

TRANSFORM

m o v e d t o c h a n g e c h a n g e d t o m o v e

PRAYER JOURNAL

Will you do something with me? Take a BIG breath. Breath IN through your nose and OUT through your mouth a couple times.

What we're about to do has the potential to alter the trajectory of our lives in a way that leads to world-changing, history-making, eternity-shifting impact. Nope, that's not an exaggeration. This six-week prayer journal is designed to help you hear from and respond to God. You will read and reflect on Scripture. You will ask God questions and listen to His Spirit's prompting. You will increase in your confidence about how the Lord is leading you.

What's the point? **TRANSFORMATION**. That's the point. God has an ongoing mission to fix his broken creation. He's inviting you and me to lay down our lives and join Him.

"That's scary to me!"
You bet it is.
"Do we have to?"
No, He won't make us.

But when we think about eternity (never-ending existence), the sacrifices of this earthly life are just a drop in the ocean. When we think about the hell on earth that people experience everyday, we can't stay the same. When we really understand what Jesus did for us in giving His life as a sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sin so we can be right with God, and that He offers us that salvation as a free gift, we can't help but gladly offer back to our Savior everything he's entrusted to our care. It's time to be moved to changed and changed to move.

JOINING YOU IN THIS JOURNEY,
PASTOR JEFF

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME SEEKING GOD

Jesus says, “*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me*” (John 10:27). There is an important connection made between listening and following. In order to follow the Lord well, we must be listening to what He tells us. Remember that God is good--He loves to encourage and affirm us as well as direct us toward that which is best, whether the path is easy or difficult.

The **TRANSFORM** prayer journal will help you learn how to press in and ask questions until you more fully understand what God is communicating to you. You may experience His guidance as a spontaneous thought or impression, but remember, it always aligns and never conflicts with what He has spoken through His Word.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- ▶ Commit to carving out about an hour every week (six weeks total) to use this prayer journal to connect with God.
- ▶ Pick a time that you're able to focus. That might be the first thing in the morning or some time later in the evening.
- ▶ Pick a place where you won't be easily distracted. Be still. Try to shut out the world.
- ▶ Trust that God is going to communicate the truth and application of His Word by the Holy Spirit's illumination.
- ▶ Write down what God is saying as you spend time with Him. This gives you the opportunity to revisit what He has revealed. Sometimes people find it is helpful to start writing and then to evaluate afterwards.
- ▶ Combine prayer and fasting. You are encouraged to fast an hour each week from something you normally do in order to focus on God as you use this prayer journal.

ABOUT FASTING

The practice of prayer and fasting is a long-standing practice of Christians throughout the centuries. Jesus considered it normal for his followers when he said, “*When...*” (not “*If*”) “*...you fast...*” (Matthew 6:16). In times of great trouble, the nation of Israel would proclaim a fast for all the people to seek the Lord (2 Chronicles 20:3). This was an opportunity to pause from everyday routines to seek God (2 Samuel 12:16). Like we will see with Nehemiah, this time often included extended confession of sins to God on behalf of others (Daniel 9:3).

Fasting from food is basically manufacturing a “wilderness” experience in which you make yourself hungry for a designated period of time to cling to a faithful God. Men and women who are desperate for God's intervention often choose to forsake food or some other temporary pleasure to seek His will and ways.

Let's be honest, this biblical practice has been largely forgotten or avoided in our church culture today. We live in a fast-paced world where information seems to be instantly available at any time. The idea of self-sacrifice to wait on God is not common or popular.

As a church family, we are seeking God's mind and heart for our future. If we choose to deny ourselves something we normally do, using that time to ask God to reveal his mind and heart, we can expect God to make his desires clearer through the removal of distractions. We will have a stronger sense of what God is calling us to do. We can expect to operate with fresh, spiritual power.

Will you join the saints who have gone before us in willingly foregoing something for an hour each week as a way of demonstrating that your spiritual hunger supersedes your physical hunger?

DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTING

FOOD FASTING

Not everyone can skip a meal because of medical needs. There are also different types of “partial” fasts which could include limiting the type of food you eat (for example, no choice food like meat or wine in **Daniel 10:2-3**, or vegetables and water only in **Daniel 1:12**).

MEDIA FASTING

Being “screen free” or abstaining from TV, social media, video games, Netflix, YouTube, etc.

EXERCISE FASTING

Some of us are already good at this, but for others it would be a big sacrifice to skip a workout.

SLEEP FASTING

Staying up an extra hour or getting up an hour early to spend time with God. Jesus did it (**Mark 1:35**).

SEX FASTING

For those who are married, the Bible even talks about fasting from sex for a short, designated period of time (**1 Corinthians 7:5**).

FINAL TIPS

- ▶ Beware the tendency to become legalistic about this and miss the point of seeking God.
- ▶ Don't “show off” your fasting (**Matthew 6:16-18**).
- ▶ Guard against any pride or criticism of others who are not doing the same thing you're doing.
- ▶ If this is new, don't hesitate to ask questions of others.
- ▶ Perhaps most importantly of all—enjoy it! Savor your time in God's presence. He is a life-giving sustenance for your soul.