

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, November 28

Read Jude

THINK: "Called, beloved, and kept" – what a promise! What is "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints"? How do we contend for it? Who does Jude credit with delivering God's people out of Egypt? Do you find that interesting? Jude speaks both plainly and poetically of judgment. Notice his vivid, image-filled language. Take time to ponder each and every phrase (vv. 8-16). What is your takeaway from it? And what is the lesson for us (vv. 17-23)? Notice the beautiful benediction that closes the letter. Take it to heart.

PRAY: Rejoice in prayer that in Christ Jesus you have been called, beloved, and kept. Thank God that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Praise God for the gospel, the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Pray through the benediction, making it your very own prayer to God today. *Ask for God's blessing on our West Campus during this season of Advent. Pray for Pastors Jayson and Jimmy and for the WC Elders.*

Tuesday, November 29

Read Joel 1-3

THINK: The opening exhortation places this book in the form of wisdom to be passed to each generation (Sailhamer). A coming time of harsh judgment is presented in ch. 1 as a locust invasion; in chapter 2 it is a descending army. Both are warnings of the coming Day of the Lord. Yet God is merciful and gracious (2:13, worth memorizing!). *There is time to repent, to pray, to fast, to turn and trust God! And God will be gracious; he will deliver his people.* He will pour out his Spirit. He saves all who call upon him. Those who trust in the Lord need not fear judgment or desolation, for he will deliver them. Are you trusting the Lord with all your heart today?

PRAY: Tell the Lord of the frightening times in which we live. Thank him that as a believer you do not need to live in fear. Affirm your trust in the Lord, and accept whatever his plans may bring your way, knowing that ultimately you will be saved on the Day of the Lord. Pray for our nation to repent and turn to God. *Pray for our South Campus pastors, staff, and Elders. Bless us with fruit, O God!*

Wednesday, November 30

Read Amos 1-2

THINK: A shepherd from Tekoa, Amos is the prophet of God sent to pronounce judgment against the peoples, including Israel and Judah, for their sin and rebellion against God. As you read, note the transgressions of the people, as well as the punishment. Do you notice any pattern? Does this series of pronouncements feel hopeless to you? What does God want us to learn from this?

PRAY: Acknowledge to God that your own heart is “prone to wander, Lord” as the hymn writer has written. Express thanks for God’s mercy to you, and that in Christ he has given a Savior. Pray again today for our nation, for “righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” Pray for a revival in the church of God. *It is Wednesday and that means our midweek activities at South Campus. Pray earnestly for our children and youth and all who volunteer with those ministries. Bring them to faith in Christ, O God!*

Thursday, December 1

Read Amos 3-4

THINK: After announcing the judgment that would come against the Northern Kingdom, Amos gave a series of five messages to explain more fully the reasons for God's judgment. The first three messages are marked by the phrase "Hear this word". Each message describes in more detail the religious, legal, political, and social rebellion which had brought God's wrath against the nation. Within the messages are appeals for repentance and instructions as to how individuals could escape the awful calamity that was coming. What were the injustices of Israel? What was Israel's persistent attitude toward God? Consider how that applies today.

PRAY: "Heavenly Father, help me to love justice and to seek it. Keep me from empty, repentance-less worship. May I accept your rebuke and humble myself before you and confess my pride. Thank you for the shed blood of Christ that washes away my sin. In you alone, O Lord God, do I take joyful delight." Pray for our nation. *Pray also for our Faith family to walk in the obedience of faith in Christ.*

Friday, December 2

Read Amos 5-6

THINK: Regarding chapters 5-6, Dr. Sailhamer writes, "The first woe (5:7-17) is an enumeration of the sin of injustice and a call to repentance. The second woe (18-27) enumerates the sin of hypocrisy in worship and issues a call to repentance. The third woe (6:1-14) focuses on the sin of arrogance." Are these an issue today? Absolutely they are! How must we respond to this reality?

PRAY: Acknowledge to our Heavenly Father that our nation and our world see daily the sins of injustice, hypocrisy, and arrogance. The great pride of sinners brings shame and guilt upon the human race. Confess this to God. Ask God to keep his church from such sins. Admit to God your own struggle with pride and ask him for grace to love him, love believers, love your neighbors, and love even our enemies and pray for them. *Thank God for our nursery workers!*

Weekend, December 3-4

Read Luke 1:26-38

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: The very first sentence is packed with significance for the reader: Gabriel, "sent from God", Nazareth, Mary a virgin, Joseph of the house of David. Ponder the importance of each for our understanding of this crucial turning point of history. Mary wasn't sure why she was called the "favored one." We cannot imagine the utter amazement of being told you will have a child who is called "the Son of the Most High." He will reign on the Davidic throne over the house of Jacob *forever*. As the commercials say, "Wait! Wait! There's more!" Mary was told "the Holy Spirit will come upon you." Reflect on the statement, "For nothing will be impossible with God." How did Mary respond?

PRAY: So much prophetic fulfillment and revelation of the plan of God is packed into these verses. Pray through them, thanking God for all of this amazing truth. Pray for those preaching (Jayson at West, Thomas at South) as they proclaim this passage. Ask God to give you great joy in your celebration of the Christmas season this year, joy even as you pray also for our troubled world in need of Jesus Christ.

FAITH GROUP: Discuss the reasons why this pronouncement from Gabriel truly marks the turning point of world history. What changes from the OT period to now the NT period? Why is this life-changing and transformative for us?