



GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
AT CASTLEWOODS

ORDER OF WORSHIP
February 5th, 2023

MORNING WORSHIP

Thomas Winn — Elder/Pastor

The Prelude Prepare your heart for worship

The Call to Worship Chris Kimbrell

Hymn "Praise Him! Praise Him!"

The Prayer of Confession and Praise Hal Pritchard

Hymn "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

Hymn "There is a Fountain"

The Reading of the Word — *Isaiah 58:1-14* Hal Pritchard

Hymn "The Old Rugged Cross"

The Sermon — *"Fasting and Prayer; Pt. III" (Matthew 6:16-18)* Pastor Winn

The Observance of The Lord's Supper

The Benediction Hal Pritchard

The Postlude

AFTERNOON WORSHIP

Business Meeting



COMMENTARY

Dr. Don Whitney

Quick. What do people who fast look like? What kinds of people come to your mind? Do they appear a bit strange? Are they John the Baptist types? Legalists? Health nuts? Does Jesus come to your mind when you think of fasting and "fasters"? Jesus both practiced and taught fasting, you know. And yet, fasting is the most feared and misunderstood of all the spiritual disciplines. Many believe fasting turns us into something we don't want to become and causes things to happen that we don't want to happen. We fear that fasting will make us hollow-eyed fanatics or odd for God. We're afraid that it will make us suffer dreadfully and give us a generally negative experience. For some Christians, fasting for spiritual purposes is as unthinkable as shaving their heads or walking barefoot across a fire pit. Fasting is so misunderstood because of the famine of contemporary awareness of it. Even though there's more interest in fasting today than during the last half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, how many people do you know who regularly practice fasting? How many sermons have you heard on the subject? In most Christian circles you will rarely hear fasting mentioned, and few will have read anything about it. And yet it's mentioned in Scripture more times than even something as important as baptism (about seventy-seven times for fasting to seventy-five for baptism). Christians in a gluttonous, self-indulgent society may struggle to accept

and to begin the practice of fasting. Few disciplines go so radically against the flesh and the mainstream of culture. Of course, there are some people who, for medical reasons, cannot fast. But most of us dare not overlook fasting's benefits in the disciplined pursuit of a Christlike life. The Bible defines fasting as a Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes. It is Christian, for fasting by a non-Christian has no eternal value since the discipline's motives and purposes are to be God-centered. Fasting is voluntary in the sense that it is not to be coerced. Fasting is more than just the ultimate crash diet for the body, it is abstinence from food for spiritual purposes. Notice Jesus' words at the beginning of Mt. 6:16-17, "When you fast..." By giving us instructions on what to do and what not to do when we fast, Jesus assumes that we will fast. Compare these words with His statements about giving and praying in the same passage, "So when you give..." (Mt. 6:2-3), "But when you pray..." (Mt. 6:5-7). No one doubts that we are to give and to pray. Plainer still are Jesus' words in Mt. 9:14-15. The Pharisees asked Him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while He is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast" (emphasis mine). That time is now. Until Jesus, the Bridegroom of the Church returns, He expects us to fast.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Today's Nursery Volunteers

February 5th
<i>Morning</i> Cortney McDonald & Bethany Wallace
<i>Evening/Afternoon</i> Business Meeting
<i>Wednesday - February 8th</i> Valentine's Banquet

Today's Sound Operator - Daniel Ranck



ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Today we will observe the Lord's Supper during our morning service.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Today we will have our fellowship meal immediately following the morning service.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Preschool and Children's Choir will not meet this afternoon.

VALENTINE'S BANQUET

This year the Valentine's Banquet will be on Wednesday, February 8th from 6 pm - 8 pm at Georgia Blue in Flowood. The price is \$30/person. Childcare will be provided at the church at \$2/child. Pizza will be provided. See Mary Hunter for more information or questions.

MID-SOUTH MEN'S RALLY

First Presbyterian Church, Jackson will host the 37th annual Mid-South Men's Rally on February 10th. The speaker this year will be Dr. Irwyn Ince, adjunct professor of Pastoral Theology, RTS Washington, D.C., and coordinator for Mission to North America. Dinner will be provided at 5 pm with the first session beginning at 6 pm. This is a free event. For more information visit <https://fpcjackson.org/church-life/men/msmr/>

MEN'S BOOK STUDY

A book study for the men of our church will begin February 18th at 7 am and meet every 2 months on a Saturday morning over breakfast. We will begin with 'Family Shepherds' by Voddie Baucham. See Prashant for details or questions.

