

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

5 Day Chronological Bible Reading Program

Week Fourteen: March 31 – April 6

Day 1: Joshua 14-17; Luke 17
Day 2: Joshua 18-21; Psalm 15; Luke 18
Day 3: Joshua 22-24; Psalm 116; Luke 19
Day 4: Judges 1-3; Psalm 16; Luke 20
Day 5: Judges 4-6; Luke 21

Week Sixteen: April 14-20

Day 1: Ruth 1-2; Acts 3
Day 2: Ruth 3-4; Psalm 37; Acts 4
Day 3: 1 Samuel 1-2; Psalm 120; Acts 5
Day 4: 1 Sam 3-5; Psalm 23; Acts 6
Day 5: 1 Sam 6-8; Acts 7

Week Fifteen: April 7 – 13

Day 1: Judges 7-8; Luke 22
Day 2: Judges 9-11; Psalm 17; Luke 23
Day 3: Judges 12-16; Psalm 146; Luke 24
Day 4: Judges 17-18; Psalm 21; Acts 1
Day 5: Judges 19-21; Acts 2

Week Seventeen: April 21-27

Day 1: 1 Samuel 9-10; Acts 8
Day 2: 1 Sam 11-13; Psalm 38; Acts 9
Day 3: 1 Sam 14; Psalm 124; Acts 10
Day 4: 1 Sam 15-16; 1 Chr 1; Ps 39; Acts 11
Day 5: 1 Sam 17; 1 Chr 2; Acts 12

Week Eighteen: April 28–May 4

Day 1: 1 Sam 18-19; 1 Chr 3; Ps 59; Acts 13
Day 2: 1 Sam 20; 1 Chr 4; Ps 56, 57, 142; Acts 14
Day 3: 1 Sam 21-22; 1 Chr 5; Ps 52; Acts 15
Day 4: 1 Sam 23-24; 1 Chr 6; Ps 54; Acts 16
Day 5: 1 Sam 25; 1 Chr 7; Acts 17

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. — James 1:22

Continued from Member's Corner

gardening, bow hunting, and spending time with his family. In 1999, Bill attended a mission trip to Romania. His favorite hymn is Beulah Land and he likes anything chocolate. Becky grew up in a Christian home and attended Sunday School and church with her parents. Around age 11 Becky's Sunday School teacher prayed a lot for her and asked her to trust Jesus. She talked with her dad and he led Becky to the Lord. Becky enjoys sewing and singing. She has been in a choir of some kind since the age of 3 and sang in the choir during her high school and college years. She attended Henderson State University for one year and then went to Baptist Medical Center School of Radiologic Technology for two years. She worked at Baptist Hospital for two years. She also worked for Mena Regional Health Systems and Mountain View Clinic. For the past 20 years she has worked with Bill in his optometry practice. Becky's favorite hymn is Love Lifted Me and her favorite sweet treat is carrot cake.

They have two daughters, Adrienne and husband Matt and Jackie and husband Chris. They are blessed with four grandchildren, Tyler, Zane, Beaux and Payton and a beloved Dobermann, Logan. Their favorite Bible verse is Philippians 4:6-7.

It Takes a Church To Raise Your Child by Tim Challies

You've probably heard it said that it takes a village to raise a child. Parenting is so difficult, so complex, so relentless, that it is more than any two people can successfully handle. Children thrive under the responsibility of loving parents but also under the watchful eye of a caring community. I have always believed in the wisdom of this proverb, but I've come to appreciate it even more as my kids grow older. And as I've come to appreciate it more, I think I've come to appreciate it better.

When I was starting out in parenting, I assumed this proverb, whose roots are in Africa, meant something like this: I will raise my children and expect the community around me—especially the Christian community—to keep an eye on them. If they go wild or get out-of-line or go sneaking off somewhere, I give those people free reign to let me know or to intervene directly. It may even fall to them to give my kids a stern talking to. I saw this kind of thing modelled in the community I grew up in. More than once I saw adults get involved when other people's kids were getting out of control. Well and good, as far as it goes.

But as time has gone on, I've seen a far more active implementation of the proverb. The proverb demands more than allowing others to trouble-shoot my children's poor behavior. It invites others to provide input into the development of their character. It invites others to take an active interest in them, to speak to them, to challenge them, to counsel them, to befriend them, to love them. It invites other believers to ask my children about their faith and their fears, their trials and temptations, their dramas and their doubts. It invites other Christians to exert a significant influence on them, and all for their good and God's glory.

It takes a village to raise a child. Really, it takes a church to raise a child because it is in the church that our children find a whole community of adults who love them, who have a deep concern for them, and who are eager to see them come to faith and grow in godly character. This "village" is not there just to keep them in line when they get unruly, but to experience the joy of seeing them grow up in God and grow up for God.

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The LORD make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his
countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:25-26

We preach Christ, and Him Crucified.

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FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

Our Goal: \$3,000
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Did you know there are 273 million who do not know Jesus in the U.S. and Canada? Every dollar given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering supports missionaries across North America.

SENDING
HOPE

Spiritual formation is a term that can evoke a variety of responses from people. In some circles the very idea that an individual might be able to somehow take their own sanctification as an endeavor of the will would be thought of as heresy. In other circles people run themselves into the ground trying to develop this gift or that one. As in many cases

the proper position seems to be somewhere in between. The Christ follower does have a responsibility to seek to nurture their relationship with Christ. These efforts can take many shapes. Many people focus on certain spiritual activities or disciplines. I am very much inclined to agree with John Macarthur who says

that what is being called spiritual formation today is simply a sort of mystical self-help mindset imposed on the Bible. This type of spiritual

“Just like salvation, sanctification is a work of the Spirit of God.”

formation espouses a “non-biblical form of sanctification” and is “dangerous”. If we believe that we can somehow manipulate our sanctification by some magic formula, then we have

stepped into, not a works-based Gospel, but a works-based sanctification. Just like salvation, sanctification is a work of the Spirit of God. There are books galore out there trying to navigate these waters. Many even seek to do so biblically, but the process of sanctification should not and cannot be reduced to

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a how-to manual and this is how many of these books read. At the risk of alienating myself I would say that the Dallas Willards and Richard Fosters of this world who have sold many books on the back of this spiritual formation concept have a view of sanctification that is much more man centered than God centered. Now, how do I reconcile that opinion with my personal practice of occasional fasting or other things that can be a part of their programs of so-called spiritual formation? I believe it lies in the reasoning and motivation behind these practices. When a person seeks to practice disciplines in order that they might somehow pull themselves upward, then that is the view I believe is false. That view smells of Gnostic ideology that claims a special access to knowledge and to God for some. Take fasting to use as an example. It is my belief that

whenever we see fasting in Scripture it is because of spiritual urgency. The fasting proposed by the false spiritual formation crowd is instead a ritualistic attempt to somehow manipulate God and is almost comical. Some might say that prayer is an attempt to manipulate God. That is only true if we are praying in an unbiblical manner. Jesus' model prayer told us to pray that the Father's "will be done". We cannot pray for God's will to be done if we are seeking to manipulate God for our own selfish motives (which we cannot do anyway). The church's place in spiritual formation is simply to show people that the Spirit of God working through and in accordance with the Word of God is the way in which biblical sanctification takes place. It is not through practicing so called disciplines in order to arrive at the next spiritual plain. Reading some of these spiritual formation books truly makes me fear for the church.

John Macarthur writes: "Many of the leading voices in the spiritual formation movement stress the need for more intuitive interpretations of spirituality. They encourage believers to incorporate a wide variety of extrabiblical spiritual practices, such as contemplative prayer, silence, meditation, creative expression, and yoga. In fact, some of the most popular methods of spiritual formation have been lifted from Catholicism, new age mysticism, or other religions and rebranded with biblical-sounding terminology." Be very careful when any person, book, or resource starts talking about spiritual formation. Let us who want to follow Scripture use more appropriate terms for growing in Christ like discipleship and sanctification.

'Til He Comes,
Bro. Russell

you! Parenting is no easy task! Knowing that you aren't alone in it and that there are people who understand praying for you can be a huge encouragement!

Last month we began an emphasis period in our church focusing on the importance of being plugged into a Sunday School class. I want to encourage you as a parent to take advantage of this emphasis! If you haven't been a regular attendee in Sunday School, then make the commitment as a family to change that and be here every week. Maybe your family isn't connected to Sunday School much at all. Come, connect, and see just how much of a blessing this avenue of ministry can be to your family!

No, Sunday School cannot save your child. Nor can it guarantee that they will grow up to be faithful and productive church members. But as parents that is not our responsibility. We are responsible for doing everything we can to make sure that we are teaching our children about who God is and that includes connecting them to a church that will come along side and teach them with us.

Parents, Sunday School matters in our parenting. Use this great resource as you seek to lead your children to the One who made them for Himself!

Your fellow servant,
Bro. Kevin

Music Notes

"O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth, Who hast displayed Thy splendor... ." Psalm 8:1

I've thought of these words of the Psalmist over the last two weeks. We were in the Sangre de Cristo mountains of New Mexico. As we sat at about 9,000 ft elevation looking at the snow capped mountains, with snow falling about us, I thought about the majesty and glory of a God who could imagine and create such beauty.



As we left the mountains, we could see, ahead of us, a mighty display of God's power in a thunderstorm with lightning streaking in the clouds in many directions. When we caught up to where the storm had passed, we found a half-mile swath of hail three or four inches deep. Job 38 came to mind where God questions Job, "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail". God's work for sure!

And, now, as Spring has sprung, with the beauty of new life, bare limbs bringing new buds and blossoms, hidden bulbs bursting in flowering plants, I am reminded of Ephesians 2:4, 5 and the hope of the new, resurrection life we have in Jesus – "But God, being rich in mercy...even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ... ." Truly, we serve an awesome God! "O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth." Psalm 8:9



I am blessed to serve, *Bro. Vernon*

Members' Corner



Bill & Becky Bell

Bill and Becky Bell moved to Mena and became members of FBC in 1981. They continue to serve faithfully in the church in many ways. You can find Bill on Sundays running video and sound or on Security. Becky is busy leading the girls in GA's and serving in The Vine After School program on Wednesdays. She also volunteers in the nursery and sings in the choir. Over the years, she has helped with VBS, Ninth Street Ministry and the free clinic as well as assisted with weddings. Bill is an ordained deacon and has served at FBC since 1983.

The couple's love story began as High School Seniors in Latin class. After graduating Pine Bluff H.S. in 1972, they went to different colleges and then moved to Little Rock where they were married in 1974. They later moved to Memphis and attended Belview Baptist where they had the privilege of sitting under the teaching of Dr. Adrian Rogers. During that time, Becky worked in a large Orthopedic clinic while Bill was in Optometry School. While in school, Bill worked in wastewater treatment for Memphis and for Maybelline cosmetics as he studied to receive his B.S. degree from U.A.L.R. He then went to Southern College of Optometry and graduated in 1981. While a sophomore at U.A.L.R, Bill recognized his need for Christ and asked Him to come into his life and was baptized at Southside Baptist in Pine Bluff. Bill enjoys

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Thank You to FBC

Dear First Baptist Church Family - I hope that you are all doing well and that the ministry in Mena is growing and thriving. By God's grace our family is doing well. God has been so good and generous to us. Pauline and I wanted to send you all a little note to thank you for your care, prayers, and support. It is really a joy and blessing to us to be able to labor together with you in the ministry of the gospel. We will be praying for you, and please keep us in your prayers as well.

In His grace, *Eric and Pauline Montgomery*
(Asian Christian Academy of India)

Attendance & Giving March 2019

Worship Services	
(SUN AM/PM/WED)	139/46/140
Sunday School	112
Budget Giving	\$40,090.55
Designated Giving	\$4,437.74



Greater Obedience

I remember clearly in my mind's eye that Sunday morning. I was a young teenager sitting in our Sunday School class. Our teacher had asked the question, "Why did you come to church today?" I remember answering, "Because it's Sunday." My answer wasn't a sarcastic one at all. I explained that at our house, when you woke up on Sundays you knew you had to get ready to go to church. It was what we did on Sundays.

While I can see now that my answer did betray a lack of heartfelt commitment, I can also see the faithfulness of my parents in it. They instilled in my siblings and me the practice of faithful church attendance, starting with Sunday School, with the hope that our hearts would one day align to the practice. And I am so incredibly thankful that they

did. Sunday School, for me, was where many of the foundations of my knowledge of God's Word were formed. And it was that knowledge that, I have no doubt, God used to shape my faith, ultimately bringing me to salvation. In fact, I didn't realize just how much I had learned in Sunday School until I was in college taking an Old Testament Survey class. I remember thinking how much of this college level class material I already knew from my Sunday School years. Sunday School can be such a powerful aid in growing our children in God's Word.

And here is another beautiful aspect of Sunday School: you can make sure that your child is being taught the Word while you, at the same time, get a break where you can study the Bible with others who are in the trenches of parenting with

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FBC Mena History Tidbit — Bro. Dillard Miller preached his first sermon as Pastor on his 37th birthday, June 3, 1956. He was evangelistic and mission minded. The church had many emphases on the Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong Offerings. He retired on June 2, 1985, having served the church faithfully for 29 years.