

Friday, August 17: Read [Matthew 7](#)

The final chapter of Jesus' sermon exhorts us against judgment and criticism, encourages open prayer with God, living by the golden rule and looking for fruit with someone's profession of faith. Jesus closes his sermon with an example of obedience to his teaching as compared with those who disobey him. The foundation of his truth will sustain a person through the storms of life, like a house built on a foundation of rock. To disregard his teaching is to place one's life in a precarious place. Whether we like it or not, the storms of life are coming. Sooner or later, everyone's "foundation" will be tested. At that time, it will be evident whether he or she built their life on rock or sand.

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**, (Word of Life), **Craig & Shelly Shafer** (Sentani, Indonesia), **Sue Saunders** (Bosnia), **Matt Kooi** (Tijuana), **Daniel Jezonski** (Wycliffe), **Andrew & Sara Williams** (Ethnos360), **Brad and Christa Babjack** (University of West Virginia), **Salomon and Megan Guzman** (Tijuana), **Alvaro and Rachel Garriga** (Central Asia)

Thru the New!

(Reading through the New Testament in 2018)

- *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, August 13 Read [Matthew 1-2](#)

We will read through the Gospel of Matthew during the next four weeks as we work our way "Thru the New" Testament. Matthew presents Jesus as the King of Israel. He records more about the kingdom of heaven than any other gospel. Chapter one sets the stage for the rest of the book, beginning with the genealogy of Jesus following the lineage of Abraham and then the lineage of kings from David's line. Next, he briefly presents the birth of Christ, followed by the story of the Magi's visit, the escape to Egypt and their eventual return to Nazareth.

Notes:

Pray for: ---My relationship with God

---My life roles

---My personal needs/weak areas

---My goals and objectives.

Tuesday, August 14: Read [Matthew 3-4](#)

Matthew takes a full chapter to cover the ministry of John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Christ. Again, the trinity is present at Jesus' baptism -- the Spirit like a dove, the voice of the Father, and the obedient Son. From the Jordan, Matthew follows Jesus into the wilderness where he is tempted by the devil. The test....can he function as a man under temptation to act on his divine prerogatives? Three times Jesus uses the sword of the Spirit to thwart Satan's attacks ([Ephesians 6:17](#)). Next Matthew directs the reader to the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus begins to collect his first disciples.

Pray for family and friends by name.

Wednesday August 15: Read [Matthew 5](#)

We will slow down a bit for the next three days and focus in on Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount, where he outlines many of the basic principles of God's coming kingdom. Chapter five begins with the Beatitudes. Here Jesus declares blessings what many would consider curses. He demonstrates how God often actively works even in adverse situations. Next, he calls his disciples to be salt and light in a dark and decaying society. Starting with verse 17, Jesus will now demonstrate how his kingdom fulfills (accomplishes) what the law was intended to do. A half a dozen times he restates the essence of various Old Testament laws going beneath the surface of outward conformity to the actual heart motive, of obedience to God.

Wednesday: Pray for Bethel Gilead Community Church

1. Leadership: 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. Pray for the church council and the various ministry team leaders.
2. Worship: Ask God to strengthen our devotion to Him, in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Pray for the development of a youth praise team.
3. Fellowship: Ask God to deepen our love and commitment to one another as a family of believers.
4. Discipleship: Ask God to develop the faith, dedication, and leadership of our people. Pray for the children and youth ministries at BGCC. Pray for our small group ministry.
5. Outreach: Pray that God will use Bethel Gilead to make a positive impact on our community so that many would come to Christ. Ask God to embolden our people to intentionally reach out to others.
6. Future Faith Goals: Ask God to give our congregation a united vision for the future. Pray for our upcoming 150th anniversary celebration. Ask God to use our church anniversary as a testimony to Branch County. Pray for God's clear leading in our upcoming 2020 plan.

Thursday, August 16: Read [Matthew 6](#)

From the law in chapter 5, Jesus now turns to what were standard "good works" for the Jews of his day - giving alms, prayers and fasting. Here he challenges his audience to avoid the temptation of doing good in order to be seen and affirmed by others. Do good for God's sake and trust in him for his blessing. Finally, Jesus deals with issues of the heart -- treasures, desires and worry. Again, his remedy is to fully trust in God for your personal needs and desires.

Notes:

Thursday Pray for "My World"

(write down names as God brings people to mind)

- 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.