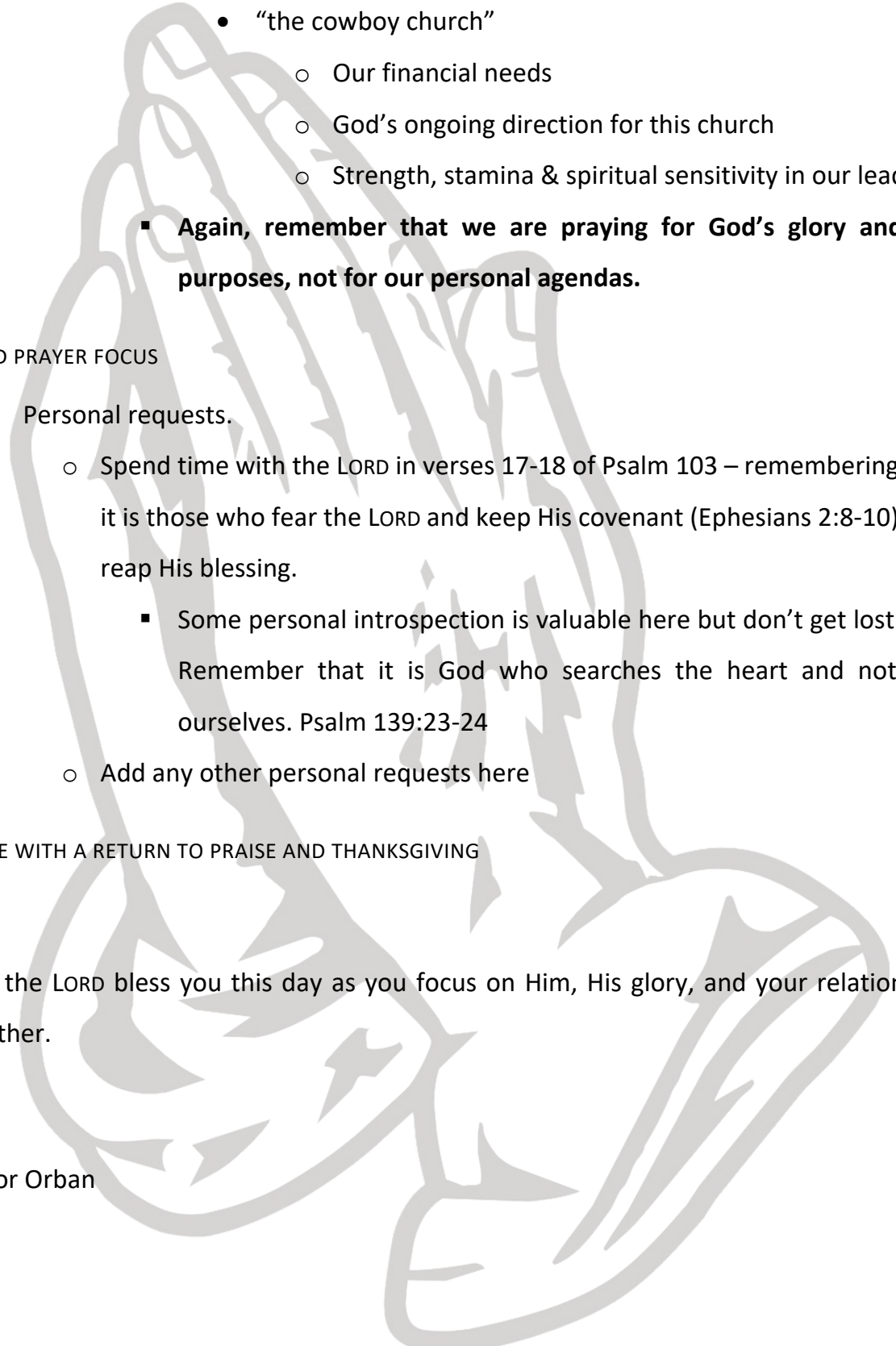
FIRST PRAYER FOCUS

- Praise and Thanksgiving
 - We need to begin with a focus on praising God for who He is. Again, the first section from Psalm 103 can definitely help us with this and help to guide our thoughts.
 - Another area for thanksgiving is (1) what God has done and (2) what He is doing. Resist the temptation to add requests here. This is a time just to glory in God's person and the wonderfulness of His actions.

SECOND PRAYER FOCUS

- God's Glory and His purposes.
 - This is a time to pray and ask for God to work out His Glory and His purposes. This is when we can look at the larger perspective and see the world He created and ask Him to do what is best and to bring glory to His name. "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done..." A few verses that can help guide us in thinking beyond our own perspectives are Romans 11:33-36.
 - Some topics that you can pray through
 - The Covid situation locally and globally
 - Our governments - local, provincial, national, and worldwide
 - The Church
 - The Church worldwide

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- “the cowboy church”
 - Our financial needs
 - God’s ongoing direction for this church
 - Strength, stamina & spiritual sensitivity in our leaders
 - **Again, remember that we are praying for God’s glory and His purposes, not for our personal agendas.**

THIRD PRAYER FOCUS

- Personal requests.
 - Spend time with the LORD in verses 17-18 of Psalm 103 – remembering that it is those who fear the LORD and keep His covenant (Ephesians 2:8-10) that reap His blessing.
 - Some personal introspection is valuable here but don’t get lost in it. Remember that it is God who searches the heart and not just ourselves. Psalm 139:23-24
 - Add any other personal requests here

CLOSE WITH A RETURN TO PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

May the LORD bless you this day as you focus on Him, His glory, and your relationship together.

Pastor Orban

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