

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

5 Day Chronological Bible Reading Program

Week Twenty-Seven: July 5 - 11

- Day 1: 1 Kings 10-11; 2 Chronicles 9; 1 Timothy 6
- Day 2: Ecclesiastes 1-3; Psalm 45; 2 Timothy 1
- Day 3: Ecclesiastes 4-6; Psalm 125; 2 Timothy 2
- Day 4: Ecclesiastes 7-9; Psalm 46; 2 Timothy 3
- Day 5: Ecclesiastes 10-12; 2 Timothy 4

Week Twenty-Nine: July 19 - 25

- Day 1: 1 Kings 19-21; 2 Chronicles 17; Psalm 129; Matthew 1
- Day 2: 1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 18; Matthew 2
- Day 3: 2 Chronicles 19-20; 2 Kings 1; Psalm 20; Matthew 3
- Day 4: 2 Kings 2-3; Psalm 48; Matthew 4
- Day 5: 2 Kings 4-6; Matthew 5

Continued from Greater Obedience

place. This is where many though well intentioned Christians have gone wrong. As one brother recently said to me, "The only bandwagon I should be hitched to is that of the gospel. I shouldn't have room for anything else!" The beauty in this is that it doesn't ignore or exclude injustice, but it places the solution for it on the only place it can truly be solved: the cross! The gospel message is the only one that can revive a heart that is dead in sin and bring true and lasting change to a person apart from God. So we must share the gospel!

Live as slaves to God (1 Peter 2:16, Gal. 2:20, Rom. 6:17-18). When the Bible speaks about freedom in the Christian life it is always within the context of freedom from sin, freedom from the wrath of God and freedom to live in holiness. Yet somehow, cultural Christianity has come to the place where we use our "freedom" to indulge in worldly and sinful things. We have forgotten Paul's words in Romans 12:1 "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." We are saved by the mercy of God unto holiness not to live apart from it! We should not buy into the lie that our freedom is ours to be enjoyed above all else. No, Christ our savior calls us to take up our cross and follow Him.

Your Fellow Servant,

Bro. Kevin

Week Twenty-Eight: July 12 - 18

- Day 1: 1 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 10-11; Titus 1
- Day 2: 1 Kings 13-14; 2 Chronicles 12; Psalm 47; Titus 2
- Day 3: 1 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 13-14; Titus 3
- Day 4: 2 Chronicles 15-16; 1 Kings 16; Philemon
- Day 5: 1 Kings 17-18; Psalm 119; Jude

Week Thirty: July 26 - Aug 1

- Day 1: 2 Kings 7-8; 2 Chronicles 21; Matthew 6
- Day 2: 2 Kings 9-10; Psalm 49; Matthew 7
- Day 3: 2 Chronicles 22-23; 2 Kings 11; Psalm 131; Matthew 8
- Day 4: 2 Chronicles 24; 2 Kings 12; Psalm 50; Matthew 9
- Day 5: Joel; Matthew 10

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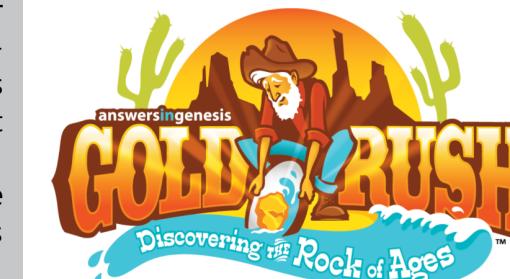
Sr. Pastor
Bro. Russell Threet

Growing Deeper
Associate Pastor
of Youth & Children
Bro. Kevin Williams

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Music Minister
Bro. Vernon Payne



We Preach Christ and Him Crucified



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JULY 27 - 31
5:00 - 8:00 PM
PRE-K - 5TH GRADE

**Howdy! Grab your bandana,
dust off your boots, and get
ready to mine for true gold
at VBS! Pre-Register your
miner to come dig with us!
Go to the church website at
www.firstbaptistchurchmena.com
Click 'Register for VBS'**

Church Family,
A couple of years ago I wrote at length about the alcohol issue in our county. I am recycling a lot of that information here because the practical and spiritual reasons to oppose these initiatives have not changed.

Recently a group calling themselves the Committee for Growth in Polk County penned an article recounting what they claimed to be the benefits of bringing alcohol sales to our county. In any good political issue people should be well informed as to both sides of the issue being discussed. While the CGPC offered what they claimed to be benefits they failed to mention any potential negative consequences. The truth of the matter is that the negative consequences to bringing alcohol into our county far outweigh any potential positives. Concerning crime, the CGPC claimed

that in two counties they named there was shown to be no increase in crime when alcohol sales were introduced to the county. Nearly every major study ever conducted on this issue would make the opposite claim, but here is a summary of one. Researchers from three major universities conducted a study using county level data in the state of Kansas compiling statistics from 1977-2011. They discovered that in those 35 years 86 counties in Kansas went from dry to wet. What they found without exception was a 10-25% increase in violent crime and a 10% increase in crimes against property. That is not a one-year anomaly, but over three decades worth of crime data. In fact, alcohol was a factor in the crimes of at least 36% of prison inmates in the entire nation.

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The World Health Organization tells us that worldwide it has been proven that alcohol use by parents is a significant factor in the mistreatment and abuse of children, as well as a strong factor contributing to alcohol abuse by the children of these parents later in life. Understand that these are not just statistics. This could be your family members, your friends, and your property being hurt and destroyed.

This initiative will not only allow for package stores to be built in the county and for all restaurants to serve alcohol, but it will also mean that every convenience store and grocery store will be able to sell beer and wine. This increased access will cause an increase in the use of alcohol across the board. Do not believe the false premise that says, "people will drink no

Attendance & Giving June 2020

Worship Services	
(SUN AM/PM & WED)	96/38/37
Sunday School	
Month	65
Tithes & Offerings	\$31,327.49
Expenses	\$23,600.81
Net Balance	\$7,726.68
Year to Date	
Tithes & Offerings	\$197,309.16
Expenses	\$167,335.23
Net Balance	\$31,959.35
Light Up the Church	PAID IN FULL



matter what". Published in 2015, a 2012 study by the American Journal of Public Health studying drinking rates by county nationwide shows that drinking rates are consistently higher for wet counties versus dry counties. Also, for those that do drink there is a higher rate of binge drinking in wet counties versus dry counties. The bottom line is that in wet counties there is significantly more alcohol usage and so there will be significantly more alcohol related problems.

That is not even the best reason to fight against this initiative. The negative impact of this effort on families will be immense. Here is what I know to be true. I have never known alcohol to help a family and make their life more peaceful.

I have never known alcohol to strengthen marriages. I have never known children that had better parents because of alcohol. I have never seen anyone walk closer to God or be a better member of their community or church because of alcohol.

Before signing a petition or casting a ballot the citizens of Polk County need to honestly examine this issue and decide, will bringing widespread access to alcohol to Polk County make the quality of life better or worse? The people that are pushing to bring alcohol into our community may not be considering the full impact it will have on our county. They are driven by supposed financial gains. Any financial gain would be diminished or completely negated by the tax dollars necessary for increased policing, increased incarcerations in our already strained jail facility, and the cost of increased

court proceedings. There is not enough money to justify the increase in pain, shame, and destruction of lives that this will bring to our community. What problems exist in the lives of the men, women, and children of Polk County that alcohol will fix?

'Til He Comes,

Bro. Russell

Greater Obedience

"But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." – Romans 6:17 & 18.

This is probably not the first verse that comes to mind when one thinks about the Fourth of July, but it is one that should.

As we celebrate our nation's freedom, and the ideal of freedom in general, we need to be reminded of what the Bible says about freedom.

A quote by actor Jim Caviezel says it well, "Every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom exists not to do what you like, but to have the right to do what you ought." So, as we celebrate freedom this month, here are some thoughts to ponder.

As saved individuals we are first and foremost citizens of the Kingdom of God (Col. 1:13, Phil. 3:20, Eph. 2:19). Too often, as I scroll through social media, I am saddened to see many who claim to be (and who I believe to be) Christians making statements

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FBC Mena History Tidbit - (pictured to left) People in Indiana, Missouri, Louisiana, and Hot Springs, AR felt God calling them to go to a specific place and establish a Baptist Church. They were not familiar with the location and it was a considerable distance, but with faith in their hearts and Bible in hand they traveled by horseback and wagon and arrived in Mena. Those people became the seven charter members of FBC of Mena when it was organized on February 21, 1897. They chose Romans 10 for their foundation. Thanks be to God for giving those 7 people a burden to come to Mena, and that they responded to God's call.

and sharing things that elevate our country to some higher lever of hope for the world. Brothers and sisters, the United States of America is not the hope of the world. As followers of Christ we come dangerously close, if not cross the line altogether, of sharing a false gospel when we portray it to be so. So how then should we relate to our nation as followers of Christ? Well, let me answer that with the words of Paul who said, "But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Gal. 6:14). Further, I find it instructive to look at how the apostle Paul used his Roman citizenship. Paul was not afraid to use his citizenship, but it was always in service to the spread of the gospel and never because of personal pride (Acts 22:22-23:11; 25:11).

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Music Notes

As I was reading the scriptures this week, I was struck by 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14 which reads in part:

... God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. And it was for this He called you through our gospel that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Of all the blessings that we receive from God our Father, there is none more awesome than what Paul sets forward in these verses. We should be so humbled to think that God chose us "from the beginning". There are various ways of taking that phrase. Some take it that Paul is referring to the early days of his ministry. There is Biblical basis for taking it as referring to the beginning of time, even before the earth was created. That was Paul's declaration in Ephesians 1:4: He (God) chose us in

Him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. Paul expressed the same thought in Romans 8:29:

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son....

The truth that God knew each of us before creation, chose us in Christ, called us through the gospel, granted us faith to believe, and imparted His Spirit to live within us is the greatest blessing we have received. God is working in our lives by His Spirit that we might "gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 2:14), that we might become "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29), "that we should be holy and blameless before Him" (Ephesians 1:4).

Blessed to serve,

Bro. Vernon

Members' Corner



Jeremy & Crystal Elder & Son Jayden

Crystal joined FBC Mena on September 14, 2019 and Jayden joined on July 28, 2019.

Where did you grow up? *Crystal* - Texarkana, TX and Big Cedar, OK.
Jeremy - Mena, AR

How did you meet? *Crystal* - Jeremy and I met at the beginning of 2008 through working at Walmart. We were married on April 25, 2009, and had Jayden April 1, 2011.

Who makes up your family? *Crystal* (33) Jeremy (40) and Jayden (9)

When were you saved? *Crystal* - My grandparents were always there for me and did the best they could to provide for me, make sure I knew I was loved, and that I knew the Lord. When I was young our church went to Heaven's Gates and Hells Flames performance. There my eyes were opened to the sin in my life and what my life could be through Jesus. I tried to live my life the way I thought God would have wanted, but it wasn't until a couple of years later when I went to church camp that I gave my life to Christ. I was baptized shortly after that. When my grandmother passed away, I felt like a piece of me died with her. I felt like I had no hope and no purpose, so I turned away from God.

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