

Friday, January 26: Read [Mark 10](#)

Verses 17-27 deal with a subject that is relevant to us as Americans -- the pursuit of wealth over the pursuit of the kingdom of God. Elsewhere Jesus declares that no one can serve both God and money ([Matthew 6:24](#)). Riches are “god-like”. They lure people to love, honor and serve wealth in place of the one true God while promising security, identity and happiness.

Apparently, the rich young ruler was a pious person. We likely would have acknowledged him to be a model man; religious, diligent and upstanding. Jesus cuts through all facades and again gets to the heart of the matter -- his allegiance to things over God. Note the disciples’ question relating this man’s dilemma to their own. Jesus’ response is refreshing. Salvation is a work of God, not man. Riches ultimately tempt us to rely on human means and resources that we can pay for, rather than on God and his mercy. When we are in right relationship to God, money then becomes our servant and not our master ([1 Timothy 6:17-19](#)).

Notes:

Pray for Our Missionaries

Juan & Adriana Palacios (Angola, Africa), **David & Miriam Trott** (Cochabamba, Bolivia), **Mario Bloise** (Argentina), **Dan & DeAnn Gerard** (San Antonio, TX), **Robert and Kailey Newkirk** (South Sudan), Mike and Fran VanBruggen (**Craig & Shelly Shafer** (Sentani, Indonesia), **Sue Sanders** (Detroit, MI), **Matt Kooi** (Tijuana), **Daniel Jezonski** (Wycliffe), **Andrew & Sara Williams** (New Tribes), **Brad and Christa Babjack** (Intervarsity), **Salomon and Megan Guzman** (Tijuana), **Alvaro and Rachel Garriga** (Interserve USA)



Spiritual Disciplines

- *Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your reading each day.*
- *Read the chapters and underline any meaningful verses and take note of specific advice or wisdom gleaned from your reading.*
- *Note any unclear passages or teaching and seek insight, answers or help.*
- *Think about what you’re reading. Ask:*
 1. *How does this apply to me?*
 2. *Are there any temptations to avoid, sins to confess, commands to obey or promises to claim?*
 3. *What insight do I gain on God, myself, others, or life?*
- *Ask God to show you any specific action you need to take as you read.*

Monday, January 22 Read [Mark 6](#)

Read chapter 6 with interest. Note the faithless response to Jesus in Nazareth and his inability to do many miracles there. We use the phrase “faith healing”. Is there true healing without faith? He commissions his disciples to carry forth his own evangelistic campaign, including the authorization to cast out evil spirits. Verse 30 records the report from their mission. Mark records two miracles that may have been done to check his disciples’ faith (verse 51-52). Note how Jesus involves them in both the crisis, and the process of feeding the hungry. Later, when he appears to them on the water, they are doubtful and afraid. Matthew includes Peter’s attempt to walk to Jesus ([Matthew 14](#)) where Mark does not (possibly because Mark writes his gospel from Peter’s perspective).

Notes:

Pray for: ---My relationship with God
---My life roles
---My personal needs/weak areas
---My goals and objectives.

Tuesday, January 23: Read [Mark 7](#)

Chapter 7 records another of Jesus' clashes with the Pharisees. He scores them for placing a higher premium on human traditions than on the word of God. Could we be guilty of the same at times? His diagnosis of the real "disease" is found in verses 14-23: heart problems! Uncleanliness before God is a matter of the heart. King David came to the same conclusion in [Psalms 51:6-12](#). The Pharisees were all about appearances. God is more concerned with the inward dealings of attitudes and intentions ([1 Samuel 16:7](#), [Hebrews 4:12](#))

Pray for family and friends by name.

Wednesday, January 24: Read [Mark 8](#)

Mark here records the feeding of a second multitude, this time four thousand. In both instances his disciples struggle to understand the significance of this sign. Note verses 14-21. Again, the miracle is demonstrating divine provision and what would eventually be the disciples' assignment to trust God after Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension back to heaven.

In verses 27-29 Jesus poses the ultimate question related to his own identity. While Peter gets it right, he misses on the mission of Messiah -- to suffer and die on behalf of sinful humanity. He later nails it though, and the church of Jerusalem is born! ([Acts 2:22-24](#))

Notes:

**Wednesday: Pray for Bethel Gilead Community Church
(Consider fasting one, two, or all meals this day.)**

- a. Pastors: Pray for God's grace and guidance in Pastor Jim and Pastor David's ministries and families. Pray for Linda Penn in her work at BGCC.
- b. Worship: Ask God to strengthen our devotion to Him, in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.
- c. Fellowship: Ask God to deepen our love and commitment to one another as a family of believers.
- d. Discipleship: ask God to develop the faith, dedication, and leadership of our people. Pray for the children and youth ministries here at BGCC.
- e. Outreach: Pray that God will use Bethel Gilead to make a positive impact on our community so that many would come to Christ.
- f. Future Faith Goals: Ask God to give our congregation a united vision for the future. Pray for God's clear leading in 2018 and beyond.

Thursday, January 25: Read [Mark 9](#)

Jesus has been proclaiming that the kingdom of God is coming. He now declares that some of his own disciples will see its power manifest among them. The account of the Transfiguration would be the most likely fulfillment of Jesus' prediction in verse 1. His resurrection and even Pentecost, in [Acts 2](#), could be other possible fulfillments.

The idea of Jesus' resurrection is a mystery to his disciples (verse 10). Earlier, Jesus had rebuked Peter for denouncing his coming death ([Mark 8:31-33](#)), and now he again alludes to it in verses 31-32. Though he taught on it, they never fully grasp his plan to suffer, die and rise until after the fact ([Luke 24:44-47](#)). There is no gospel for them or us without the passion of Christ.

Notes:

Thursday Pray for "My World"

- Neighbors • People who live around me.
- People at Work • Others God brings into my life. Take note of specific needs around you and ask God what he wants you to do to help. Who can you invite to church this Sunday?
- Ask God to bring revival and a spiritual awakening to Branch County. Pray for the area churches and a greater spirit of unity and cooperation.
- Continue to pray for the nation, our national leaders and a revival in America.