

Think FAST . . .

For The Next Generation

By Pastor Brian Whitaker

Have you ever tried fasting? Perhaps you've fasted for one meal, and used that time instead for prayer. Perhaps you've fasted an entire day, using that day to seek the Lord's will on an important decision. Maybe you've even fasted multiple days at a time.

I have to admit that fasting is one of the spiritual disciplines that I don't do very well. Does that surprise you to hear a pastor admit that? I'm just being honest: I struggle with fasting. I'm not very good at making this a regular part of my walk with God.

And yet, when I have fasted, I have found tremendous blessing. I have gained insight about people for whom I was fasting and praying. I have heard God direct me about major life decisions. I have seen God work in powerful ways in the life of a person for whom I was praying and fasting. I have experienced depths of intimacy with Christ during times when I have fasted and prayed. The practice of fasting (however sporadic) has definitely brought some great blessings in my life.

The Cotter Family feels the same way and here is a story that John recently shared.

"Peggy had been called to fast during the period leading up to our auto accident, (now coming up on two years ago). She had told me that the Holy Spirit just 'wouldn't let her alone,' convicting her to fast all day once a week for a few weeks leading up to what we now know retrospectively was that extraordinary day when God protected me in the face of what so many felt was otherwise 'impossible'. I can't get my head

around what an amazing God we love." For those of you who don't know the Cotter Family, John by all medical accounts, should not have survived. His aorta was severed in the accident and went undiagnosed for many hours because the aorta just stayed perfectly lined-up. A cardiac surgeon explained, "This doesn't happen, this is literally a miracle because he should have died within a few seconds."

Highland has set aside Tuesday, February 17, as a day of church-wide fasting and prayer. We have chiefly established this as a day to seek the Lord's blessing on our upcoming capital campaign. But we have also broadened the focus so we can fast and pray about anything God places on our hearts that day; a wayward child, a hurting marriage, the need for a job, spiritual warfare, seeking victory over a besetting sin, etc. We can do this on our own, or

come to any of Highland's campuses during from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., or 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. to pray together with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Whether you fast regularly, struggle with fasting like I do, or maybe haven't ever tried fasting before, may I encourage us all to try fasting at least one meal – or even the whole day – on February 17? As we fast and pray as a united body of Christ, we may find that God will do some amazing things.

Some practical guidelines for prayer with fasting are on the back of this page.



"So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting..." (Daniel 9:3)