

Friday, April 6: Read [\*1 John 3, Mark 8\*](#)

The final chapter of this series is entitled Becoming Your True Self. The first three verses of 1 John 3 set our hopes on what we will finally be when Jesus returns. As God's children, we are being transformed into his likeness -- a process that will be complete upon Christ's second coming. Only then will we be fully complete. The rest of the chapter teaches us to renounce sin and the work of the devil, and commit ourselves to right living, loving others and right (truthful) thinking. This includes accepting God's grace and cleansing from confessed sins. Guilt can alert us to sin's presence, but once forgiven, we must let guilt go and embrace our freedom to live for Christ guilt-free. The new commandment of Jesus is to live in love, loving God and serving others as people of God. As we do, we discover our true selves, the people he intended us to be from the beginning when he saved us.

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** (South Africa), **Craig and Shelly Shafer** (Sentani, Indonesia), **Sue Sanders** (Detroit, MI), **Matt and Becky 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), **William and Salma Garcia** (Tijuana church plant)

# The Good Book

40 Chapters That Reveal the  
Bible's Biggest Ideas

## 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, April 2 Read [\*Romans 8\*](#)

We enter into our final week of The 40 Chapters That Reveal the Bible's Biggest Ideas. This week's theme is God's Message for You and today's chapter is entitled "Is God Ever Mean?" Romans 8 answers a resounding "No". God is bent on loving every person he ever created. Here he clarifies that there is no condemnation for those who are Christians. He calls us sons of God, adopted into his family forever and predestines us to become like Jesus. He promises to work all things together for our good and that, come what may, nothing will ever separate us from his love and concern. Never mean, God is all wise, loving and compassionate toward all his children.

*Notes:*

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

## Tuesday, April 3: Read [1 Corinthians 13](#)

The Apostle Paul penned his famous Love Chapter to assure us that love is More Than a Feeling. Speaking of God's kind of love (agape), Paul instructs us "that love is something that, without it everything is nothing" Without love, all skills, gifts, resources and rewards are ultimately empty. In the following five verses, Paul describes love in simple, exact terms. It is other-oriented. It always considers the best interest of others over self. He concludes his short expose on agape love by assuring us that it will endure forever. Because God himself is, by nature, Love.

Reread the chapter placing Jesus' name in for love each time it appears. He is the manifestation of true agape among mankind. Then, insert your name wherever love appears. Sound funny? Ring true? God wants his love to overflow through you to others as well.

Notes:

*Pray for family and friends by name.*

## Wednesday April 4: Read [Galatians 5](#)

Galatians 5 affirms what every self help book suggests...you can change. However, according to the Apostle Paul, you can't change yourself, not as God intends. God Can Change Your Character. Verses 22-23 present a list of character qualities that God desires every Christian to experience and exhibit. They are called fruit, produced not by us, but by the Spirit within us. To the degree that we learn to yield daily to the indwelling Holy Spirit, we can see changes in our personality, traits of Christ himself, replicated in our lives. They act as a good measuring stick of a person's spiritual maturity or Christ-likeness. Look again at the list. Which trait do you most lack? Peace, self-control, patience? Perhaps another. Why not ask the Holy Spirit to work within you in a way that that fruit can grow more steadily in your life? The test of growth will likely be seen in relationships, so be alert and trust God's grace to work in and through you.

Notes:

### **Wednesday: Pray for Bethel Gilead Community Church**

- 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.
- Worship: Ask God to strengthen our devotion to Him, in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Pray for this coming Sunday's service.
- Fellowship: Ask God to deepen our love and commitment to one another as a family of believers.

- Discipleship: ask God to develop the faith, dedication, and leadership of our people. Pray for the children and youth ministries here at BGCC. Pray for our various small groups that meet each week.
- Outreach: Pray that God will use Bethel Gilead to make a positive impact on our community so that many would come to Christ. As God to help us to incorporate new people into our fellowship.
- 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, April 5: Read [James 1](#)

Deron Spoo has entitled this chapter Straight Talk. The book of James is straight forward, bold and blunt. It tells us what we need to hear, whether we want to hear it or not. Hard truth, coupled with love, is helpful truth to those willing to hear it. This chapter covers a wide array of topics, advising us to endure suffering, seek Godly wisdom, guard our attitudes toward wealth, humility and temptation; listen before speaking, avoid getting angry and work at doing what the word instructs. James closes the chapter with a definition of "true religion" -- to look after orphans and widows and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. Defend the defenseless and practice pure living. Who could you step up and defend? Anyone come to mind? What secret sin is tempting to pollute your soul? Anything pressing you? Be a "doer of the word". Ask God for wisdom and follow his lead. Verse 25 promises you a blessing if you do!

Notes:

### *Thursday Pray for "My World"*

- Neighbors • People who live around me.
- People at work or out in the community • 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.