

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

5 Day Chronological Bible Reading Program WWW.FIVEDAYBIBLEREADING.COM

Week Twenty-three: June 1-7

Day 1: Proverbs 3-5; Romans 10
Day 2: Proverbs 6-7; Psalm 7; Romans 11
Day 3: Proverbs 8-10; Psalm 144; Romans 12
Day 4: Proverbs 11-13; Psalm 8; Romans 13
Day 5: Proverbs 14-15; Romans 14

Week Twenty-five: June 15-21

Day 1: Proverbs 29-31; 1 Thessalonians 4
Day 2: Song of Solomon 1-3; Psalms 72; 1 Thess 5
Day 3: Song of Sol 4-6; 2 Thessalonians 1
Day 4: Song of Sol 7-8; Psalm 127; 2 Thessalonians 2
Day 5: 1 Kings 5; 2 Chronicles 2; 2 Thessalonians 3

Week Twenty-four: June 8-14

Day 1: Proverbs 16-18; Romans 15
Day 2: Proverbs 19-21; Psalm 40; Romans 16
Day 3: Proverbs 22-23; Psalm 117; 1Thessalonians 1
Day 4: Proverbs 24-25; Psalm 41; 1 Thessalonians 2
Day 5: Proverbs 26-28; 1 Thessalonians 3

Week Twenty-six: June 22-28

Day 1: 1 Kings 6; 2 Chronicles 3; 1 Timothy 1
Day 2: 1 Kings 7; 2 Chronicles 4; Psalm 44; 1 Timothy 2
Day 3: 1 Kings 8; Psalm 30; 1 Timothy 3
Day 4: 2 Chronicles 5-7; Psalm 121; 1 Timothy 4
Day 5: 1 Kings 9; 2 Chronicles 8; 1 Timothy 5

Continued from Pastor's Desk

As Peter clearly explained:
For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21
The words we find in holy Scripture should be celebrated every day and not just once each year. They contain the truth of God, His character, His creation and sovereign will. They explain the fallen state of man and the consequences of sin. They detail the good news of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross to bring us salvation. They proclaim the glories of God and how we will join Him in life-eternal when this temporal life is over if we truly have faith in His Son. May we always be reminded of the words of the psalmist:
Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

Blessings on you all,

Bro. Jim Tennery

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While the girl was dying, Luther tried to comfort his sobbing wife by saying, "Think where she's going. She'll get along all right." As Magdalene declined further, he prayed, "I love her very much. But if it is thy will to take her, dear God, I shall be glad to know that she is with thee." He asked the young lady lying in her bed, "Dear Magdalene, my little daughter, you would be glad to stay here with me, your father. Are you also glad to go to your Father in heaven?" She said, "Yes, dear Father, as God wills." Luther exclaimed, "You dear little girl!" and marveled that God had given him such great gifts. He got down on his knees and held his daughter, weeping and still praying for God to spare her, but then said, "Thy will be done." Magdalene died in his arms. Melancthon stood by and marveled, "If the love of God for the human race is as great as the love of parents for their children, then it is truly great and ardent." As they laid Magdalene in a coffin, Luther remarked, "It's strange to know that she is surely

at peace and that she is well off there, very well off, and yet to grieve so much!" When they buried her, Luther said, "There is a resurrection of the flesh." Luther understood that marriage and child-rearing take place in a world deeply marred by sin and death. He said "bearing one's cross" was one of the primary purposes of marriage. Yet, the believer does not shirk responsibilities such as changing diapers and nursing sick children, and he does not complain at the "bitterness and drudgery." He sees parenting as pleasing to God, a divine service for which sinners are "not worthy." When Christians parent their children by faith in Christ, "God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling." Thus, Christian family life is part of our "cross-marked vocation," as Gustaf Wingren wrote, where we experience our union with Christ in His crucifixion and resurrection in our ordinary callings. Luther believed that the stresses of family life offer one of the best environments in which to cultivate Christian discipleship.

This article was written by Joel Beeke and previously published in The Legacy of Luther by Stephan Nichols

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Greetings,
June 1 – 3 is what Jewish people refer to as “Shavuot.” It is also referred to as the Jewish Pentecost and is known as a holiday in which the people of Israel celebrate what they consider to be the most important day in their nation’s history. It commemorates the time when God gave Moses the Torah (first five books of the Hebrew Bible) on Mount Sinai. It along with Passover and Sukkot (tabernacles) make up the three major Pilgrim festivals celebrated by the Jewish people. In this article, I want to maintain our focus on the Shavuot festival and the meaning behind it. The Jewish people view this particular holiday as one for celebrating the amazing gift of God’s law. Moses recounted the event for the Jewish people:
And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments,

and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess. Deuteronomy 4:13-14
We must admit that this is certainly a reason for all of us to celebrate. The sovereign and supreme God of all creation chose to reveal Himself, His character, and His commands for us through the Torah. We do not, in fact, have a distant, unreachable God, but One who is intimately involved in letting us know about who He is. God reached down from heaven through the prophet Moses to give us a gift beyond measure and we are compelled to lay hold of that gift and cherish it as the Jewish people do. However, there is more to God’s revelation than the first five books. We have 61 more books that are to be as revered as the first five. In the canon of Scripture, God has given us all we need to know as the church to function as His people and carry out His commands to

further His kingdom. In an incredible gift, God has provided us with His Word that gives us the things we need to grow as believers and carry out our God-given mission. *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17*
The dates of Shavuot are even more intriguing. We would be more familiar with the Greek name for Shavuot which is “Pentecost” as the word meaning 50 as Shavuot occurs fifty days after the first day of Passover. Interestingly, the day God gave the Torah as His revealed law, is the same date He sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles in Jerusalem which was another absolutely profound gift of God in revealing Himself. These are not mere words, but the truth as given by God through faithful men.

Continued on back

Cultivating Christian Discipleship in the Family

Martin Luther said parents should not merely lavish honors and possessions on their children but should "enrich their souls with the arts, with study, with sound literature," and especially "in the fear of God."

If this is done diligently, fathers and mothers will find that they have "plenty of opportunity" to practice godliness and good works in their own households without running around looking for something to do. Luther strongly believed in education. He required that Katie study the Bible, though she sometimes felt that she knew enough; he had his children tutored by older students, and his sons studied law, theology, and medicine. Luther used catechisms to encourage household piety. In the Small Catechism, Luther directed the head of the household to teach his family the meaning of the Lord's Supper, how to begin and end each day in prayer, and how to give thanks to God at meals. He also included a list of Scripture verses relevant to different kinds of people, including husbands (*Col. 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7*), wives (*1 Peter 3:1, 6*), parents (*Eph. 6:4*), and children (*Eph. 6:1–3*). Luther wanted to shift the focus of spirituality from the monastery to the home, turning each family into a house of prayer with every member instructed by the Word of Christ. In the preface to his Large Catechism, he wrote, "It is the duty of every head of household at least once a week to examine the children one after another" in their knowledge. They should be required to recite the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer every day "when they arise in the morning, when they go their meals, and when they go to bed at night."

Luther said loving one's children requires a regular use of "the rod and discipline" because of the foolishness of a child's heart (Prov. 3:11; 23:13). Luther believed in corporal discipline, but a restrained and merciful use of it. Luther said: "One shouldn't whip children too hard. My father once whipped me so severely that I ran away from him, and he was worried that he might not win me back again. I wouldn't like to strike my little Hans [almost six years old at the time] very much, lest he should become shy and hate me."

Luther reminded his hearers that though God chastises His children, He is quick to rescue and raise up those who run to Him. Discipline must be joined with kindness: "One must punish in such a way that the rod is accompanied by the apple." He warned that a harsh and stern father "makes his children either dispirited or hopeless," and said, "Praise and punishment belong together." Luther called people to use "simple and playful methods" to "bring up young people in the fear and honor of God." Mere corporal discipline will not build heart conviction but will only result in temporary conformity. Therefore, God's people must teach children at their level, using "baby talk" that will "sink into their minds." Luther concluded, "Therefore let all heads of a household remember that it is their duty, by God's injunction and command, to teach their children or have them taught the things they ought to know."

Luther summed up the godly parent's legacy in his words to his one-year-old son when he put him to bed, perhaps sung as a lullaby: "Go now and be godly. No money will I leave you, but a rich God will I leave you. Only be godly."

Luther grounded his teaching on family life upon earthy realism. He knew that Katie had her hands full.

In 1532, she was nursing one child while pregnant with another. Later in 1540, she was incapacitated for two or three months after a miscarriage. Yet for all the burdens of motherhood, she was amazingly active. One biographer wrote, "Kate became gardener, fisher, brewer, fruit grower, cattle and horse breeder, cook, bee-keeper, provisioner, nurse, and vintner."

In 1542, for example, the Luthers had five cows, nine calves, one goat, two kids, eight pigs, two sows, and three piglets. As a family man, Luther said celibacy is full of temptations, but he also admitted that marriage is full of busyness and annoyances. He said, "We have become so infected with original sin that there's no kind of life which, once undertaken, isn't a matter of regret at times." Yet, he said, "It seems to me that it is the pleasantest kind of life to have a moderate household, to live with an obedient wife, and to be content with little." Luther delighted in his children. He believed that *"children are a gift of God and come solely through the blessing of God"* (Ps. 127:3), a point overlooked by pagans who view children as the result of mere nature and accident. One day, Luther chatted with his seven-year-old son about his doll, and commented on the simplicity and natural playfulness of children, which Luther said makes them "the dearest jesters."

The Luther home was full of music, for Luther loved to sing in harmony with his family and guests. Life was not without sorrow, however. On September 20, 1542, Luther's daughter Magdalene died at age thirteen after a short illness. *Continued on back*

Passing Away

One of the sad facts of church history is that the people of God have not always taken the call not to love the world very seriously (1 John 2:15). Time and time again, the church has conformed itself to and has even supported the world's opposition to the will of God. Many denominations supported and endorsed slavery in the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Professing believers in twentieth-century Germany often endorsed the radical nationalism promoted by the Nazi party. In our own day, unfortunately, this trend continues, albeit in ways that are less obvious to us. How many congregations structure their worship according to modern entertainment rather than the proclamation of the Word of God and the worship of Him alone? How often do churches become bogged down in programs that are started more for the sake of creating little empires than for meeting the real needs of the people of God? There may be many reasons for getting caught up in the way the sinful world operates, but perhaps one of the strongest reasons is that we think the world will always exist as it does now. After all, it is easy to look around and assume that since things are the way they are, then they are as they should be and will continue as such forever. However, as John reminds us today, the world in its present state will not last forever. The present evil system that sets itself in opposition to God is passing away (1 John 2:17). It is foolish to love the world system both because it is opposed to God and because it will not last forever. Moreover, unlike the world, today's verse tells us it is the one who does the will of God who will abide forever. This does not mean it is our obedience that earns eternal life for us, for although God requires perfect conformity to His law, all of us have fallen short of this standard (Rom. 3:23). It is the perfect obedience of Christ, imputed to us by faith that provides eternal life for us, and we demonstrate that this obedience has been imputed to us, and thus that we have eternal life, as we do the will of God (James 2:18).

Coram Deo

The decay we see around us every day bears witness that this world will not last forever. Indeed, the new age that began with the coming of Christ will one day be consummated in a new heavens and a new earth. It is the eternal state for which we must long and for which we must store up our treasure. Do you have a tendency to love this world too much? Where is your time and money spent? Ask the Lord to help you store up treasures in heaven. For further study: Isaiah 40:8, Daniel 7:13-14, Romans 8:19-23, 1Corinthians 7:31

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Music Notes

Anyone who has reared children, or who is in the process of doing so, knows the care that thoughtful parents have for their children. As a father, I have spent many hours watching my children – watching for their welfare on a playground or while swimming, watching them in school programs, watching them graduate, and watching them grow into adulthood. There have been joys, as well as some heartache, as a result of poor choices they have made, but I have never stopped loving them. June, being the month of Father's Day, prompted me to think about fatherhood. A number of polls reveal that children who have close bonds with their fathers are less likely to experience depression, disruptive behavior, or lying, and are more likely to exhibit good behavior. According to Psychology Today, research has found that some of the problems resulting from absence of a father include a child's lower self esteem, behavioral problems, lower academic achievement, youth crime, promiscuity and teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, and a number of other physical and psychological disorders. The importance of a father in a child's life cannot be overstated. We never outgrow the need for a father. Thankfully, we have a Father who loves us more than we can ever know. The psalmist wrote in Psalm 103:13, *“Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him”*. And in Psalm 121:5, *“The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun will not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever.”* Our heavenly Father is always present for us. He is intimately aware of everything about us, and He constantly is watching over His children. Cavilla Martin penned the following lyrics: “For His eye is on the sparrow, And I know He watches me.”

Blessed to Serve,

Bro. Vernon