
DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER ~ 23-MAR-22

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. *If you are new to our “fasting and prayer” day, there is some introductory material included on the last page that you may find helpful.*

2022 – PRAYERS FROM THE BIBLE

Much has changed in our world since we last gathered this way; some very positive changes and some extremely negative. As we look at our world in crisis, and other crises around us I want us to spend some time with Paul in one of his prayers. I have included the text from the NIV here.

^{9b}...We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹²and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ~ [pronoun capitalization added]

~ Colossians 1:9b-14 (NIV)

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

Paul was, to the best of our knowledge, never in Colossae. It was a church that was more than likely founded by others (a man named Epaphras), while Paul lived and ministered in Ephesus. The biggest significance this has for us, on this day of fasting and prayer, is that Paul was praying for a church that he hadn't visited and Christians, many of whom, he hadn't met. When we wonder how to pray for Christians in various places around the world that are going through issues or are in crisis, (remember that all these New Testament churches existed in a time and place of opposition and persecution) Paul gives us this example. In Colossians 1:9b-14 we can see a pattern of prayer for some of the foundational issues for every Christian in any and every possible situation. May God guide our thoughts and prayers as we look at this prayer and remember our fellow Christians around the world.

Colossians 1:9-10

- Paul begins by praying for a clear understanding of the Lord's will in their individual lives.
 - From whom does this knowledge originate?
 - For what purpose does Paul ask for this understanding of God's will? (i.e., what should be the natural result of such knowledge in the life of the Believer?) – v10
 - How are these two elements of living "a life worthy of the Lord" evidenced in my own life?

Colossians 1:11

- Paul's second request for them is something we would expect but perhaps not for the reasons we would expect. "Power" – but for what purpose?
 - Whose power is it that we are to be strengthened by? See also Ephesians 6:10-13.
 - What should the result of this strengthening be in the life of a Christian?
 - Does my life exhibit such endurance and patience, especially in difficult times?

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Colossians 1:12-14

- Paul ends his prayer with a hope and desire for their ongoing frame of mind.
 - How often am I “joyfully thankful”?
 - What are the reasons for such joy and thanksgiving? And do I fully appreciate all that Jesus did for me in the miracle of salvation? *“Lord, may we be truly thankful for the wonders that You have done for us in our rescue and redemption!”*
 - Ponder your salvation for a few minutes. What has the Lord rescued you from and brought you into? What does the forgiveness of your sins mean to you in your personal life? Spend some joyful time thanking the Lord for His intervention in your own life.

PRAYER CONCERNS

We will go back to our regular “circles” of prayer this month. So here are some suggestions for prayer issues that we can be praying for...

International:

- World Crises
 - In a world filled with multiple crises – pray for God’s will and His glory to be made clear around our globe.
 - Pray for the salvation of world leaders.
- World Churches
 - Pray Colossians 1:9-14 for the Christians (and churches) in areas of conflict, such as Ukraine and Russia.
 - Pray Colossians 1:9-14 for those believers around the world who are in intense situations of opposition and persecution

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National:

- Pray for God’s glory and His will accomplished across Canada.
- Pray for the salvation of our national leaders.
- Pray Colossians 1:9-14 for Canadian churches.

Provincial:

- Our provincial leaders and their salvation.
- That our government’s policies would somehow reflect God’s glory and His will.
- Alberta churches and Christians as we continue to emerge from Covid restrictions.
 - Grace and compassion and we begin to gather again in greater numbers with many differing perspectives.
 - Again, Colossians 1:9-14 for us as Alberta believers, so that God would be seen in us and honoured and glorified in our churches and communities.

Local & Personal:

- Once again for our local politicians’ salvation.
- Our church (“the cowboy church”).
 - Its financial situation.
 - God’s glory and His will done in and through “the cowboy church”
 - A question to the Lord: “How do You want me to be involved in our church?”
- God’s will done and Him glorified in your own personal requests.

Our world and our church are both in need of God’s intervention. As you spend time interceding before His throne, may you know God’s presence and direction though this time and this day.

In His Grace

Pastor Orban

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THOUGHTS AND TIPS CONCERNING FASTING

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. 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. In this way, He can lead us into His thoughts, attitudes, and possible action plans in our daily and community (church) life.

Here are a couple of articles 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>

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