

FAITH BIBLE READING

Apr 1-7, 2019

At Faith Baptist Fellowship, we *Love God's Word and Prayer* (Ephesians 6:17-18)! Take the 'sword of the Spirit' (God's Word) and persevere in prayer! In this year, ask God each day to speak directly to you from the Scripture portions you read. Select a quiet place and consistent time to read and pray.

Our plan for 2019 will be similar to previous years **with one exception**. Monday-Saturday we will focus on one main devotional passage; the additional readings will keep you on track to finish the entire Bible in one year. On Sunday, we will have a passage from the upcoming Sunday sermon along with questions for Faith Group discussion. **In addition**, we will include a **"One Another"** passage also for Faith Group discussion and personal application in caring for one another in the body of Faith.

We suggest having a notebook and pen for answering questions and recording your thoughts/insights. Bring this notebook with you to Faith Group for discussions and prayer times.

Abbreviations: **TAI** – Think About It | **PP** – Prayer Points

MONDAY, APRIL 1

Read Psalm 74

TAI: Derek Kidner, under the banner "Havoc" in his Psalms commentary, sums up the setting this way, "This tormented psalm has the marks of the national disaster that produced Psalms 79 and 137 and the book of Lamentations: i.e., the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 587 BC." (IVP, pp 264-5). *See Lam. 2:5-9 as a parallel*. Yet in the midst of pain and loss, a vision of God's track record (vv. 12-17) remains, and faith is sustained. How does your faith and confidence in God stand up in the pain of life?

PP: What life circumstances are causing you suffering or pain today? Tell it all to the Lord. Acknowledge the things that make life hard and a source of sorrow for you today. Then pray a prayer of thankfulness for all the kindness and grace God has shown you in the past: for life and breath, for friends and family, and especially for Jesus, the cross, and God's grace in salvation. Ask God to increase your faith and deepen your hope through the realities of life in a fallen world.

Pray for our nation, its leaders, and for righteousness in Christ.

Additional readings: Mark 1:21-34; 1 Corinthians 2; Joshua 6-7

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

Read Psalm 75

TAI: An outline for your consideration:

v. 1: Celebrate God's nearness and faithfulness with thanksgiving.

vv. 2-5: Hear God the Judge warn the boastful, wicked, and proud.

vv. 6-8: Who will pour out the cup of judgment? God alone will.

vv. 9-10: Praise God! He will cut off, and he will lift up as well.

Asaph's song celebrates the ultimate victory of those who trust in God and final judgment of the wicked and proud. Choose carefully!

PP: Imagine a choir singing this song of both celebration and warning. Now sing your own song! Or hum. Or if not, pray in your own words the truth of this song, honoring the God who is near and who will lift up those who walk with him. Pray for those in your life who do not trust in the Lord, asking God to save them from the wrath to come. Thank God that in Christ he will lift you up to glory!

Pray for your state, its leaders, and for righteousness in Christ.

Additional readings: Mark 1:35-45; 1 Corinthians 3; Joshua 8-9

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

Read Psalm 76

TAI: What location does this psalm celebrate? What has God done to the enemies of God's people who have tried to overtake them? No one can stand against the Lord when the battle lines are drawn. Better to be *humble* with God on your side than *proud* with God as your foe! Concerning v. 10, "God gets praise even out of the schemes of unjust men" (ESV SB). Today it might seem like the earthly rulers have their way, but in the end, God will judge and rule forever.

PP: These Psalms reinforce the truth of James 4:6—God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourself in prayer today. Express to God your humble desire that he rule and reign over every aspect of your life. Invite him into your troubles and dreams, asking for his sustaining grace and believing his promise to meet your needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus.

Pray for your city, its leaders, and for righteousness in Christ.

Additional Readings: Mark 2:1-12; 1 Corinthians 4; Joshua 10-12

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Read Psalm 77

TAI: Who can say they have never had a sleepless night? When troubles have you awake and unable to rest, what do you do? Verses 7-9 record the stifling questions that accompany sleeplessness. The correction comes in the form of memory: remembering God's grace and faithfulness in the past (11-15). Perhaps the greatest memory of God's arm moving: his deliverance from Egypt through the Red Sea. *So, when unable to sleep, remember God's faithfulness and recall his goodness to you, and pray with hope and thanksgiving!*

PP: Follow the final instruction of the TAI paragraph: in the face of today's anxiety and worry ("concerns" ha!), recall all God has done for you, and pray a prayer of hope and thanksgiving. Delight yourself in God's love, mercy, power, and care! Worship him, thank him, rest in his unchanging grace. Our anchor holds in the storms of life.

Pray for your neighborhood. Offer yourself to God as an instrument of his mercy, grace, and love. What can you do to help someone today?

Additional Readings: Mark 2:13-17; 1 Corinthians 5; Joshua 13-14

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

Read Psalm 78:1-39

TAI: Psalm 77 recalled God's help in the exodus from Egypt. This psalm is a litany of many times when God faithfully did "glorious deeds" and "wonders" (v. 4) on behalf of his people. What are those deeds? Make a list. What crucial point is made in the midst of all these wonders that are recounted? (re v. 32) Can you identify the gospel in vv. 34-39? Why does God deal kindly with his sinful people? *Reflect on God's compassion toward you.*

PP: Make a litany of God's grace and faithfulness toward you. Perhaps you want to write your own psalm. Then prayerfully thank God for his compassion and love toward you in Christ Jesus. Thank him especially for the cross, for "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Pray about the day ahead, trusting in God's faithful care for you. *Pray for a friend or co-worker who needs Jesus Christ.*

Additional Readings: Mark 2:18-28; 1 Corinth. 6:1-11; Joshua 15-17

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Read Psalm 78:40-72

TAI: The litany of God's faithfulness toward his people continues. What is the high cost of not remembering? Isn't v. 56 one of the saddest in all the Scriptures? Ponder its sadness. Have you ever been tempted to "test" God and rebel against him? Why did Israel choose idolatry? Why do people so often choose to follow idols today (perhaps a different kind of idol...)? Over and over people rebel against their Creator, and over and over again he compassionately sends mercy. The ultimate was sending his Son as our Redeemer.

PP: Confess to God any times when you have tested his mercy, rebelled against him, or chosen false idols. Thank him for sending his one and only unique Son, Jesus, as your Savior. As we did yesterday, thank God for his many faithful deeds of kindness and goodness toward you. Be specific. Is there ever too much thanksgiving?

Pray for our upcoming Good Friday and Easter services.

Additional Readings: Mark 3:1-19; 1 Corinth. 6:12-20; Joshua 18-19

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

Read Mark 10:32-52

TAI & PP: Reflecting on vv. 33-34, review Isaiah 53. What do you think of the request of James and John? What "cup" and "baptism" is Jesus referring to here? Ponder what Jesus meant when he confirmed that they would "drink the cup" and receive "the baptism" that he would. How did Jesus turn this awkward request into a vital "teachable moment"? What important question did Jesus ask blind Bartimaeus? Do you think Jesus asks YOU this question today?

Pray for today's worship services and for those preaching. Answer in prayer Jesus' question: tell him what you long for today! Thank him for drinking the cup of suffering in your place.

Care Point: **Ephesians 4:2** "...Be patient, bearing with one another in love."

How is this "one another" part of a walk worthy of our calling in Christ? (v. 1) How is it related to humility and gentleness? What is challenging about it?