

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 continue our Daily Bible Readings. 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 faithsf.com. Enjoy your time in God's Word and Prayer!

Monday, August 1

Read 1 Samuel 8:1-9:27

THINK: Samuel's sons were a disappointment; what sins did they commit? When the people demanded a king, how did the Lord see the situation (v.7)? What warning did Samuel deliver from the Lord to his rebellious people? How did the people respond to the warning? *Ponder this: do people today heed the warnings of God's word? How committed are you to heeding those warnings and living by faith?* The detailed account of Samuel's meeting with Saul is fascinating and wonderfully descriptive. What stands out to you?

PRAY: Ask God to shepherd you in a wise and Christ-centered walk through this world. Ask God to help you discern the warnings of his word and live in alignment with truth. Commit to God that he is your forever Lord and Leader and that you will follow him through obedience to his word. *Pray for Pastor Jimmy and Allison Hoang as they pack and prepare to make the move from FL to Sioux Falls. Pray for Middle School camp going on this week and for our Faith students and leaders who are taking part: 26 students, 8 leaders!*

Tuesday, August 2

Read 1 Samuel 10:1-11:15

THINK: God has now responded to Israel's request for a king by having Samuel anoint Saul. What were the signs that God gave Saul confirming his coming rule as king? Note two important phrases in this section: v. 6 "be turned into another man" and v. 9 "God gave him another heart." These foreshadow the NT concept of regeneration (the new birth). Samuel makes clear that their thirst for a king is a rejection of God's leadership over them (v. 19). Where was the reluctant Saul when the time came for his introduction as king? How was the defeat of the Ammonites in chapter 11 a picture of what God could do with Saul? And they rejoiced!

PRAY: Praise God that He is our everlasting King! Praise Him for the new life and salvation He has provided through Jesus. Thank Him for His Holy Spirit that dwells in you as a Christian. Ask Him to help you today to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Christ as a faithful disciple. *Ask God to bless MS camp going on now.*

Wednesday, August 3

Read 1 Samuel 12:1-13:23

THINK: The aging Samuel now addresses the people. After reminding them of his integrity, he also reminds them of God's faithfulness. What lesson did he want the people to remember and do? What would be the result of their obedience? Their disobedience? This section is rich with powerful statements worth taking to heart (vv. 14, 16, 20-22, 23, 24-25). What was the result of Saul's disobedience (10:8, 13:13)? Who was the man that God was going to raise up "after His own heart" in the near future? Later?

PRAY: It seems basic. Trust the Lord and walk by faith. Yet we struggle! How easily we forget. Ask God to continually fill you with His Spirit and empower you to live today in obedient faith. Ask God to keep you from the pursuit of 'empty things.' Consider and confess what you have been seeking that cannot "profit or deliver." Thank God for the cross—O the wonderful cross—and for Jesus.

Thursday, August 4

Read 1 Samuel 14:1-52

THINK: Saul's son Jonathan now displays a faith and confidence in God that his father lacks. The result is a great, surprising victory. What is the foolish oath that Saul makes and what is the impact of it? Why didn't God respond to Saul's inquiry? What lesson can we learn from Saul's disobedience and rash decision to fulfill his oath? How was Jonathan's life spared?

PRAY: "Heavenly Father, keep me from rash, silly, presumptuous statements. May there be more of Jonathan in me and much less of Saul! Thank you, Father, for hearing my prayers and for working in my life and giving so many undeserved victories! Help me today to trust you with all my heart, lean not on my own understanding, but acknowledge your loving Lordship and leadership in my life, and walk the path you set before me." Praise God today for Jesus and that He is our Great High Priest that hears and answers our prayers!
Pray for those on your Sacred 7 list. Continue to pray for MS camp.

Friday, August 5

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-16:23

THINK: A striking section to read, ponder, and take to heart. Quickly, Saul's reign as king over Israel has gone from bad to worse. Why did God regret anointing him king? (Yet, verse 29!) What makes our sin so serious? Whom did Saul fear more, God or people? Have you ever rationalized your disobedience before God? Reread 15:22-23 and reflect on its truth. What lesson ought we take to heart as Samuel anoints the youngest, the shepherd boy, to be the future king of Israel? Ponder a difficult reality, 16:14-15, that Saul was tormented by a harmful spirit *from God*. It was God's plan.

PRAY: Sin is serious. Our world takes it so lightly, but God is not mocked. Take time to respond by prayer to these two incredible chapters of God's word. Confess any sin. Ask God to help you no longer fear people (or live to please them!) but rather fear him alone.
Pray for our church family in this season of Anticipating Change!

Weekend, August 6-7

Read Revelation 4

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: Summer! Lots going on: vacations, reunions, camps, work schedules and family schedules that have to be adjusted. Our current series, Knowing the Holy, reminds us that in all this change, our God remains unchanging! His character remains true and without flaw. God's attributes show us the many facets of his utter perfection and the majesty of his eternal glory. After all, that is what we will find when we stand in his presence! We will meet the Holy Holy Holy God and bask in the wonder of breathtaking, astounding worship. What a day that will be!

PRAY: For those preaching this weekend. Pray for Pastor Jayson, Christi, and their kids as they near the end of Jayson's summer sabbatical. Pray for several recovering from bouts of Covid. Pray that your heart and mind will be awakened (and reawakened!) to the magnificence of God's glory and the wonder of his perfections. Praise God! Sing a song of praise. Tell God how much you love him. Ask him to fill you again with the Holy Spirit.

FAITH GROUP: Discuss what it will be like to be in the very presence of God (as in Revelation 4). How does thinking about that, reflecting on the scene in Revelation 4, impact your day to day routine in the week ahead? Is it true that being "heavenly minded is of no earthly good"?