

# LOVE GOD'S WORD & PRAYER

New Testament Challenge 2020

At Faith Baptist Fellowship, we *Love God's Word and Prayer*. Hearing a sermon at church on Sunday mornings alone isn't enough to be considered a healthy diet of God's word and prayer. We strongly believe that every growing disciple of Jesus needs to be regularly hearing from God through his word and personally speaking back to God through prayer.

**We are challenging everyone to read through the entire New Testament in 2020 – one chapter per day, five days per week.** If regular Bible reading is not yet a habit of yours, this is a great way to get started! As always, we will provide devotional thoughts and helpful prayer points on the passages. The weekend material will prepare you for the upcoming Sunday sermon as well as provide some discussion help for Faith Groups.

*We recommend you set aside at least 15-20 minutes a day for this plan and prayer. If you fall behind, just start on the current day. Try to develop the habit of reading at the same time and place. We suggest having a journal and pen for answering questions and recording your thoughts and insights. Happy Bible Reading!*

## Monday, September 14

Read John 1:1-51

**THINK:** Who is the Word? What did the Word do? Who is the Life and Light? What are the characteristics of this Light? What was John the Baptist's role? *Memorize John 1:12-13.* How could the Word come after John and be before John? How did John the Baptist fulfill Isaiah 40:3? How did John know that Jesus was the Lamb of God? Name three distinctives of Jesus according to John (vv. 33-34). Do you, like Andrew, bring others to Jesus? What was Nathanael's testimony, after meeting Jesus?

**PRAY:** Pray through the entire chapter, praising God for all that Jesus is! He is our Creator! He gives us life and light! Thank God that in Christ you are a child of God! Praise Him that the darkness cannot overcome the light! Thank God for the new birth. Thank Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ask God for His help to become an Andrew, bringing others to Jesus, and a Philip, telling others "Come and see!"

## Tuesday, September 15

Read John 2:1-25

**THINK:** What stands out to you as you read about the wedding at Cana? What might the running out of wine signify? What does the phrase mean “manifested his glory”? How did His disciples respond? Why were sellers and money-changers in the temple? Why did this offend Jesus? How did Jesus respond? How did this occasion turn into a resurrection promise? Note the recurring word “believe”. What does John mean when he says that Jesus knew “what was in man”? Reflect on this.

**PRAY:** The wedding party running out of wine is thought to represent the spiritual barrenness of the time. Wine (never drunkenness) was viewed as a sign of joy and God’s blessing. (ESV Study Bible). One could say the miracle of the wine foreshadows a greater miracle of the resurrection. Do you believe in Jesus-His works and His word? Do you have joy? Pray for spiritual renewal and joy in your life. Pray for renewal and joy in our church. Pray for spiritual revival in our land and the world.

## Wednesday, September 16

Read John 3:1-36

**THINK:** Who were the Pharisees? Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus “by night”? He struggles with understanding a second birth. How does Jesus explain it? Have you experienced the new birth? How did you receive it? *Have you memorized John 3:16-17?* Why is the one who does not believe “condemned already”? Why do people love the darkness rather than the light? Reflect for a while on John’s remarkable statement, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Note in the final paragraph the presence and role of each member of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit.

**PRAY:** Rejoice and be glad in prayer that the wrath of God does not remain on you. Thank God for his gift of the new birth to you! Tell God that you desire Christ to increase in your life. Pray for the Converge Heartland Annual Meeting and the Cultivate Conference held at Faith South tomorrow and Friday. Pray for those who will be traveling today.

## Thursday, September 17

Read John 4:1-54

**THINK:** This chapter begins with the remarkable exchange between Jesus and the woman at the well. See if you can jot down four items that make this conversation so amazing. What does it mean to worship in spirit and in truth? Do you think we at FBF worship in this way? What is the “food” of Jesus? What “labor” does Jesus want his disciples to enter in to? What is unusual about Jesus staying with the Samaritans? How did they respond to Jesus? How could Jesus heal the official’s son when he wasn’t even in the same place? How did the official respond?

**PRAY:** Thank God for the living water that brings us eternal life! Tell God of your desire to daily worship him in spirit and truth. Ask God to help us cross “Samaritan-like” barriers to bring the gospel to people, both here in our city and around the world. Pray for Jim Capaldo as he leads the Converge Heartland Annual meeting today. Pray for Pastors Robert Thune Sr. and Bob Thune Jr. as they speak today at the Cultivate Conference Faith South is hosting.

## Friday, September 18

Read John 5:1-47

**THINK:** Why did Jesus ask the invalid whether he wanted to be healed? In vs 14 Jesus tells the man to sin no more so that nothing worse would happen to him. What did Jesus mean by this? One of the key themes of the Gospel of John is that Jesus is God. What did Jesus do and say in this chapter that would point to His authority and divinity? Where do we find eternal life? Is it possible to know a lot about the Bible but still not have eternal life?

**PRAY:** Jesus makes a point about hearing the Word and believing in God (vs 24). The invalid Jesus healed was still in danger of ‘something worse’ (condemnation and eternal death) if he continued in his sin and did not believe in Jesus. The Jews who were persecuting Jesus were in danger of condemnation, even if they knew a lot of Bible verses because they didn’t believe Jesus (vs 39-40). Do you believe that Jesus is God and that He is real? Ask God to help you defeat sin in your life and to trust completely in Him. Pray for Pastor Mark Dever who is speaking at the Cultivate Conference this morning at Faith South.

## Weekend, September 19-20

Read Genesis 37:12-36

If you've fallen behind this week, consider using these extra days to catch up. You can also prepare your heart and mind for this Sunday's worship service. Read the planned sermon text above and the thoughts below in advance of Sunday morning's message. If you are in a Faith Group, consider discussing the questions below together.

**THINK:** What does Israel (Jacob) ask his son Joseph to do? How does Joseph respond? How do his brothers feel about Joseph's coming? What do they conspire to do? Why? Reuben had a plan to rescue his brother Joseph. What was it and did it succeed? The brothers now hatch a plan to deceive their father, Jacob. What did they hope to gain by that?

**PRAY:** Please pray for Pastors Dana and Jayson as they continue this series in Genesis: *Meant for Good*. This is a story of hatred and deception. The brothers tried to improve their lot with their father by wicked means. Jacob himself had attempted something similar with his father. Here also is the beginning of the suffering of Joseph, the obedient servant. Ask God to help you trust in His sovereign rule during circumstances that appear out of control.

**FAITH GROUP:** Share what stands out to you in this passage. Do you identify personally with any aspect? Have you experienced family dysfunction? Have you ever been deceived? How did you react? Can you share a situation where you trusted God even though you were unfairly treated? Are you in a situation now that is confusing and hard to trust God in? Pray for each other in this.