

# LOVE GOD'S WORD & PRAYER

## Daily Bible Reading

At Faith Baptist Fellowship, we *Love 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. If regular Bible reading is not yet a habit of yours, this is a great way to get started!

**We are encouraging everyone to begin 2021 with spending time in the Psalms.** 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 encourage you to set aside at least 15-20 minutes a day for reading 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. Have a journal and pen for answering questions and recording your thoughts and insights. For additional Bible reading plans check out our website at [www.faithsf.com](http://www.faithsf.com). Enjoy your time in God's Word and Prayer!*

## Monday, April 26

Read Psalm 90

**THINK:** There are great riches in this psalm. Begin by memorizing verse 12. Death is inevitable. Our days are numbered! It enhances wisdom to keep that in mind. Then go back to the beginning:

God is eternal, vv. 1-2 - and he is our dwelling place forever.

God holds our destiny, vv. 3-4 - and he stands above time.

Life is fleeting, vv. 5-6 - it flourishes then fades; it's here then gone.

God knows our sin, vv. 7-8 - his wrath is upon us.

Life is hard, vv. 9-11 - even a long life soon ends to face judgement.

Be glad in God - 12-17 - Find joy in his steadfast love, and wisdom. Trust in God's grace and favor. He will make your life count!

**PRAY:** Perspective! That's what Psalm 90 is all about. Life is short; life is hard; God will judge; let him help you make your life count for the kingdom. Pray through each of the summary statements from above. Pray and ponder. Do you relate? Do you have a heart of wisdom? Are you glad in God and rejoicing in his steadfast love? Pray, praise, confess, rejoice: Respond and communicate with God!

## Tuesday, April 27

Read Psalm 91

**THINK:** One of the greatest and most famous of all missionary stories is that of Jim Elliot and the 4 other martyrs for Christ in the jungle of Ecuador in 1958. Jim's journals were published as "The Shadow of the Almighty" from Psalm 91 (life-changing reading).

Ponder the reality behind this psalm. Does it promise perfect protection from all harm? Elisabeth Elliot was asked about that after the murder of her husband and his 4 missionary companions. She said, *"I prayed for protection of Jim, that is, physical protection. The answer the Lord gave transcended what I had in mind. He gave protection from disobedience and through Jim's death accomplished results the magnitude of which only Eternity can show."* God will protect you from harm that is outside of his will; he may use your suffering to accomplish his will. And then...eternity with God!

**PRAY:** At the beginning of your prayer and at the end, pray vv.1-2. Thank God for his grace and protection from harm to accomplish his will in your life. Ask God to make you fearless in the pursuit of obedience to his calling on your life and the fulfillment of his will.

Pray for our missionaries during this challenging time. Pray for them by name! Ask God to meet them with grace, power, and joy.

## Wednesday, April 28

Read Psalm 92

**THINK:** Another song with thanksgiving and praise. What does it celebrate in the morning and at night? Does the work of God's hand make you glad? What does the fool not understand? What does the Lord do for the righteous? (Cedar trees in Lebanon are famously strong and used for palace and ship building.) It is grand to say, "The Lord is my Rock!" Hallelujah.

**PRAY:** Express to God your gladness for his works (be specific!) and gratefulness for his love and faithfulness. Ask God to give you grace to flourish like a cedar tree of Lebanon! "Father keep me from being a fool; instead, grant me the blessings of the righteous through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. Enable me by your Holy Spirit to bear fruit now and in my old age. You are my Rock! Amen."

## Thursday, April 29

Read Psalm 93

**THINK:** Who rules and reigns over the world? The Lord does. The scene is his throne room, and his majesty, strength, and eternity are celebrated. The scene shifts to the mighty waters of a great flood. Yet God's strength is greater! "The Lord on high is mighty!" Such power would be frightening in the hands of a despot, but God is trustworthy. He reigns in holiness. This psalm and the next several are a series delighting in the majesty, glory, rule, and reign of God in the universe. Fear him, trust him, love him, walk with him!

**PRAY:** "Heavenly Father, in these difficult days of civil unrest, the global pandemic, threats of violence and acts of injustice, THANK YOU for reminding me today of your everlasting reign. You are the true and living God! You reign over the universe! I know that in your perfect timing and divine plan the future is secure in Jesus Christ. You will bare your mighty arm and rescue your people at just the right time. I exalt you as king! I exult in your majesty and glory! Help me walk in faith and the fulness of the Holy Spirit today. Amen"

## Friday, April 30

Read Psalm 94

**THINK:** The scene shifts from the throne room (Ps 93) to the court room of God: "Rise up, O Judge of the earth" (v. 2). Why do the wicked seem to flourish? What is God waiting for? These questions are centuries old! If God has the power (Ps 93), why doesn't he set his world in order NOW? The God of protection allows the arrogant and evil to mistreat the godly with atrocious acts (vv.4-7) defying God. Ah, but don't be a fool (vv.8-11). The Lord will not forsake his people. Justice is coming. The Lord will be your help in his time; his steadfast love will ultimately deliver you! They may condemn the innocent to death - Jesus! - but our Refuge will punish the evildoers and be your eternal Stronghold. Trust in God! Trust and wait on him!

**PRAY:** How is the world treating you? Are you frustrated that it seems like godless, worldly people are running things to your pain and detriment? Tell God now what is bothering you. Be honest about the hurts and sorrows of your life. But then reaffirm to God that you trust him and know that in his time he will deliver! Express to your Father your faith, hope, and love! Ask him for patience and endurance for present trials, knowing he is your Refuge.

## Weekend, May 1-2

Read John 21:1-14

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 together.

**THINK:** What a blessing! Rich in detail, from fish to fire, John wants us to "be" right there with him and the other disciples. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> appearance of Christ to his disciples, John writes, and it speaks volumes about the tender relationship of Jesus with his followers and their amazement that he lives to help them fish! And much, much more. Notice again the humble, yet personal way John refers to himself, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Do you think of yourself that way, "I am the disciple whom Jesus loves!"

**PRAY:** Pray for the pastors preaching on this wonderful, warm text on Sunday. Ask God to speak to you about all that this passage reveals about Jesus. "Breakfast with Jesus" -- did you have that this morning? Tell the Father right now that you desire every day to be with him, moment by moment, hour by hour.

Today we will have the Lord's supper, another "meal" with Jesus. Thank God for this, and prepare your heart for the bread and the cup.

**FAITH GROUP:** Why does the text include the exact number of fish? What prompted Peter to jump right in the water and swim ashore? What does this passage reveal to us about the risen Jesus? What is John trying to help us "see?" Do you find it hard to accept that you are "a disciple whom Jesus loves" and relate to him in that way?