

Week of September 20 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.*

We have come to the second part of our study of the book of Acts. Part I -- The Church Established, featuring the Apostle Peter. Part II -- The Church Extended, featuring the Apostle Paul. Luke, who wrote Acts, includes three different missionary journeys of Paul, covering a combined period of some 20 years. Each mission trip sets the stage for many of Paul's New Testament letters. This week, we will focus on Philipians.

Monday, September 21: Read [Acts 16:11-40](#)

As we finish up our study of the book of Acts, let's look at one more church that Paul planted on the second missionary journey, the church at Philippi. Luke tells us Philippi was strategic as a Roman colony and the leading city of Macedonia. Things start out well for them, but turn sour when they are beaten and jailed there. Note ([1 Thessalonians 2:2](#)). Paul's suffering and imprisonment sets the stage for the letter he would later write to encourage the Philippian believers to rejoice in all situations. Two notable conversions in Acts 16 are Lydia and the jailer. Both not only received the gospel and believed, but were baptized along with their whole households. The gospel spreads through families and family groups. What whole family do you know who needs the gospel? Could God use you to start the ball rolling? Pray for them and reach out. Why not invite them to the hog roast Sunday.

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, Sept. 22: Read [*Philippians 1*](#)

Philippians is one of four prison epistles written by Paul from a Roman prison cell around 60 A.D. The theme is experiencing joy even in the midst of suffering (mentioned five times in the first chapter). Paul models this for the believer, emphasizing God's sovereignty over his present predicament -- even to the point of motivating others to preach while he's laid off! Verses 29-30 really summarize Paul's emphasis here. See also [*1 Peter 4:1-2,19*](#). Our assignment likewise is, regardless of what happens to us, to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ (verse 27). How's your attitude lately? Are you experiencing any sort of suffering? How are you handling it? Perhaps the book of Philippians will be helpful this week. Take note of any key verses in your daily reading, write them down and memorize them. You'll need them at some point.

Tuesday: Pray for Family by Name.

Wednesday, Sept. 23: Read [*Philippians 2*](#)

Philippians 2 contains one of the greatest declarations of Christ's divinity in the New Testament. Paul is calling for unity and humility in the church. He points to Jesus as the ultimate example -- being God, he lowered himself to our level as a man. He went even lower to serve us, and even lower to receive our punishment of death. As a result, God exalted Jesus to the highest place where he receives the highest praise! Our attitude toward one another should reflect his other centeredness.

Verses 12 and 13 provide an interesting sidebar for the Christian. We are told to "work out our salvation" but also told that God is working in us. Are we saved by our works ([*Ephesians 2:8-9*](#)) or are we saved for good works ([*Colossians 3:23*](#), [*2 Timothy 3:17*](#)). And, is it we who do the work or is it God working through us ([*Ephesians 2:10*](#))? Either way, we are not to be idle. The Christian life is a life of service. Remember God's promise to us is in [*Philippians 1:6*](#)!

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. 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

1. ministry, to raise up new groups, new teachers and more leaders.
2. 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.
3. Future Faith Goals: Ask God to give our congregation a united vision for the future. Pray for God's clear leading in our 2020 plan 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, Sept. 24: Read [*Philippians 3*](#)

Paul sets himself out as a model for the Christian life. His view of commitment to Christ, willing sacrificial service and perseverance in the face of adversity are evidences of maturity as he states it (verse 15). And he calls the Philippians to follow his example looking forward to our final transformation in glory. Meanwhile, we are to "press on". Take a second look at the kinds of adversity and suffering you have faced. Are you tempted to despair, to blame God for your troubles and to give up? Or, by God's grace, are you learning to, like Paul says, take a mature view of your troubles, to trust God to work in and through them and with his help, to find your joy in the Lord. That's what this letter to the Philippians is all about.

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.
- 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.

Friday, Sept. 25: Read [*Philippians 4*](#)

In verses 2 and 3, Paul mentions four different leaders in the church at Philippi. Apparently there was some division among the leadership at the time. His admonition is not unlike his general instructions to the church in [*chapters 2:1-4*](#).

Verses 4-8 are a standard passage on dealing with anxiety. Notice the components he gives for being at peace within -- Joy and peace relate to the Lordship of Christ over life and circumstances. Prayer is the primary way we deal with anxiety, followed by active thanksgiving and a refocused mind. Finally, contentment in your life circumstances comes from knowing God is sovereign and in trusting the promise of his providence (verses 12-13, 19). At any point that you are tempted to worry, refer back to chapter four of Philippians. Follow Paul's prescription for peace there and watch to see how God will work. In Paul's case, writing from a Roman prison cell, people's lives are being influenced for the kingdom -- not only through his writings to the churches but in person, even up to family members of Caesar in Rome (verse 22).

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)