



# The Cross & Steeple

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March 2015

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## From John

### A Few Thoughts on Fasting

The first time I fasted, I did not eat from Good Friday at 3 p.m. until Easter Sunday morning (the hours that Jesus was in the grave). I was pretty sure that I was one of the biggest martyrs that ever was.

Fasting still seems strange to many of us. But it is right there in the Bible (Moses, David, Elijah, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, Anna, Cornelius, Paul and Jesus all fasted. As did Nineveh and the nation of Israel. Fasting is a great way to center your mind on God. And to grow in self-control – known among Christians as a *spiritual discipline*. And to focus your prayers on a specific person or a specific need.

I am certainly no expert on fasting. Some of you are – people who regularly fast one day a week or at regular intervals. I mean to do that, but I do not. Except around Lent. Then I really like to fast. So I have made several observations during those fasts that I include here.

1. The first week is the hardest. Okay – I saw you roll your eyes. But it is true the first day, first three days and first week are hard. Then it gets easier – less hunger pains.
2. Our bodies lie to us. They will shout at us that we are hungry. And we are not. At least in the sense of needing food. The human body can go a long time without solid food (most fasts of more than a day involve only drinking water and juices). So, when your body tells you that you are hungry three hours after a meal it is lying to you.
3. Our bodies lie to us because we teach our body to lie to us. The body tells us we are hungry because we in the U.S. are mostly very spoiled. We like to eat before our body needs something. Fasting allows you to realize this and know that you can get along very well without all those meals (I am not talking to those of you who have a medical condition like diabetes requiring regular food intake). Fasting also makes you ashamed that you have so spoiled your body that you feel hungry when you are not – that you become enslaved to hunger (you proclaim that you have to eat something because you are starving. No you aren't.)
4. People think fasting is weird. If they see you are not eating, they will ask why. Say you are fasting and they conclude you are a religious fanatic, and they will be very uncomfortable. Say you are trying to watch what you are eating and they will conclude that you are on a diet and they will admire you for that. Even tell you that you already look like you have dropped a few pounds. In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus tells us not to make a big deal about fasting in front of others. To act normal – like we are all ready for a party. (see below)
5. It is easy to forget why you are fasting. You may like feeling like a martyr, feeling a bit morally superior. Don't. Fasting is to help you with specific prayer and help you draw closer to Jesus. Anything else is pretty much a waste.
6. If you continue to fast for several weeks (as in all of Lent or longer), there may come a time when you feel hungry again. Now you can listen to your body. This time you are hungry, and it is time to start eating again. But most of us never get to this point.
7. When you come off of your fast, if it was a long one, you will be shocked by how little you need to eat to feel full. Once after a long fast, I broke the fast by eating a banana. Only I could only eat half of it. Don't let that scare you. By the middle of the next week, I was right there at the all-you-can eat buffet.
8. A Lent fast does not have to include Sundays. The church set aside 40 week days before Easter for Lent. They did not include Sundays because every Sunday is to be a little Easter celebration of the resurrection of Jesus.

So go ahead and fast. If you want to do so. Don't do it because you feel like you have to do it. And it is fine to start small – miss a meal a week or a meal a day during Lent. Our Catholic brothers and sisters talk about giving one thing up for Easter (yes, I hear your joke – I am giving up brussel sprouts and liver this year).

And if you do not want to fast from food, there are lots of other things you can use instead. I recommend fasting from cell phones and computers. Most of you have real problems there. What did you say? Me and ESPN? Now you are meddling. Me and coffee? That's just crazy talk.

*"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."* Matthew 6:14-16

**Youth Sunday**

March 1

Youth Will Lead Music Service

Followed by **Spaghetti Lunch**  
at Noon

Meal Will Be Prepared and Served  
By Youth and Leaders  
Who Will Also Clean Up  
Afterwards

Everyone Invited

Donations for Meal Will Be Greatly  
Appreciated

Funds Will Be Used to Support  
Youth Trips and Activities

**March 8**

Daylight Saving Time Begins

**Spring Break for Schools**

March 21-29 Collinsville School  
March 28-April 5 Fort Payne  
Schools

**Children's Choirs Year End Program**

March 22

5:00 Tentative

**Shocco Springs Choir Week**

July 13-17

**Holy Week Schedule**

**Palm Sunday**

March 29

**Maundy Thursday  
Service**

April 2, 6:00 P.M.

Communion and Prayer  
Lasting About 40 Minutes

**Good Friday**

April 3

This Year the Date Also  
Coincides with the  
Beginning of **Passover**

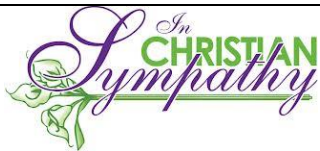
**Easter Sunrise Service  
and Breakfast**

April 5, 6:30 A.M.

**"New Beginnings"  
Women's Retreat  
March 7, 2015**

Sponsored by CLC – Christian Ladies of Collinsville  
Please begin praying now and plan to be with us then,  
too!

We would also appreciate your contributing any items that  
you are no longer using and willing to part with, for the  
C.L.C. Upscale Yard Sale To Be Held at the Retreat



**The Church Family Expresses  
Sympathy and Love to:**

- The family of Craig Butler (Newsomes and Carters).
- To John Morgan on the death of his uncle Thomas Bradbury
- To Belinda Barksdale on the death of her father David Faulkner
- To the McReynolds family in the loss of Ronnie's aunt
- To the Wardrups in the loss of Annette's cousin
- To Jo Ann Burton and family in several losses
- To the family of Mary Jo Nelson



Thanks to all the men for leading  
worship on Men's Day. And especially  
to Marty and Jon for music and  
children's story and inviting the guest  
speaker. And to all the cooks for the great breakfast.  
It was a wonderful Men's Day.

The Borntrager family would like to thank you – our family—for your love and prayers these last weeks. Daniel is doing great in therapy. We ask your continued prayer for complete recovery.

Again, thank you.  
The Borntragers



Deborah Redditt's tests all came back clear!

~ March 2015 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <b>Birthday</b> Hallie Douglass Edgar Morales	3 <b>Birthday</b> Mary Ann Winkler	4	5 <b>Birthday</b> D.T. Chatman Lexie Gibbs	6 <b>Birthday</b> Tanya Cantrell	7 <b>Birthday</b> Mark Delk Jonathan Perkins
8 <b>Lord's Supper</b> J.R. & Donzella Bobo  <b>Daylight Savings Time</b>	9	10	11 <b>Birthday</b> Phil Chambers	12	13 <b>Birthday</b> Joseph Morgan Daly Burke	14 <b>Birthday</b> Stephanie Mills Rachel Bobo Jessalynn Roden Fred Shankles Scot Shankles
15 <b>Flowers</b> Terri Bobo	16 <b>Birthday</b> Zach Bobo	17 <b>Birthday</b> Flo Pendergrass	18 <b>Birthday</b> Logan McLaughlin	19	20 <b>Birthday</b> Luke Laney	21 <b>Anniversary</b> Jason & Kelly Norris
22 <b>Flowers</b> Jo Ann Myers  <b>Birthday</b> Munsey Box Caleb Acker	23	24 <b>Birthday</b> Tim Rothell	25 <b>Birthday</b> Amy Smith	26 <b>Birthday</b> Sydney Maddox	27 <b>Birthday</b> Allen Justice Chad Cates	28
29 <b>Flowers</b> Juanita Rogers  <b>Birthday</b> Sara Buchanan	30 <b>Birthday</b> Jill Tidmore	31				



**Annie Armstrong Easter Offering**

For North American Missions

Week of Prayer – March 1-8

Offering at Church – February 22 – Easter

Church Goal -\$2600

Amount of AAEO used to support missionaries and their work: 100%

Amount of NAMB budget that comes from AAEO: 49%

Amount of NAMB budget from Cooperative Program: 38%

Year offering started: WMU started it in 1895 Amount given in 1895:

\$5,000 + Amount given to AAEO in 2013: Year-end figures totaled \$57 million

Offering Goal for 2015: \$60 million



*Congratulations to Mrs. Jerry Delk for receiving a Certificate of Recognition from Governor Robert Bentley.*

*The certificate said, "Jerry is recognized for being a long-time advocate for persons with mental illness in Alabama and for her work with the Governor's Office on Disability".*

*Your church is proud of you and your work, Jerry.*

Cecil Sharpe is a great grandfather!

Dear Family

Sunday Evening, March 22, will be the conclusion of the 2014-2015 Children's Choir Year. There are many of you who have helped make possible this ministry of Collinsville Baptist. We thank you all - those of you who were there every Wednesday, cooking or teaching or caring for or transporting children and youth, others who have prayed faithfully, and many who have given generously and sacrificially in order for these children and youth to benefit from experiences both at church each week, and also summer music camp.

Thank you for being such a wonderful church family. We hope you will make a special effort to be present as these fine young singers share what they have learned this choir year. Thank you, all!

All of the choirs did a great job with their December program. That service is always one of the highlights of the Christmas season at Collinsville Baptist. In addition, our Youth Choir (Praise & Worship team) led music for the Youth Service in November, and will lead music again for the March first worship service. They represented our church singing a song for the Community Christmas service in December, and did a wonderful job combining with the Sanctuary Choir for special music in January. In addition to getting ready for the March 22 choir program, they are also preparing a song to share on Easter Sunday. Thank you, Youth, and leaders Leah and Jon Perkins, for all the extra time and effort you are investing in ministering for our Lord through music. We are so thankful for this group and for all those who minister each week. We are so blessed!

Please continue to pray that we can use every opportunity to help people of all ages come to know Jesus, grow in the faith, and become the men and women of God - and become the Church - that He wants us to be.

Gloria Morgan

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### *Prayer Requests*



**General:** Time Release Program; Christian Ladies of Collinsville Retreat; Choir Program; Mental Health Advocacy; Travelers

**Church Family:** Jerrie Alexander & family; Dot Burke; Carter family; Phil Chambers; Jerry Delk; Bob & Carolynne Gese; Rex Leath; Jo Ann Myers; Janet Nelson; Pendergrass family; Juanita Rogers; Scotts; Fred Shankles; Deborah Tarrant; Unspoken;

**Relatives:** Barksdale's sister-in-law (Suzanne Graves); Borntrager's brother & son (Avery, Daniel); Gloria Morgan's mother, brother, sister & cousins (Mary Lorena & Newt Roberts, Mary Willis, P.J. Redmond, Mary Lynn Kotz); Margaret Myers' sister (Debbie Estes); Wayne & Deborah Smith's daughter & family (Cynthia & Keith Wheeler); Newsome's daughter & family (Krista, Jason & Jacob Preston);

**Friends:** Mary Blanton; Roger Dutton; Aimee Griggs; Leon Hufstetler; Deb Redditt; Williams family



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### **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

Church Goal: \$3600  
Given: \$3600

**Our Goal Was Met!**

# CBC YOUTH NEWS



## The When

Sunday Bible Study 10 a.m.

Youth Group Wednesday 6 p.m.

Worship Team Wednesday 7 p.m.

## What's happening?

Youth Sunday Worship Service - **March 1<sup>st</sup>**

Spaghetti Lunch @ 12 p.m.



## Words from our Retreat:

"I just want to say that the winter retreat 2015 helped me grow closer to God and that it took a big effect on the way that I see people in the world today. It has also taught me to forget about how other people judge my everyday life and to focus on God's plan for me...THANK YOU WINTER RETREAT 2015!" Mason

"It was awesome, I loved it. I met new friends and got to learn about God and Jesus and learned new stuff and got to do lots of fun things." Isaiah

"It was a fun experience to draw closer to God." Allora

"I loved the winter retreat. It was awesome. I myself made many memories and friends. It was awesome. I hope we get to go again." Branson

## Note from Luke Laney:

First I want to say a special thank you to everyone who supported us financially or prayerfully. We had an incredible weekend. The theme verse was Romans 12:2 which says do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Our students were challenged to view themselves the way God sees them despite how they see themselves or how the world sees them. That is a child of the King. Created for a purpose. We became closer as a group and made several new friends throughout the weekend. Each day was filled with various camp activities and a small group Bible study session. We closed each night with a worship service and time in God's word as a large group. Please continue to pray that we grow to see ourselves and others the way Christ sees us. Thank you again for your support! Luke

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## **A Devotional for Monday of Holy Week: The Cleansing**

**A Lenten interpretation of Jesus clearing out the Temple.**

*By Elizabeth Sherrill, Hingham, Massachusetts*

The process is called by many names: sanctification, amendment of life, getting right with God, but the meaning is the same. The recognition that with Jesus in charge, many things we used to do, say, want, are no longer okay. It's such a common pattern that we've come to expect it.

And then there's the danger in the Monday experience. We think we know what things He wants to get rid of. When my mother was growing up, the list included wearing makeup, reading novels and riding a bicycle on Sunday. Each group, each era, has its own expectations.

But the hallmark of that Monday in Jerusalem was surprise. Jesus knew what stood between people in those days and God. "Astonished" is how Mark describes people's reactions to that original cleansing, and astonished is how we feel when God's housecleaning, not the one we envisaged, gets underway within us. Prejudice. Old hurts. A sense of inferiority. Whatever blocks our relationships with Him, out it must go.

"What are you doing!" we cry when the Cleanser strides in.

"I'm making myself a temple," He replies.