

- Pray for the community parachurch ministries serving our county, including Beginnings Care for Life Center, Branch County Right to Life, Celebrate Recovery, Coach Eby Youth and Family Center, Damascus Road Ministry, Family Promise, Forgotten Man Ministries, Foster Closet of Branch County, God's Choice Church, Jacob's Well Ministry, Presbyterian Free Health Clinic, Shelterhouse, Tommy's House, the Gideons and the Bronson Food Pantry.
- America: Continue to pray for the nation, our national leaders and a revival in America. Pray that God would use the Coronavirus outbreak to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ. Pray for God's guidance and protection through this election cycle and up to the end of 2020.

**Friday,** January 1: Read [Matthew 10:29-31](#), [1 John 4:18](#), [Revelations 21:1-7](#)

Life is full of uncertainty. I have a natural tendency to worry that something bad is going to happen even if things are going really well. In fact, sometimes I do it more when things are going smoothly in my life. This propensity to assume the worst correlates directly with forgetting God's goodness and care. You and I must remember that God is always with us, and we will get to spend eternity with Him.

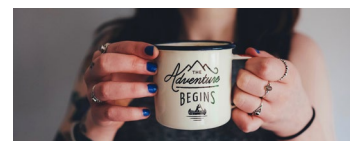
But if we're honest, eternity can overwhelm us because we are not positive about what Heaven will really be like. Yet, God allowed the apostle John to see and articulate enough to excite and thrill us about what's to come. The new heaven and new earth are unlike anything our humanity can grasp — No more death, sorrow, mourning, or tears. I think it's safe to say no more anxiety or depression as well. God will be near, and we will forever feel His love and protection because we are His cherished children.

In this last day together, I simply encourage you to meditate on the first seven verses of Revelation, chapter 21. I pray that no matter how concerned or anxious we may be or how difficult our current circumstances are, we will find hope in what lies ahead. This is not just about clinging to the hope and peace that will someday be. This is about embracing just how much we are loved. The more we are reminded of God's deep love for us, the less fear's grip will be able to hold our hearts hostage because His perfect love casts out all fear.

#### **Friday: Pray for Our Missionaries**

**Juan & Adriana Palacios** (Angola, Africa), **David & Miriam Trott** (Cochabamba, Bolivia), **Mario Bloise** (Argentina), **Dan & DeAnn Gerard** (San Antonio, TX), **Craig & Shelly Shafer** (Sentani, Indonesia), **Sue Saunders** (Bosnia), **Matt and Becky Kooi** (Tijuana), **Daniel Jezowski** (Wycliffe), **Brad and Christa Babjack** (University of West Virginia), **Salomon and Megan Guzman** (Tijuana), **Alvaro and Rachel Garriga** (Central Asia), **William and Salma Garcia** (Tijuana church plant), **Brendan and Ashley Camp** (Columbia)

Week of  
December 27  
2020



Be the CHURCH is DISCIPLESHIP

#### **Spiritual Disciplines Guide:**

- *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.*

*Devotion Monday -Thursday is taken from "Habakkuk's Journey," by YouVersion, with additional reading text to encourage the believer of God's promises. Friday's devotion was written by Brian Russell—Executive Director at YouVersion. "From Anxiety to Peace."*

**Monday,** December 28: Read [Habakkuk 1](#), [Psalms 23:4](#), [Psalms 34:4](#)

Habakkuk is a book that can easily incite uncertainty and provoke thought. It is easy to challenge and hard to be challenged. As men and women of God, we must be willing to do both. I know that I can quickly challenge another, but when the tables are turned my natural stance is defensive. It becomes an act of service to God to accept the challenges that He has brought to you for the purpose of personal growth. Read [Genesis 50:20](#).

#### **Monday: Pray for yourself:**

- My relationship with God
- My life roles and responsibilities
- My personal needs/weak areas
- My goals and objectives for 2020

**Tuesday**, December 29: Review *Habakkuk 1*, read *Genesis 50:20, Philippians 1:18, Philippians 3:1, Philippians 4:4-7*

Read Habakkuk one more time and try to see the message as a hope for things to come. When Habakkuk wrote this, he saw the destructive ways of the people around him, yet he neglected to fall back on the scripture that he grew up with. Genesis 50:20 says, “You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result--the survival of many people.” These were the words of Joseph to his brothers. They had sold him into slavery and when they were reunited they feared of his retaliation, but Joseph never lost his trust in God’s plan. In every bad situation, there is a positive that will come from it even when we do not see it.

**Tuesday: Pray for Family by Name.**

**Wednesday**, December 30: Read *Habakkuk 2, Philippians 4:6-8, Matthew 6:34, Hebrews 4:16, Genesis 12:1, Joshua 3:14-16*

*Waiting for God:* As Habakkuk continues his dialogue with the Lord, there seems to be more questions. In chapter 2 God reveals a profound truth that seemed to be missed by many people. God gave simple solutions to hard problems, while at the same time posing tough questions to the insightful mind.

God’s ways are perfect to Him, and because we do not look on the same plane of time and existence we do not always know where He is going with what we are experiencing. Sometimes it comes down to accepting that God knows what He is doing and we must release our will and trust His.

**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. Ask the Lord of the harvest to raise up more workers for the harvest (*Matthew 9:38*)
2. Worship: Ask God to strengthen our devotion to Him, in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Pray for more musicians to help lead the church in worship, including a pianist. 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. Pray that we incorporate newcomers into our church fellowship. Take some time to pray through this past Sunday’s congregational prayer requests.

4. Discipleship: Ask God to develop the faith, dedication, and leadership of our people. Pray for the children and youth ministries at BGCC. Ask God to bless our small group ministry, to raise up new groups, new teachers and more leaders.
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 God’s clear leading in our future plans as we call our members to a greater love and commitment to the Lord and his service. Ask God to bless our finances so that we can better accomplish his purposes for our congregation.

**Thursday**, December 31: Read *Habakkuk 3, 2 Peter 3:9, Psalms 37:5, John 11:38-40, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:5*

*Trusting God:* As Christians we often dwell on the love of God and look at His mercy. We often forget that in His love there is also wrath, but the question is why do we forget this? The sacrifice He made for us was such a great gift of love that it easily overpowers the image of His wrath. One simple truth stands out; God is a just God and He will not pour out His wrath on the undeserving world and God is not consumed with spite. His love for mankind is so great that it often leads Him to going against what He even wants.

I once heard an apologist get asked, “If God is so loving, why does He send people to hell?” His answer to this had a transforming affect on the way I thought about it. To paraphrase the quote, “The act of being in hell is to be separated from God and in that God is actually being loving by respecting freedom of choice. If a person chooses to stay away from Him in life, He will not force them to be with Him in death.” The implications of this are astounding since *2 Peter 3:9 tells us: The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.*

**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?
- Community -- Ask God to bring revival and a spiritual awakening to Branch County, even through the Coronavirus crisis.
- Pray for the area churches and a greater spirit of unity and cooperation, especially as churches reunite after the quarantine.