

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, September 26

Read Romans 8:18-39

THINK: Suffering—not a happy subject but a worthwhile one in light of the challenges of life. What gives the believer hope in the midst of suffering? What evidence do you see of creation “groaning” and being subject to futility? Do you find it hard to wait *patiently* in hope for our final redemption and the glory to come? How does the Holy Spirit help us in our suffering and waiting? Have you ever memorized vv. 28-30? What a statement of confidence and faith in the face of suffering. Meditate on “all things” in v. 32. Who are God's elect? What can separate you from the love of God in Christ?

PRAY: There is so MUCH here in this passage! So much promise, so much truth, so much hope to bank on—no wonder they call it “the Great Eight!” Pray through each verse. Personalize each statement and promise. Make it your own. Are you suffering? Struggling to wait patiently for glory? Tell the Father and pray these precious truths and promises back to him. *Nothing can separate me....*

Pray for our Westies to warmly welcome every guest each Sunday.

Tuesday, September 27

Read Romans 9:1-18

THINK: Now Paul turns his attention to Israel, his anguish at their unbelief and his heart for them to be saved. Their inheritance is so grand, and yet most rejected Jesus Christ, God's greatest gift and their Messiah. According to vv. 6-8, it is not ethnicity that counts but rather faith in God's promise. Ultimately, whether a Jew or a Gentile, it is God's electing love, God's choice, who shall be saved (ponder vv. 14-18). This is difficult truth (v. 16; 18). But the point Paul is making is clear: that God is merciful to anyone—how gracious and kind of him! What is our part? To believe the gospel!

PRAY: Humble yourself before the Lord, pray through this passage, and ask God to give you understanding of its truth. Thank God for giving you the gift of faith to believe in Jesus. Pray for a great global harvest of souls, both Jews and Gentiles! Pray for those on your Sacred 7 list: "God, my heart's desire and prayer is that they would be saved!" To the extent that we don't fully understand the intersection of God's sovereignty and our human will, we bend the knee to God, worship him, and bask in the wonder of his mercy.

Pray for our South Campus to warmly welcome every guest.

Wednesday, September 28

Read Romans 9:19-33

THINK: In v. 19 an objector raises two questions. Paul answers the objections with four questions. What points does he raise with his questions? Tip: it might help to outline the series of questions on paper to see the flow of his argument. What is Paul's point with regard to the Jews and Gentiles? Paul closes this section with the prophecy found in Isaiah 28:16. Who is the stone of stumbling? What is the promise for all who believe? Bask in the wonder of it!

PRAY: These are unquestionably deep things, yet for Paul, worthy of our reflection and meditation. Who are we to question God's plan and purpose? And for the believer: what an extraordinary promise! We will NOT be put to shame. Praise God for this. Thank him for planning for us a great salvation by faith in Christ which we do not earn (nor could we no matter how hard we tried!). Thank him for offering this great salvation to all peoples: Jews and Gentiles alike, all races, languages, and groups. *Pray for our children & youth.*

Thursday, September 29

Read Romans 10

THINK: Who is the “them” in verse 1? How is righteousness to be gained in the gospel? According to Paul, true saving faith comes through confessing with your mouth and believing in your heart. In saving faith, is there any difference between Jews and Gentiles? Why is gospel proclamation necessary? Gospel sending? How has God displayed remarkable patience with Israel (and with you and me!)? Reflect on all of God’s kindness and patience with you.

PRAY: Paul stated in v. 1 that he prayed for the salvation of Israel. Pray the same prayer, for salvation for those whom you love who do not yet believe. Pray for the spread of the good news of Jesus to all the peoples of the earth—to the Jews and all Gentile peoples as well. Pray for our missionaries who are taking the gospel to the nations (choose one individual or family and pray particularly for breakthroughs and success in their work). Ask God to help you share your faith with others today. *Ask God to grant wisdom and discernment to our Faith Elder Council as we Anticipate Change.*

Friday, September 30

Read Romans 11:1-24

THINK: Paul now is trying to clear up common errors: the thought that simply being born a Jew was enough. Not without saving faith! Or that salvation could be earned—No! Not without saving faith. When a majority of the Jews did not receive Jesus Christ as Messiah, the gospel went to the Gentiles (as was the plan of God). But throughout there have been a remnant of Jews who have believed in Jesus, as there are today. There is no place for pride, either among the Jews or the Gentiles. We cannot be proud! We can only rejoice in the kindness and patience of God to save us.

PRAY: Pray for a powerful spread of the Gospel among the Jewish people. Pray for a harvest move of God’s Holy Spirit all over the world, among Jews and Gentiles alike. Confess any pride, which is sin. Thank God for his kindness and patience in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Pray for our Faith Nominating Team, finalizing a ballot.*

Weekend, October 1-2

Read I Corinthians 2:1-16

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: Can you think of sources you could turn to for "lofty speech and wisdom" (the wisdom of the age)? But not the Apostle Paul! What did Paul preach? How did he preach it? *Paul's great desire was to preach the cross of Christ with God's divine power by the Holy Spirit!* Yet there was wisdom in his preaching; what kind of wisdom? Read Isaiah 64:4. Meditate on vv. 10-13 and reflect on the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit as by grace we learn to receive and live by the truth of God found in his word. Who can instruct God? Who finds God's truth *folly*? We as believers in Christ have (by grace!) the mind of Christ!

PRAY: We are every day surrounded by the wisdom of the age and so much anti-Christian folly! May God keep us "near the cross" and walking in step with the Holy Spirit in the obedience of faith in Christ. Pray that way! Ask for God's help in tuning OUT the spirit of the age and tuning IN the mind of Christ!

Pray for our pastors preaching on this great passage of Scripture.

FAITH GROUP: What sources of folly, worldly wisdom, and foolishness seek to turn our minds from truth each day? Share your thoughts on that. Then share together as a group the "means of grace" to keep our hearts and minds focused on Christ. What does it mean to have the mind of Christ?

Pray for one another! This is the great challenge of our times.