

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 7

Read 2 Corinthians 1

THINK: To what end does God comfort you when you are afflicted? What do these verses teach us about affliction? What can you learn about prayer from v. 11? Would this describe your Christian life: *with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with worldly wisdom but by the grace of God*? How does Paul's explanation of his planning lead to an affirmation of God's promises in Christ? How does "work with you for your joy" describe the mutual benefit of discipleship? Are you standing firm in your faith?

PRAY: What afflictions are you suffering currently? Tell the Lord! What afflictions are you aware of with family, friends, and the body of Christ? Ask the Lord to work powerfully in each situation. Ask God to help you walk today by his grace and Spirit, rather than with worldly wisdom. Rejoice and thank God for his promises. Celebrate that all are "YES!" in the living, resurrected Christ. Ask God to help you live by faith today, walking in the hope of the promises of God, standing firm in your faith. *Pray for Pastor Jayson, Pastor Jimmy, and Christi Wittrup in our new West Campus office. Thank God!*

Tuesday, November 8

Read 2 Corinthians 2

THINK: Paul has a rather “complicated history” with this church, rebuking their tolerance of sin (1 Cor) and painfully challenging them (another letter lost to us). Though a majority had repented, there was still a rebellious minority, hence the great emotion and personal nature of this letter (source: *ESV Study Bible*). Why is it so vital that the church forgive and comfort the one who had repented? How is our church *the aroma of Christ* and to whom?

PRAY: Rejoice that our sufficiency to be “gospel people” comes from Jesus Christ and not ourselves. Pray for our church body’s unity, love for one another, and willingness to live courageously for Christ and his gospel in difficult times. Pray for an atmosphere of love, caring, forgiveness, and grace to permeate our church life. Assess yourself in these things and pray for your own attitudes and actions. Ask God to make you an aroma of life to your Sacred 7. *Pray for Carmen Hecht, newest member of our South office staff.*

Wednesday, November 9

Read 2 Corinthians 3

THINK: Read the first paragraph again. Do you view your life as a letter written by Christ? How might this mindset change the way we live TODAY? What is the new covenant? What is the source for our sufficiency in ministry? What does Paul mean by “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life?” The glory of the life-giving Spirit far outshines the glory of the law; new life in Christ greatly outshines legalism, which leads to death. Life in the Spirit for the believer gives freedom and hope and joy, beholding God’s glory in Christ.

PRAY: Ask God to help us live in true freedom and hope and joy by the Holy Spirit, all for the glory of God. Pray that our lives are “letters” of life to those in our sphere of influence. Rejoice again that our sufficiency for this “letter of life” is in Christ by the Spirit, and not our human strength or “prowess.” Thank God that we do not have to try to “earn” by law what cannot be earned, but rather receive the gift of regeneration and faith and life by grace through faith. *Pray for our children and youth ministries at South Campus this evening.*

Thursday, November 10

Read 2 Corinthians 4

THINK & PRAY: Slowly and carefully reread the opening paragraph 3 times, underlining, highlighting, thinking deeply. This captures well our philosophy of preaching and teaching at Faith. Stop then and pray for our pastors and teaching staff, that we would seek to consistently preach and teach Jesus Christ; that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ would come through week by week, not promoting self, or using underhanded means or tampering with God's word.

Memorize v. 7 & 17-18. When Paul is afflicted, persecuted, and perplexed, how does he *keep from losing heart*? Ask God now to help you keep our resurrection hope "front and center" in your mindset as you face daily trials. Ponder the eternal weight of glory yet to come and pray a prayer of thanksgiving for such hope! *PAUSE! Pray-Anticipate God's faithfulness and help-Unite around the gospel and the scriptures-Stand True to Christ's church-Expect some discomfort with change but embrace it and enjoy it!*

Friday, November 11

Read 2 Corinthians 5

THINK: The opening verses are a great example of Paul's eschatological hope influencing far more than his "end times" view: his hope in Christ impacts everyday living. It is crucial to his fight of faith and worldview. Why is it so important to aim to please God? Why is the content of our hearts so much more important than our outward appearance? Notice again how Paul emphasizes that the resurrection of Jesus impacts our daily life choices (v. 15). *Memorize vv. 17 & 21.* What is reconciliation? How does it happen?

PRAY: "Heavenly Father: please help me view my life every single day through the lens of Christ crucified, risen, and coming again. Help me to please you in my daily choices. Keep me from judging others based on how they look; rather help me see others through the lens of Jesus Christ my Lord. Thank you for making me a new creation in Christ! Help me to be an agent of reconciliation today."

Weekend, November 12-13

Read I Corinthians 7:1-24

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: Some aspects of this passage are challenging for us; understanding the context of Paul's unique calling helps in discerning what he is saying here: "Paul is happy that God has given him the gift of being content with remaining unmarried, since this permits single-minded devotion to the Lord's work (see vv.32-33). Paul recognizes, however, that his situation is not the norm. Remaining unmarried is a gift that many others do not have." (*ESV Study Bible*) An unbelieving spouse is not "saved" by being married to a believer, but the union allows a unique, consistent, and present testimony of the gospel to the unbeliever, by grace leading to their repentance and faith.

It is not our external circumstances that matter most, it is our personal relationship to God and his Son, Jesus Christ.

PRAY: Pray for our pastors as they prepare and preach this important passage. Pray for your own marriage. Ask God to help you live a life of faithfulness and joy no matter what your personal circumstances. Ask God to help all in our church body, whether married or single, live a life pleasing to God, giving glory and honor to him. Pray especially for those Christians who are married to unbelievers, with the special and often difficult dynamics that impact that unequal yoke.

FAITH GROUP: Have you ever known a believer who was so passionate about their calling to serve God that they remained purposefully single for the sake of serving Christ more wholeheartedly?

Were any members of the group led to faith in Christ by your believing spouse? Tell your story. Pray for those in that situation.