

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, July 18

Read Acts 22

THINK: How does Paul open his defense to the crowd there at Jerusalem? Why is he stating his Jewish credentials? How does he describe his calling from God? His testimony caused an uproar – Why? What fact saved Paul from a severe scourging? Dr. Luke tells this amazing story in such a powerful, truly *inspired* way! Jot down a few thoughts of personal response to this testimony from Paul:

PRAY: Thank God for the Apostle Paul's transformed life and powerful gospel testimony. Ask God to help you prepare and share your own testimony of faith in Christ and how God's grace and Spirit have changed you. Ask God for grace and courage to share your own testimony with others, such as those on your Sacred 7 list.

Pray for our Alaska team ministering today in Palmer, AK.

Continue to pray for Pastor Jimmy and Allison preparing to move.

Tuesday, July 19

Read Acts 23

THINK: In Acts 23 Paul has an unofficial meeting with The Sanhedrin. What a dynamic interaction between Paul and the Chief Priest, Ananias! What did Paul mean by “whitewashed wall”? How is Paul able to place a spotlight on the differences between the Sadducees and Pharisees? What did Jesus personally tell Paul?. What was the oath taken by over 40 Jews? How was this foolish plot to kill Paul thwarted? How is Paul protected to carry out the mission that Jesus set before him? An incredible story: God’s plan and purpose cannot be thwarted by the machinations of wicked people.

PRAY: Praise God for his remarkable protection and grace to fulfill his plan and mission for Paul...and for you! Ask God to help you rest in his divine promises and grace, filled with the Holy Spirit, as you live for the glory of Christ and fulfill God’s calling for you. Every day our enemy prowls around like a roaring lion, but even more amazing is God’s daily grace and power to overcome the Wicked Plotter.

Continue to pray for our Alaska team, both youth and leaders.

Wednesday, July 20

Read Acts 24

THINK: Paul is on trial before Judean Governor Felix. The Jewish authorities pieced together their charges, trying to convict Paul of a crime, but they are vague and unspecific. What was Paul’s response? How did Paul represent the gospel? How much time passed? What was happening occasionally during that time? What were the motives of Felix? Did Paul gain his freedom from prison? *Ponder what it must have been like for Paul to wait those two years.*

PRAY: Praise God for the people he raises up to represent Him. Thank God for sending Jesus Christ and for His grace and mercy in your life. Ask God for patience and grace as you wait for things you wish would happen sooner. Ask God for revival in the church, a harvest of souls, and spiritual awakening in our land. Christ is coming, and with his coming the judgment: are you ready?

We continue to pray daily for our Alaska ministry team. God bless them and grant them success in making a kingdom impact!

Thursday, July 21

Read Acts 25

THINK: Felix, Festus, Agrippa – to understand who these leaders were, consult a study Bible. Paul provides his fourth defense of his actions and teachings. Paul exercises his right as a Roman Citizen to be heard by Caesar. How does Festus respond to Paul's request? Who was Bernice? All the rich detail in this account makes clear that Dr. Luke, our writer, had eyewitness testimony to draw upon, and that for the reader, the precision matters.

PRAY: Pray for the judicial system in our own country. Ask God to give us judges and courts which seek truth and to do what is right rather than what is popular and politically expedient. Pray for Christians around the world that are unjustly accused of wrongdoing because of their allegiance to Jesus Christ. Pray for our leaders here in Sioux Falls and in South Dakota. *Today is the last ministry day for our team in Alaska. Ask the Father for lasting fruit.*

Friday, July 22

Read Acts 26

THINK: What a mighty and remarkable testimony! Take note:
-Paul's emphasis on the resurrection (v.8) both confronted the Sadducees and pointed Agrippa and Bernice to Christ Jesus, the risen Lord.
-Paul emphasized that Christ himself called Paul into the ministry of the gospel.
-By his own testimony (v.18), Paul was calling his listeners to conversion through Jesus Christ by repentance and faith (v.20) in the crucified and risen Lord (v.23). In closing, Paul appeals to any seed of belief that might be in Agrippa (v.27) or in any of his listeners. Indeed, God is at work!

PRAY: Praise the Lord for how He works, taking Saul the persecutor from death to life, from Saul to Paul, and then using him in great ways to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for an opportunity to share the Gospel today. Pray for the names on your Sacred 7 list.

On this final day in Alaska, our team will have time together, seeing some sites and enjoying the grand beauty of God's creation. Then they will fly out late and travel through the night. Pray for both a tremendous closure for their time in Alaska and safe travels.

Weekend, July 23-24

Read Psalm 89

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: We continue our series on "Knowing the Holy - Treasuring God's Divine Attributes". In Hosea 6:6 God states, "*For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the **knowledge of God** rather than burnt offerings.*" What can you learn about God in Psalm 89? What attribute stands out to you? What is the main idea of this prayer? Who does the psalm writer call "Blessed" (verse 15)? How do God's promises encourage you to face the future?

PRAY: Ask God to bless our speakers for this series, with Nate Walter at West Campus and Pastor Dave Vilhauer at South. Ask God to help you grow in your knowledge of him this summer, with grace to not only receive the truth but also respond to it in the obedience of faith. *Pray for Pastor Jayson on sabbatical, and also for Pastor Jimmy and Allison as they continue to plan their transition to Sioux Falls for ministry at West. Pray also for the ongoing transition to "two churches with a shared vision and mission."*

FAITH GROUP: What attributes of God stand out to you from Psalm 89? What promises from God are there that may help you deal with feelings of frustration and fear? What does it mean to 'walk in the light of God's face'?