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Through the Bible in 7 Weeks

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Weekly Reading Assignments

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

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READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 1: BEGINNINGS (for June 3 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

CREATION | GENESIS 1:1-2:3

The Scriptures go back to the beginning and say that God made everything. Do you agree with this? What, if anything, does v. 1 have to do with faith in Jesus?

God reflects on His creation as “good” (vv. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) and “very good” (v. 31). What does He mean by “good”? What did He call “very good,” and what does this tell you?

Look at vv. 26-28. What does it mean that men and women are created in God’s image? What is humanity’s basic role in the Lord’s created order?

THE FALL | GENESIS 3:1-19

This passage is referred to as “the Fall.” What did we fall from? What did Adam and Eve do wrong (see Genesis 2:15-16)?

One of our main tendencies is to blame others for our own wrongdoing. Check out vv. 12-13. Who does the man blame? Who does the woman point to? Who do you point to when you do things you know you shouldn’t?

God believes He has the right to command people and have us obey. Do you contest or challenge that claim? What do you understand Adam and Eve's basic sin to be? And ours? What are some consequences and present-day indicators of the Fall?

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM | GENESIS 12:1-9

Verses 1-3 spell out the Lord's purpose for blessing Abraham. Why was he going to be blessed?

Why did Abraham obey the Lord? Failure to obey cost Adam and Eve a lot. Abraham's obedience promises a future. Are you willing to follow God even when you don't know what's next or where He might lead you? Read Luke 14:27-33 to see how this connects with following Jesus.

THE PASSOVER | EXODUS 12:1-51

Focus on vv. 12-14. What is the event of Passover? What makes it so memorable? What does it point forward to?

Read vv. 24-28. How does God tell the people to explain Passover? How do you define and practice worship in your own life?

Verses 29-51 reveal the Lord as the God who acts in history. Briefly walk through the text. How do you discover God at work in the world and in your life today?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS | EXODUS 20:1-17

God's free people are to live a moral life pleasing to Him and satisfying to them. How does God identify Himself in v. 1? Why, do you suppose?

What does it mean to say that the four commands of vv. 3-11 deal with our "vertical relationship" with God and that the six commands of vv. 12-17 deal with our "horizontal relationship" with people?

Do the commandments apply to Christians today? How are freedom and law both wrapped within God's love?

What does it mean to love Jesus (see John 14:21)? Can we say that we follow Jesus "in our hearts" but never change our actions to do what He tells us?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 2: HISTORICAL BOOKS (for June 10 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

NATHAN REBUKES DAVID | 2 SAMUEL 12:1-25

In v. 9 God puts this question to David, “Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes?” Have you realized your sin shows contempt and hatred for God’s Word? Reflect on specific changes you may need to make.

Read vv. 13-14. Look at the process: admission of sin, forgiveness, consequences. How have you seen this pattern play out in your life? Is God fair with you?

Read vv. 24-25. When have you seen God bring something good to you after forgiving you?

SOLOMON’S WISDOM | 1 KINGS 3:1-15

God says to Solomon: “What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!” (v. 5). We expect the Lord to reprimand the king. Instead comes this gracious, generous promise. What would you ask for if God offered?

Now read vv. 7-9. What does Solomon ask of the Lord? Why do you think he asked for this? How does it compare with your wish expressed in the last question?

What is the Lord's reaction in v. 10? God responds generously by giving him wisdom and more. What does this say about Solomon's relationship with the Lord? How does your connection with God compare?

ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL | 1 KINGS 18:16-46

Elijah's challenge is about idolatry. Elijah set up a "God contest." In your own life, is there a "contest" between Jesus and some opposing gods or idols?

Verse 38 highlights the utter emptiness of non-gods. What does that suggest about who and what we can depend on? What does that say about American culture?

JOSIAH'S REFORMS | 2 CHRONICLES 34

Josiah is serious about getting rid of faith in worthless idols and renewing faith in the true God. Have you truly anchored your life on Jesus? Do you feel you're actually following Him?

“As long as he [Josiah] lived, they did not fail to follow the Lord, the God of their fathers” (v. 33). In whom do you recognize this sort of leadership today? What can you apply to your life and influence?

ESTHER’S DECISION | ESTHER 4

Read vv. 1-8. Put yourself in that predicament. How would you react? Does your trust in God weaken or strengthen you when fear becomes real?

The second half of the story (vv. 9-17) describes how the queen and her cousin responded to the situation. When your faith is on the line, do you usually show courage? If not, how do you respond?

Can you think of events in your life where you are in position to help people in a big way, even though it’s risky? Esther put her life on the line. Does that phrase overdramatize the decisions of ordinary Christians, or does it accurately depict what’s at stake? Reference Jesus’ words in Mark 8:34-35. Integrity and courage are close kin. Esther’s story reveals both. What does your story reveal?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 3: WISDOM BOOKS (for June 17 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

GOD’S RESPONSE; JOB’S REACTION | JOB 38:1-18; 42:1-6

God answers “out of the storm.” The Lord is not tame. God’s presence is stormy, disruptive, and loving at the same time. Have you found Him so?

Job spoke without knowledge and understanding. Can you identify? Prepare to talk with the group about the arrogance and presumption in the ways we approach God.

Job’s eyes now see the Lord (v. 5). Do you see the Lord? Do you recognize His creative power and purpose in you and in the world? How does seeing make you feel? Does seeing God change how you see yourself? How so?

A PSALM OF DAVID | PSALM 8

Do you believe God made the universe? Why? Do you believe people are the pinnacle of creation? Why?

David is convinced God gives men and women a job to do, a destiny to live out (vv. 58). How is the human race doing generally? How are you doing personally?

The psalm opens and closes with precisely the same words: “The Lord, his name is majestic in all the earth” (vv. 1 and 9). What did David intend by this? Do you see your life and work connected to God from start to finish?

A PSALM OF DAVID | PSALM 23

What is the image God in vv. 1-4? Is your phase of life right now restful and restorative, or hard-pressed? Explain.

The imagery shifts in vv. 5-8. How is the Lord pictured? Can you see yourself an honored guest at a meal hosted by God?

As you walk through life, what sorts of things follow you? Describe in terms like the writer. And whom do you follow? Are you secure or insecure in the world? Where or who is home?

WISDOM’S BENEFITS | PROVERBS 3:1-15

This passage is part of a long section in the book (1:8-9:18) about the superiority of wisdom. What is the promise of v. 2?

Proverbs gives practical advice for godly living. And the text moves in a direct manner. Vv. 3-12 give wise counsel and promise benefits. For instance, v. 3 advises us to always be loving and faithful; then v. 4 promises we'll receive the benefit of favor and a good name. Name some other examples given.

What does v. 13 promise? Have you found it true, or do you aspire to experience it? What do vv. 14-15 claim? Do you agree? What do you most desire? Why?

STANDING IN AWE OF GOD | ECCLESIASTES 5:1-7

Read vv. 1-3. Men and women need to stand in awe of God. Our awe deepens and expands when we worship the Lord, if we worship correctly. When you come to worship God at church, what is your attitude toward Him? What helps increase your awe of God?

Read vv. 4-6. Is a person a fool to promise God genuine worship but then not deliver? Do our mouths sometimes claim to do what we know we'll refuse to do? How good are we at actually following through on giving or serving or showing up or (fill in the blank)?

Read vv. 2 and 6. Do you see wisdom in this advice? Is it hard or easy to obey? Talk can be cheap and empty (v. 7), but fear of God is valuable and meaningful. What does that look like in your daily life?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 4: PROPHETICAL BOOKS (for June 24 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel and the 12 Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)

ISAIAH'S COMMISSION | ISAIAH 6:1-8

What does it mean to be holy? Why do the seraphim sing only of the holiness of God rather than His other attributes?

Why was Isaiah "ruined" or "undone?"

How does the burning coal atone for his sin? What is this a picture of? What is Isaiah's response to God's holiness and forgiveness (v. 8)?

JEREMIAH AT THE POTTER'S HOUSE | JEREMIAH 18:1-10

What theme or idea from these verses stands out to you?

Have you ever considered the role God plays in forming kingdoms and governments and how that affects you as a citizen?

Can you think of any examples of how God has used the governments of man to accomplish His will?

THE IMAGE OF GOLD AND THE FIERY FURNACE | DANIEL 3:1-30

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had the courage and strength of faith to stand for God despite knowing the outcome could be death. How would you respond in their place?

Do you think you could give up your life to honor God? Where do you draw the line when it comes to sacrifice? Is there anything that is too much to offer God?

Because they were willing to give up their lives, God was glorified. How can you glorify God with your life?

JONAH'S ANGER AND THE LORD'S COMPASSION | JONAH 4:1-11

Have you ever been angry with God? Why?

How do you question God in your life? How might you be running from His call or commands, or how have you in the past?

What do these verses tell you about the character of God? How should what you learned of God's character change the way you think or act?

THE DAY OF THE LORD | MALACHI 4:1-6

Why do you think people are uncomfortable with the idea of God's judgment?

Can God be truly loving if He does not act against sin?

Verse 5 mentioned Elijah, but Malachi was written after Elijah's time. Read Matthew 11:11-14. How does this change your understanding of the passage?

Why is it important to be righteous in God's eyes today?
What promises are in these verses for those who follow God?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 5: THE GOSPELS (for July 1 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

JOSEPH AND MARY'S FLIGHT INTO EGYPT | MATTHEW 2:12-23

How did Joseph and Mary know to go to Egypt? Who delivered the information?

Why would King Herod want to kill Jesus (see vv. 2:1-8)?

Why did the Lord inform Joseph and Mary that they must go to Egypt (v. 15)?
Why was it important for things to happen according to prophecy?

HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN | MARK 8:22-26

Jesus performed many miracles. Why was this one important enough to include in Scripture?

What significance is there (if any) to Jesus healing the blind?

After first laying His hands on the blind man, why does Jesus ask him, "Do you see anything?"
Wouldn't Jesus already know?

Why does Jesus tell him not to enter his village?

PARABLE OF THE LOST SON | LUKE 15:11-32

Who is the audience that Jesus delivered this parable and the two preceding parables to (see v. 15:1-2)? What insight does this give us about the intended meaning of the three parables in Luke 15?

What was the younger son saying to his father by asking for his share of the inheritance (v.12)?

What does the phrase “when he came to himself” or “when he came to his senses” mean (v. 17)?

What was the father’s response to his son’s return?
How would you feel if you were the lost son?

Who do you most identify with: the lost son or the older son? Both of them had hardened their hearts to God in different ways. What was the father's heart towards each of them?

RAISING OF LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD | JOHN 11:1-45

What does Jesus mean in v. 4? Why did He stay two days longer where He was before going to Lazarus (v. 6)? What does this tell us about Jesus?

Read Jesus' claim in vv. 25-26. What does this mean? His question in v. 26 is meant for us, too. How would you respond?

Why did Jesus weep (v. 35)? What does this tell us about Him?

Try to imagine the scene in vv. 38-44 as Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. How would you react? What would it be like?

What does v. 45 tell us about Jesus' motives for raising Lazarus? What does that tell us about God's miracles today?

JESUS FEEDS THE 5,000 | LUKE 9:10-17

Where were Jesus' apostles returning from (v. 10)? How would they feel?

How did Jesus respond when the crowd tracked Him down?

What does this mean for how He responds to us?

Why did Jesus tell the apostles to give the people something to eat (v. 13)?

Didn't He know they wouldn't have enough?

What precedes the multiplying of the loaves and fishes?

When Jesus performed the miracle, there was an abundance of bread and fish left over.

What does this tell us about God's provision in our own lives?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 6: THE LETTERS (for July 8 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Acts, Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude

SNAPSHOT OF THE EARLY CHURCH | ACTS 2:42-47

What four things did they devote themselves to according to v. 42?
How are you devoted to these things today?

How do vv. 44-45 describe the community? Where do you see these things happening today? Should we live the same way?

In what spirit did they do these things (v. 46)? Why were they feeling that way?

What was the result of their lifestyle according to v. 47?

THE GREAT LOVE CHAPTER | 1 CORINTHIANS 13

What is the context of Paul's words on love (see 2:31)? What does this tell us about the intended meaning of these beautiful words about love?

What do vv. 1-3 mean? Can you do things for God without loving God?
Do you sense this in your life?

Slowly read aloud vv. 4-7. Which of those qualities sounded unlike you?
Which of them sounded like you?

THE ARMOR OF GOD | EPHESIANS 6:10-18

What does it mean to “be strong in the Lord?” Why do we put on the armor of God (v. 11)?

How do we extinguish attacks from the evil one (v. 16)?

What is the only offensive piece of armor mentioned (v. 17)? Can you think
of some examples of how this works, either from Scripture or your own life?

What does v. 18 exhort us to do? How do these things keep us alert?

Paul closes by asking for prayers for boldness to proclaim the gospel. Do you ever ask for this kind of prayer? Do you ever offer it?

THE GREAT FAITH CHAPTER | HEBREWS 11

What is faith (v. 1)? How is this different from the common definition of faith?

What is the author's point in showing that the various characters throughout biblical history made their decisions "by faith?"

Read v. 13. Think about your own life. Does this sound like how you live, or are you far more comfortable in the world?

In what ways do we live in a better time than those who lived and died before Jesus?

FAITH AND DEEDS | JAMES 2:14-26

What's the answer to the question in v. 16? What good is it to offer good wishes but no practical help?

What are the two kinds of faith described in v. 18? What is the pronouncement about “faith without works” in v. 19?

How do good deeds fit in with faith (see v. 26)? Can you be a follower of Christ and never do anything based on your belief?

Is your faith mostly internal or external? Do your neighbors, coworkers, friends and family know that you believe in Jesus? How do they know?

What are “good deeds” or “good works?”

What were you created for (see Ephesians 2:10)?

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 7: REVELATION (for July 15 sermon)

BOOK COVERED: Revelation

TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS | REVELATION 2:1-7

What does God praise about the Ephesian church?

What does God have against the church?

What are God's instructions in light of their sin (v. 5)?

What are the consequences if they don't listen?

The last mention of the tree of life in the Bible was in Genesis 2:9.

What significance does it hold? Where is it (v. 7)?

TO THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA | REVELATION 3:14-22

Why is God so upset with this church? Would he be upset with you for the same reason?

Verse 17 should ring in our American ears. Why wasn't the church's prosperity to its advantage?

How do you feel about what God says in v. 19? What does He promise if they repent?

THE SCROLL AND THE LAMB | REVELATION 5:1-14

What do you think the scroll represents? Why was no one worthy to open it?

Who was worthy to open it (vv. 5-6)? Who do these pictures represent?

Why did the angels and elders sing when the Lamb opened the scroll?

What is the Lamb worthy to receive?

Read v. 13, then read Philippians 2:9-11. What reality is taking place in Revelation 5:13 that Philippians 2:9-11 predicted?

Imagine yourself in the author's shoes as he saw this vision. How would you feel? How would you respond?

THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA | REVELATION 13:1-10

Why did people start to follow the beast (v. 3)?

Where did the beast get its power from? Who do you think that represents?

According to v. 5, why was the beast allowed to exercise its authority?

Who will worship the beast? Who will not?

What is the “book of life?”

What is the call at the end of v. 10? How does that apply to us today?

THE DEAD ARE JUDGED | REVELATION 20:11-15

Who is seated on the great white throne? What is laid open before the throne?
What is contained in them?

How are we going to be judged? If your name is not recorded in the book of life,
where do you go following judgment?

Who will be judged? Will anyone escape judgment?

How do the realities discussed bring urgency to sharing your faith today? What is at stake?

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