

FAITH BIBLE READING

Dec 31, 2018—Jan 6, 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, DECEMBER 31

Read Malachi 2:17-4

TAI: We continue to write brief descriptions of the 6 disputations that make up much of this book:

Disputation 4. (*Handel's Messiah!*)

Disputation 5. (*Robbing God by refusing to give.*)

Disputation 6. (*Wait for the Lord and fear him.*)

The book (and the OT) close with a final word of both exhortation and hope (4:4-6). What is the fulfillment of that final promise?

PP: Not unlike the days described in Malachi, in our own day people behave as if there is no judgment to come. Sometimes it is difficult to trust in our Father and wait for him! But it's worth it. Jesus is coming again! As the year closes, express to God your great desire for 2019 to be a year of faithful trust, waiting on his timing, believing his promises, and holding on to the great hope of the gospel. Make a list of key prayer requests you want to pray often in the new year.

Additional readings: None

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

Read Matthew 1:1-17

TAI: This opening genealogy makes clear Matthew's purpose: to reveal Jesus as the promised Messiah and Savior of the Jewish people and the world. It shows the line from the great patriarch Abraham to King David, and then David to Jesus himself. Why are "by Rahab" and "by Ruth" in v. 5 distinctive and meaningful? [Fun suggestion: go to YouTube and search "Andrew Peterson Matthew's Begats" to listen to a fun song about this passage. Pastor Jayson has sung this!]

PP: We begin the new year with a great reminder of the grand plan of God to send the world a Savior through the Jewish people, his own Son Jesus Christ. Thank God for this amazing gift of grace! Pray for the advance of the gospel among both Jews and Gentiles throughout the world in 2019. *Yesterday you worked on a list of key prayer requests you want to pray through often this year. Pray through your list today (or make one if you didn't yesterday!).*

Additional readings: Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 1; Genesis 1-2

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

Read Matthew 1:18-25

TAI: How does this account of the birth of Christ appeal in a unique way to a Jewish reader of Matthew's gospel? What was the predicament for Joseph? From what understandable act did the angel keep Joseph? [Note: betrothal at that time, differing from our 'engagement' today, required a certificate of divorce to end the arrangement of marriage.] Read Isaiah 7:14, the first of many OT prophetic quotations used in Matthew's gospel. How does Matthew emphasize the crucial theological truth of *incarnation*?

PP: Reflect for a few moments on the reality of the incarnation, God with us, and how it was prophesied so long before the birth of Jesus by the prophet Isaiah. Then pray a prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God for such an amazing gift. Ponder also the faithful obedience of Joseph, the carpenter who raised God's Messiah in his home! Ask God to give you grace to walk in that kind of obedient faith this year.

Additional Readings: Acts 1:12-25; Psalm 2; Genesis 3-4

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

Read Matthew 2:1-12

TAI: Once again we see Matthew's commitment to convince the Jewish reader that Jesus is their promised Messiah (read Micah 5:2). Why was Herod troubled? What is deeply troubling about Herod? Notice how Matthew draws attention to the fact that the magi *worshipped* the child Jesus. Why would they do that? Why would they choose the gifts they presented to him?

PP: Matthew's gospel here emphasizes the appropriate heart response to Jesus: worship. How is your own heart today as it relates to worshipping Jesus? Commit yourself to being a wholehearted worshipper in this new year 2019. Ask your Heavenly Father to help you worship him in Spirit and truth each day. Present to God your spiritual gifts as well, committing to use them for his glory and for the building up of the church. Thank God for your spiritual gifts.

Additional Readings: Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 3; Genesis 5-8

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

Read Matthew 2:13-23

TAI: Read Hosea 11:1 and Jeremiah 31:15. Here Matthew draws attention to two fascinating parallels between Jesus and Israel: like the Jewish nation, Jesus was called out of Egypt (and Matthew gives details as to why). Also, as Pharaoh killed the Hebrew babies when Moses was an infant, so now Herod murders babies in a desperate attempt to kill the newborn king. Then another fulfillment: Jesus becomes a Nazarene. Matthew is drawing in the Jewish reader—is he drawing you in as well?

PP: Our minds have two contrasting lines of thought as we reflect on this passage: fascination (the parallels between Israel and Jesus) and horror (the murder of the children). We have the same thoughts today: fascination that the gospel of Christ is spreading to all the peoples of the world, and horror at the abortion of millions of babies every year in our world. Pray for the gospel's spread globally and for the end of the practice of abortion globally.

Additional Readings: Acts 2:22-47; Psalm 4; Genesis 9-11

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

Read Matthew 3:1-12

TAI: What was the message of John the Baptist? What OT prophecy did his ministry fulfill? Why did John dress and eat the way he did? Why did people respond to John by being baptized? Why did John call the religious leaders a “brood of vipers”? What is *fruit in keeping with repentance*? Would you say that your life bears such fruit? What point is John making about the children of Abraham? What will be unique and different about the baptism of Jesus?

PP: Reflect on *fruit in keeping with repentance*. Tell God of your heart’s desire to bear such significant fruit in this new year. Tell God about specific areas of your life where you hope to see change and new fruit. Pray for our church to be fruitful this year.

Additional Readings: Acts 3; Psalm 5; Genesis 12-14

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

Read Mark 5:21-43

TAI & PP: From Pastor Dana: “Years ago, while working in a church in Hawaii as a single seminary student, I recall vividly hearing a marvelous sermon by Cully Olson (no relation) on this section of Scripture. His outline was Jesus is Lord of the Deeps (4:35-41), Lord of the Demons (5:1-20), Lord of Disease and Lord Over Death (our text today). What a mighty Savior and Lord we have!”

Ponder all that Mark is declaring to us about the supremacy of Jesus Christ through this portion of his gospel. Pray a prayer of praise and adoration, and express your thanks to God for his Son!

Care Point: Mark 9:50 ...be at peace with one another.

Faith Groups: Discuss the context of this statement. What is the relationship between being salt and having peace with one another? What circumstances make being at peace difficult? How does the gospel help us overcome these obstacles and be at peace with one another?