

# Weekly Reading

Dear Shoreline Family,

As we enter a new year, it is a great time to think about taking steps forward in our spiritual lives. God wants his people to grow into full maturity. The apostle Paul puts it this way, "...so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12-13)

As we enter into 2010 we will be taking a spiritual journey of learning. We will be doing this on three levels.

**1) Study of God's Word.** If you have a regular Bible reading program, stick with it! If you don't, we will introduce a weekly reading program beginning today. It will be listed in the church program as well as placed on the Shoreline web site. Each week we will provide six days of reading (three to follow-up the Sunday message and three to prepare you for the following week). Along with the reading will be some reflection thoughts for the week.

## Week of January 10-16

**Day 1-** Matthew 26:26-30 and 27:27-56

**Day 2-** Luke 23:26-56

**Day 3-** John 13:1-17 and John 19

**Day 4-** 1 Corinthians 12-13

**Day 5-** Romans 12

**Day 6-** Ephesians 4:1-16 and 1 Peter 4:1-11

**Bonus:** Read John 13:1-17 each day this week.

**Memorize/Reflect-** *"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."* (John 13:14)

**Reflection-** How has Jesus served me and how should this impact the way I live?

**Reflection-** Who has "washed my feet" and how can I say, "Thank you"?

**Discussion-** Tell about a person who really serves like Jesus and what do you learn from their life?

**Discussion-** What are some examples of serving in our world today that would be like "foot washing" in the days of Jesus and how can we serve in some of these ways?

**Prayer Direction-** Pray for God to grow your desire and willingness to serve others. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to daily opportunities to serve (people close to you and those you meet through the day).

**“Live It!” Challenge-** Commit to one surprising moment of service this week. Do something that is unexpected and extravagant for someone in your life!

**2) Prayer Focus.** Each month we will have a specific approach to prayer that will be introduced and engrafted into our worship services as well as other gatherings of the Shoreline congregation. Our prayer focus for January will be the use of a simple acronym: C.A.T.S. This is praying using the format: Confession, Adoration, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. You can do this on your own, with another person, or as a family. It can be out loud, silent, or written. Have fun with it and let this simple prayer structure take you to deep places of connection with Jesus!

**3) Spiritual Disciplines (Fasting).** Each quarter we will learn about and practice a specific spiritual discipline. For the first quarter of the year our focus will be fasting. We are encouraging everyone to spend time fasting each week of January through March. Fasting is about refraining from something so we can turn our attention, prayers, and hearts toward God. As we refrain from other things, our hunger for God grows! Here are some suggestions for how you can fast in the coming months:

- ***Skip a meal once a week*** and use this time for prayer.
- ***Refrain from eating for a full day*** and pray for Shoreline, your personal walk with Christ, for others to know the love of Jesus, or for some other area of focus every time you think of food. You might find yourself praying all day! (If you have any medical concerns, check with your doctor before doing any sort of extended fast)
- ***Take a week and don't watch any TV / Hulu / or Movies.*** Use this time for prayer and study of God's Word.
- ***Give up video games for a week.*** Use this time for prayer and study of God's Word.
- ***Turn off your cell phone for one hour a day. Fast from phoning, texting, Email, and all other e-based forms of communication.*** Use this time to connect and talk with Jesus!
- ***Cut down on your intake of Caffeine (Coffee or Soft Drinks).*** Each time a craving hits you, use this as a reminder to pray.
- ***Go a week without any sweets and desserts.***
- ***Facebook fast.*** Go a full day with no Facebook or other forms of e-based social networking.
- ***Identify something you really love and do on a regular basis and take a day or week off.*** Use this time to pray, listen for God, or read His Word.

Remember...fasting is not so much about what you don't do, eat, or enjoy. Fasting is about creating a deeper hunger for God by cutting off other things (often good things). When we do this, we long for God more and connect with Him in deeper ways.