

Friday, July 7: Read [Psalms 53-54](#), [Matthew 22](#).

Jesus addressed his greatest critics and silenced them. He saw through their trick questions and gave them a public flogging, so to speak. The Pharisees, the Herodians, Sadducees and experts in the Law were silenced. Being silenced was not enough as Jesus turned the tables, so to speak, on them. His question to them (vs. 43-46) about the scriptures would end any attempt to outwit him. They were left to walk away without answering or have to acknowledge him as Lord. That really is how critics of Christianity work. Their questions are disguised to trap Christians to contradict themselves. Eventually, God's Spirit will redirect their own beliefs on them. They will have the option to accept truth or walk away. They will not be able to deny truth.

Notes:

Pray for Our Missionaries

Juan & Adriana Palacios (Angola, Africa), **David & Miriam Trott** (Cochabamba, Bolivia), **Mario Bloise** (Argentina), **Nate & MaryBeth Brace** (Kentucky), **Dan & DeAnn Gerard** (San Antonio, TX), **Robert Newkirk** (Jesus Film), **Craig & Shelly Shafer** (Sentani, Indonesia), **Mike & Fran VanBruggen** (S. Africa), **Sue Sanders** (Detroit, MI), **Matt Kooi** (Tijuana), **Daniel Jezonski** (Wycliffe), **Danielle Tucker** (YWAM), **Andrew & Sara Williams** (New Tribes).

Specific Concerns:

Pray this weekend:

- Review the week (Thank God for answered prayer)
- Note any ongoing concerns to pray for next week.
- Praise God that He is working in your life. You are growing in your faith.



Spiritual Disciplines Reading Assignments

- *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.*

Weekly Readings

Monday, July 3: Read [Psalms 45-46](#), [Matthew 18](#)

Psalms 45 is a wedding song for the King who is praised for his attributes and his great deeds. His kingship is similar to the Kingdom of God that Jesus proclaimed. In Psalm 46, God of Jacob is referred to as fortress. As Jacob had no place to run to safety, not living in a city but in the desert, so we find our safety in God and not a physical fortress.

Matthew 18 is an ongoing conversation the apostles have about greatness in the Kingdom of God. They look too far to the future without understanding the significance of the present. The apostles are looking to rule in a Kingdom without realizing they must care about the smallest and the weakest among them.

Notes:

Pray for:

1. *My relationship with God.*
2. *My life roles*
3. *My personal needs/weak areas*
4. *Goals and objectives*

Tuesday, July 4: Read [*Psalm 47-48, Matthew 19*](#)

Matthew alludes to oneness when recording the events in chapter 19. He talks about marriage that the “two should become one.” The Law has ten commandments but is considered One Law. Jesus said there is only “one who is good” (v17). The rich young ruler wanted to know the “One thing” (v16) he must do to get eternal life. When the disciples asked “who then can be saved?” Jesus in essence answered, only “One Way” is it possible that all men might be saved: by God. We know that way to be Jesus. Simple and pure devotion is not complicated. It is oneness with Christ.

Notes:

Pray for family and friends by name.

Wednesday July 5: Read [*Psalms 49-50, Matthew 20*](#)

The “Parable of the Workers” might best be titled “Parable of the Landowner”. The landowner, in clear view of those who worked all day, had his men pay the later workers a day’s wage. The reader can easily be drawn to have sympathy for those who worked a full day. Are there events in your life where you feel like the full-day laborer and fail to see the situation from God’s perspective? Like the landowner, doesn’t God have the right to be generous to all people? Do we sometimes view God’s grace as something we can earn through good behavior or hard work? What is grace if it is earned? How does this address the disciples dispute of who should sit at Christ’s side in His kingdom?

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 new position 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 2017 and beyond.

Thursday, July 6: Read [*Psalm 51-52, Matthew 21*](#).

Matthew records Jesus going to the fig tree and finding no figs. He then curses it and it withers shortly afterwards. It is symbolic of his final entry to Jerusalem and finding no fruit among the religious leaders and even the masses. Christ demonstrated his authority by his teaching, his blessing (healing), and by his rebuke (cleansing the temple). The masses recognized his Lordship. However, recognizing his Lordship is one thing. Accepting Jesus’ Lordship in one’s life is much different. A few days later the masses rejected Jesus. Like the fig tree that Jesus cursed, it brought forth leaves but had no fruit to show. In Pure and Simple Devotion to Christ we have hope. In John 15:5, Jesus promises that “...the one who remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit.” Yahoo!

Notes:

Pray for “My World”

- Neighbors • People who live around me.
- People at Work • Others God brings into my life. Begin to take note of specific needs around you and ask God what he wants you to do to help.
- Ask God to bring revival and a spiritual awakening to Branch County. Pray for the area churches and “The Call” prayer gathering coming on July 16.
- Continue to pray for the nation, our national leaders and a revival in America.