

# Week of November 29 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 will switch from Proverbs to Ecclesiastes for the next couple weeks relating some of our topics on current issues to Solomon's ancient quest for meaning. As king of the land, Solomon pretty much has all that he would want and need. Even still, he is not contented. Read through Ecclesiastes and join in the universal human quest for significance. See if you come to the same conclusions about life's meaning and purpose that Solomon did.

## Monday, November 30: Read [Ecclesiastes 7](#)

Many of the ditties in Ecclesiastes seem wrong or at least, a little off. Some statements are paradoxes. Others are Solomon's own reasoning, what he discovered or concluded in his search for fulfillment. The day of death does not immediately strike as a better day than someone's birthday. We celebrate birthdays, we mourn death days! In the grand scheme, however, death marks the completion of a life and, for the believer, a gateway to eternal life with God. It's our final graduation! From a wisdom perspective, death sober us into accepting our own mortality on earth. Our days are numbered.....and a wise person lives like it. A fool seeking pleasure and laughter could easily miss the ultimate point of his life and die having lived in vain. Ecclesiastes forces us to wrestle with some of the real, existential issues of life.

## **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 1: Read [\*Ecclesiastes 8\*](#)

Ecclesiastes 8:16 includes another summary statement of Solomon -- there is nothing better than -- to eat and drink and be glad, and to find joy in one's work (see also [\*2:24-25; 5:19-20, 9:7-9\*](#)). True contentment is illusive. In Solomon's case, it seems almost impossible to find, especially without God. We would do well to take special notice of this truth and actively seek first the Lord and his kingdom righteousness ([\*Matthew 6:33\*](#)). God is the only true foundation for lasting meaning, significance and fulfillment in life -- without him, everything is meaningless, like chasing after the wind.

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

## Wednesday, December 2: Read [\*Ecclesiastes 9\*](#)

"Earthly wisdom" leaves one pessimistic, critical of the good and ultimately dissolutioned. Chapter 9 reinforces this reality, again acknowledging that, regardless of who you are or what you accomplish, your life will end at death. [\*James 3:13-18\*](#) contrasts earthly wisdom with wisdom from heaven. God's wisdom sees beyond the temporal, the momentary and the earthly realm. And, it promises a reward that transcends this earthly life with its small, temporal and uncertain rewards (9:11).

**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.

1. 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.
2. 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, December 3: Read [\*Ecclesiastes 10\*](#)

Ecclesiastes 10, like chapter 4, is a collection of short, one verse proverbs, nine of which also occur in the book of Proverbs. Can you spot which ones repeat? Like we did in Proverbs, which verse most applies to you at the moment? Why not add one or two verses from Ecclesiastes 4 and 9 to your memory verse list from Proverbs? Words from the wise are gracious.....(10:12).

### **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. Pray for God's guidance and protection though this election cycle and up to the end of 2020.

**Friday,** December 4: Read [\*Ecclesiastes 11-12\*](#)

Chapter 11 reaffirms that our human effort is finally subject to the grace and sovereignty of God. We are to reasonably do our best in life and trust the results to God. He will bring our lives under judgment with rewards in the end (11:9, 12:14).

Take special note of Solomon's poetic description of growing old (chapter 12:1-7). Read this section carefully to decipher what each line represents (i.e. keepers of the house tremble = shaky hands).

Solomon's conclusion ought to be ours as well. Fear God and keep his commandments. All ultimate meaning and fulfillment in life flows from worship and an obedient life. There is no fear of God's judgment for all who live their lives to honor and please the Lord.

**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)