

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

5 Day Chronological Bible Reading Program WWW.FIVEDAYBIBLEREADING.COM

Week Forty-nine: November 30– December 6

- Day 1: Esther 7-10; Revelation 3
- Day 2: Ezra 7-10; Psalm 97; Revelation 4
- Day 3: Nehemiah 1-3; Revelation 5
- Day 4: Nehemiah 4-6; Psalm 98; Revelation 6
- Day 5: Nehemiah 7-9; Psalm 140; Revelation 7

Week Fifty-one: December 14-20

- Day 1: Job 12-14; Psalm 100; Revelation 13
- Day 2: Job 15-17; Revelation 14
- Day 3: Job 18-20; Psalm 141; Revelation 15
- Day 4: Job 21-23; Psalm 101; Revelation 16
- Day 5: Job 24-27; Revelation 17

Week Fifty: December 7-13

- Day 1: Nehemiah 10-13; Revelation 8
- Day 2: Malachi 1-4; Psalm 2; Revelation 9
- Day 3: Job 1-3; Psalm 29; Revelation 10
- Day 4: Job 4-7; Psalm 99; Revelation 11
- Day 5: Job 8-11; Revelation 12

Week Fifty-two: December 21-27

- Day 1: Job 28-30; Revelation 18
- Day 2: Job 31-33; Psalm 102; Revelation 19
- Day 3: Job 34-36; Revelation 20
- Day 4: Job 37-39; Psalm 103; Revelation 21
- Day 5: Job 40-42; Psalm 150; Revelation 22

The Secret to a Happy Life

James is sometimes called the “New Testament book of Proverbs.” That’s because of passages such as James 4 that give us a series of loosely linked aphorisms of practical, godly wisdom. This chapter begins with our universal concern about conflict: *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend on your passions.* (James 4:1-3)

The world is marked by warfare. There’s global war and national conflict; there’s warfare in the church; there’s warfare in the community; there’s warfare in the home—there’s conflict all around us. James says that these quarrels, fights, disputes, and contentions come from within, from the fallenness of our hearts. The motivation for these conflicts is envy, or covetousness, which is a transgression we rarely hear about in our own day. Conflict is the fruit of covetous hearts that want what others have. Now, it’s not inherently wrong to want something we don’t have. James’ statement that we do not have because we do not ask implicitly calls us to ask God to give us our desires. We should feel no shame when we desire good things as long as our desire does not make those good things into idols. The warning against covetousness comes into play when James acknowledges that sometimes we ask *wrongly* for what we don’t have. Sometimes we ask for good things in the wrong spirit. What does this mean? Consider that we ask for things because we believe they will make us happy. This turns into covetousness when we believe that we have an inalienable right to pursue pleasure as the source of happiness. Maximizing pleasure is our culture’s chief goal, but happiness and pleasure are

profoundly different. I’m not opposed to pleasure. I enjoy pleasure. But remember, sin is tempting because it can be pleasurable—in the short term. We sin because we think it will feel good. Every time we sin, we believe the original lie of Satan, who tempts us that we will be happy if we get the pleasure we want. Hedonism, which defines the good in terms of the pleasurable, is the oldest philosophy to oppose God. However, sin never brings happiness—the state of inner delight, blessedness, and contentment wherein there is no room for greed or covetousness. Christians know moments of happiness, when we are alone in the presence of God, in fellowship with Him, and it is enough to know our sins have been forgiven. But soon we forget and we’re worrying about the bills. Suddenly, we say, “If I just had a little bit more money, if I just had a better car, if I just had a nicer house, I’d finally be happy.” After explaining conflict’s source, James reveals what ends it and brings true happiness: *“But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, ‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’ Submit yourselves therefore to God . . . Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.”* (James 4:6-7, 10) Humility is the secret to a happy life. What is humility? Scripture does not say the humble person is Mr. Milquetoast, the wishy-washy person, the spineless man who is a doormat for the world; rather, the humble person is one who fears God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and such fear flows from a heart that is in awe of God and bows to His authority. The opposite of humility is arrogance. To think God owes us every pleasure we want manifests an

unspeakable arrogance that presumes to critique God’s provision for us. Every time we start fighting over what we don’t have, our struggle is ultimately with the Lord. Is anything more foolish than warring with God? Opposition from God is opposition with a capital O. He’s the last being I want to have opposing me. God opposes the proud, so we need to get this maxim from James into our souls: *“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”* If there’s anything that we ought to be in a passionate quest to achieve, it’s the grace of God. By definition, grace is not something you can earn. You can receive grace only if God in His mercy gives it to you. It’s a gift. You can’t buy, earn, or merit it. God gives grace to the humble because they understand the graciousness of grace. Humility willingly submits one’s life to God’s sovereign mercy. Humble people recognize that the Lord doesn’t owe them anything. Do we want more grace? Let’s try a little more humility. Do we seek less opposition from God? Let’s do away with our pride. We must remember that we are unworthy servants throwing ourselves on the mercy of the court. When we enter God’s presence and demand that He give us something or try to persuade Him to give us something as if we were His counselors who advise Him of a better way of doing things, we’ve entered into His presence not boldly as the Bible calls us to do, but arrogantly. We must come to Him in thanksgiving and praise for the grace we’ve already received. The more humble we are, the more grace we get. The prouder we are, the more God opposes us.

This article was written by R.C.Sproul and originally published on Ligonier.org on November 15th, 2021

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Merry Christmas, We find ourselves at the end of the year that seems like it has just started. The days, weeks, and months seem to fly by. The busyness of life often makes it a blur, and we wonder where the time has gone as we reflect on the past in those rare moments of quiet and calm we get. It makes us ponder where the time went and if things will ever slow down to a “normal” pace. Here it is again, Christmas time which means no rest for the weary. So many plans to make. So many preparations to be completed. So many meals to cook. During this time of year, the busyness is only increased by our desire to celebrate Christmas with family and friends. The hustle and bustle of such arrangements can exhaust and exacerbate even the most holiday spirit-filled person. It can be a dizzying time of year trying to get everything done. Amidst the chaos of holiday planning, we will no doubt hear the oft repeated platitudes like, “Keep Christ in Christmas,” or the poetic, “Jesus is the reason for the season!” Certainly, these become part of our holiday vocabulary to remind ourselves and others of the importance of keeping Jesus first and foremost in our celebrations. People decry the commercialization of the remembrance of Jesus’ birthday and become dismayed when it is all over and we reflect realizing that Christ really

wasn’t part of Christmas and Jesus wasn’t really the reason for our gatherings at all. Consider with me for a moment; how strange would it be going to someone’s birthday party and nothing about the celebration had to do with the one for whom we had gathered? I think we would be weirded out. Yet, we easily lose focus on why we gather at Christmas and what the real reason is we celebrate. The entanglement of holiday pandemonium relegates Jesus to an afterthought and places Him on a shelf where the elf belongs. How then do we, in the scurry of this time of year not get caught up in the craze and miss Jesus during His birthday? A quick search yields lots of suggestions from well-meaning folks who genuinely want to help others maintain a focus on Jesus. Some are serious while others are just plain silly. However, one truth is evident. Keeping Jesus in the foreground of our gatherings must start with intentionality. We must be deliberate in keeping a focus on the One who truly matters. It seems reasonable to assume that a proper celebration of Christ would include His church joined together for His worship. We cannot forsake the gathering of ourselves as it is designed to be an encouragement as we anticipate Christ’s second coming (Hebrews 10:25). We are God’s people to whom He has given the greatest gift of all in salvation through Jesus. A candid reflection on this can change our perspective and direction.

Tom Ascol said it well, “So as you celebrate Christmas, with whatever traditions and activities that you and yours enjoy, Take advantage of the opportunity to praise God afresh for the great, what Paul calls the ‘unspeakable,’ gift of His Son. If you have Christ you can be sure that, from your heavenly Father’s kind hand, you have and will have everything you need.” I would recommend reading the Christmas story as a family and even constructing a Nativity scene as other means to remind ourselves of the reason we celebrate our Lord who has by His grace brought us salvation by sending His one and only Son into the world to live as a man without sin and took the cross to pay for our sins. Moreover, death could not hold Him and He is enthroned in heaven, seated in glory for all eternity as the Lamb of God! *“And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’”* Luke 2:8-11 I pray that your Christmas is blessed with the warmth of family and friends, peace and joy, and the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May God bless you all,

Bro. Jim Tennerly

FBC Church Family,

Here we are in December. What we usually think of as the holiday season. Many of us will spend days with family and friends in ways we are usually unable to throughout the year.

This is a special time, but it can also be a challenging time as a Christian. Many Christians spend their holidays surrounded with non-believing family members. This should be looked at as a great thing and a great opportunity. Solomon says this in Ecclesiastes 3:11

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, He has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end."

Right before Solomon says this, he spends time with this reality, that there is a time and a season for everything a person does in this world. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. There is a time to mourn, and a time to dance. There is a time to keep silent, and a time to speak.

Here in Ecclesiastes 3:11, God has given mankind times and seasons. We all go through these different times and seasons in our lives, but also, God has placed eternity into man's heart. Yet, God has made it clear that no-one will ever come to saving faith with Him without hearing the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

So, there's this friction.

God has placed eternity within every person's heart, but every person must hear the Gospel to come to saving faith with Christ. On one hand, we are all spiritually empty without Christ.

On the other hand, we all need to hear of Christ through the Word of God. The opportunity for you is how you can share Christ with those who are nearest to you. It is their greatest need.

The holiday season can be a mixed bag of emotions and feelings for people. There can be great laughter and joy for some, but there can be great mourning and weeping for others.

At the end of the day, there is nothing that can provide true satisfaction, spiritual life, and true joy apart from union with Christ. Your family members cannot be led to Christ unless someone leads them to Christ.

You cannot lead someone further than you have been led yourself.

Do you know Christ spiritually and internally?

Have you responded to the Gospel through faith and repentance?

This is a great opportunity for you this holiday season, to share the Gospel with those closest to you!

What great joy that Christ Jesus has come into the world to restore what we have broken. Share with your family that Christ Jesus lived a perfect life. He willingly went to the cross to die the death we deserve. He shed His perfect blood to cover our sinfulness, and He rose from the dead to conquer death for us. What great joy that Christ has come to call sinners to Himself through repentance.

What great joy it is that Christ will bless all who come to Him with eternal life. God has placed eternity on our hearts that we may seek Him and find Him. We all just need to hear of Him!

-Jeremy Martinez



In 1873, Lottie Moon was appointed as a missionary to China.

She spent nearly 40 years sharing the gospel with love, courage, and unwavering faith. Today, this offering supports missionaries and helps take the life-transforming message of Jesus to the nations.

Based loosely on the Apostles Creed

Begotten of the Father's nature,
offspring of eternal love,

Human child of Mary's nurture was
conceived from pow'r above.

One with God's eternal being,
one with us except our sin,

Opened God's redemptive wisdom,
promised mercies to begin.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
from the cross into the grave,

This the death planned from the
cradle, This the only death to save.

This the only Kin-Redeemer,
purchase price was Him alone.

He the God-man, intercessor,
none else could for sin atone.

From a manger of man's making,
to God's bless'd eternal throne.

He will judge the dead and living,
take the saved to be his own.

Never may we fail to worship,
never may we fail to bow.

Fathomless the grace that saves us,
worship ever, worship now.

Written by Tom Nettles and previously published on
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Christmas is near.

Preparations are being made for the celebration of Jesus' birth. Christmas trees are going up. Presents are being purchased. It is a ritual repeated each year. As I was hearing people talk about preparing for Christmas, I thought about the preparation that was made for Jesus' coming into the world to be the Savior of mankind.

So many prophecies in the Old Testament were given to prepare the Jewish race for the appearing of their Messiah. Yet, when Jesus did come into the world, the people did not accept Him.

Jesus didn't look like the people thought He should look. –

"...He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him." (Isaiah 53:2)

Jesus was not from the right family –

"Is not this the carpenter's son? ...And they took offence at Him." (Matthew 13:55, 56)

Jesus didn't have the right credentials. –

"...the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'" (Matthew 21:23)

Jesus didn't act or speak as the religious leaders thought He should. –

"The synagogue official (was) indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day." (Luke 13:14)

Jesus hung out with the wrong crowd. –

"And both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'"

The apostle, John, wrote in John 1:10,

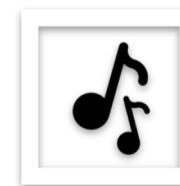
"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

In all your preparations, stay focused on Jesus.

Don't be like those who rejected their Savior.

Don't try to make Jesus fit your mold or conform to your expectations. Accept Him for who He is.

Don't let Christmas pass without knowing Jesus, believing in Him, receiving Him to be your Savior.



Blessed to Serve,

Bro. Vernon