

Why do we want to pray?

On Monday, January 23rd, we at Santa Rosa Christian Church are being invited to fast and pray together for the week. There are many things we could individually and collectively share with the Lord during that time. **We want to pray to give a godly bent to our thoughts and plans for the year ahead.**

An increasing number of Christians in America, in California, and in Sonoma County, are sensing the need to spend more time seeking the Lord. **We want to pray because we sense this same need and call to prayer that others are sensing.**

Many people are feeling the pinch of tougher economic times, growing concerns for their marriages and families, and an overall sense of unease that things are changing in the world and perhaps not for the better. **We want to pray because we want to have hope, not anxiety.**

God is changing things. We are told in Scripture that as the world draws towards the culmination of history, there will be many changes, “wars and rumors of wars....” etc. **We are praying because we want to live in faith, not in fear.**

When God is “ready to move” in the sense of turning the page from one era or season in His church, it is often the church itself that is the most resistant to moving with Him in the changes He is bringing. **We want to pray in order to be ready to move with Him.**

In Matthew 9:14, we see this pattern as the disciples of John the Baptist (representing the most recent wave of revival) come to Jesus and ask him why His disciples “do not fast?” They fasted and so did the Pharisees before them. Their concern was not so much about whether or not Jesus’ disciples are fasting. Their real question (the question behind the question) was “Why are you doing something different than what we did?” **We want to pray so that we can receive, not react to what the Lord is doing in the present.**

When God is preparing to do a “new thing” in the earth, it is just that, a new thing. Jesus came to earth in a totally unpredictable way. Many who were expecting the Messiah missed Him because they were expecting something else. **We want to pray and draw closer to the Lord so that we don’t miss what He is doing in our world.**

As we begin our new year, 2012, we can anticipate in the “new thing,” that it may be difficult to recognize what God’s presence and purpose look like, which is why we want to encourage everyone to set aside January 23-29, for prayer and fasting.

You may choose to pray with family members, friends, or by yourself. We will gather on Wednesday evening, January 25th, for prayer together and Sunday evening, January 29th, for a light dinner provided by SRCC. More specific instructions and helps for prayer and fasting will be on the church website: <http://www.srchristianchurch.org/prayer-fasting-2012>

Fasting & Prayer Perspectives

Fasting was a discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, "when you fast," not if you fast.

Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.

Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."

Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.

The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!

Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience as you set aside food, things and time to pray and hear the voice of God.