

**Friday**, December 21: Read [\*James 5\*](#)

James again picks up with what was apparently a sore issue within the culture and perhaps the church as well. Injustice, discrimination, the abuse of power by wealthy elites was taking its toll on people. Like John the Baptist earlier in that century, James addresses this in his letter.

He finishes this chapter, and the book, with Jesus' second coming in view, encouraging the reader to stay true to the Lord, faith and life. His call to prayer in chapter 5 has served as a guide to Christians through the centuries who are seeking help, healing and forgiveness.

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

# ***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**, December 17 Read [\*James 1\*](#)

James, probably the half brother of Jesus, writes his Epistle as encouragement to Christians everywhere to live out their faith in practical ways. This letter is reminiscent of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and Solomon's book of Proverbs.

Chapter one launches with one of the more familiar and practical scriptures on the testing of faith and the need for perseverance in the face of adversity. It concludes with the exhortations to be "doers of the word" and to strive to keep our religion pure.

Notes:

**Pray for:** ---My relationship with God

---My life roles

---My personal needs/weak areas

---My goals and objectives.

**Tuesday**, December 18: Read [\*James 2\*](#)

James draws quite a bit of attention to economic inequality in his letter, calling Christians to avoid favoritism and to prefer humility, whether financially poor or well-to-do. To love, as Christ commanded, is to look beyond social status and to show mercy to all, even as each of us desires God's mercy, patience and grace.

The second half of chapter two keys in on the ongoing debate about the role of faith in works. Similar to Paul's arguments on faith and works, James agrees that faith is the necessary ingredient to be right with God, but that true faith will always display itself in actions. Abraham is his example of faith in action, just as Paul cites him to be in [\*Romans chapter 4\*](#).

**Pray for family and friends by name.**

**Wednesday** December 19: Read [\*James 3\*](#)

Chapter three weighs in heavily on the power of the tongue. The tongue can lead a life or destroy it. ([\*Proverbs 18:21\*](#)) It is an indicator as Jesus taught of the inner condition of the heart ([\*Matthew 15:18-19\*](#)).

Parallel to the teaching on the tongue is the clear manifestation of wisdom in someone's life through good deeds and peaceful living.

**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. 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**, December 20: Read [\*James 4\*](#)

James challenges his reader to steer clear of worldliness, which stands in opposition to the way of God. Evil desires manifest in fighting and violence are signals of worldliness at work in someone's life. The counter to worldly pride is humility and repentant submission to God. Likewise, as critical spirit and boasting give further evidence to a worldly attitude. Again, the counter is to humbly submit to God's good will and follow it.

**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.