

DAILY BIBLE STUDY SHEET

Daily meditation on the Word of God is imperative to our growth. As the people of God we should commit to reading Scripture every day. There are questions to help prompt your meditation. If you do not have a Bible, please contact the church office and one will be given to you. To locate the passages, use the Table of Contents to find the page number. The number before the colon will tell you the chapter to find. The numbers after the colon are the superscript numbers in your Bible indicating the verses to read.

Monday, May 23rd – Mark 14:32-36; Romans 8:9-15

As we look at the various parts of the Lord's Prayer, we see that some of the language is used in other parts of Scripture. By studying them, we have a clearer picture of what is meant in the Lord's Prayer. Today we look at "Our Father." We talked in the past about "Abba" meaning more than just "Father," but something more tender and intimate, like "Dad" or "Daddy." In Mark, Jesus is facing his impending death and is found praying in Gethsemane. He prays "Abba, Father." What does that teach us about praying to God? How can developing this intimacy with God provide us the strength to endure what lies ahead or experience joy and share it with God? In Romans, Paul talks about being adopted into God's family through rebirth of the Spirit of God dwelling within us. Because of the Holy Spirit, we are no longer slaves to sin, but empowered to put to death our sinful nature. By being God's adopted children, we are also empowered and able to cry out, "Abba! Father!" How does that make you feel? Think about what it means to be so intimate with God that the Spirit of Jesus, God Almighty, lives in you. Spend time in prayer today calling God "Abba," "Dad," or "Daddy," until you become more comfortable with the intimacy of God.

Tuesday, May 24th – Psalm 139

When we pray "Who art in heaven," we need to remember the three definitions of heaven: the closeness of the air around us, the majesty of the stars, moon and sun we see out in space, and the expanse outside the entire cosmos. Remember the old song lyrics that sum up the presence of God, "Nowhere to run to baby, nowhere to hide." As you read Psalm 139, underline or journal about what verses make you pause in wonder, which frighten or excite you. Do you ever think that when you are sinning, God is right there next to you, as close to you as the air? When troubles arrive, do you consider how big our God is, how he is larger than and encompasses the cosmos? What things come to your mind when you begin to realize that God knows *everything* about you, that you can have no secrets from God? How does the intimacy of Abba and the vast ever-presence of God influence how you pray the first phrase of the Lord's Prayer? Today spend time throughout the day seeking God in the air you breathe, in the sky you see, and in the vastness of the cosmos.

Wednesday, May 25th – Matthew 13:24-52; 18:23-35; Luke 12:31-34

Today we look at some of Jesus' descriptions of the Kingdom of Heaven, or as Luke's Gospel says, Kingdom of God. As you read these teachings of Jesus, what common themes do you see? Is there mercy? Is there inclusivity? Is there judgment? Is it a great prize? When you think about all these descriptions/aspects of the kingdom of God, are these the things you are praying for when you say the words, "Your kingdom come"? What do you think about when you pray these words? What images does that phrase conjure up for you? What images and thoughts should come to your mind when you pray these words in the future? How does slowing down at this point and considering what that looks like help you in praying a prayer that honors God and truly seeks his Kingdom?

Thursday, May 26th – Matthew 22:34-40; John 14:15-21

We move to the next phrase of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Will Be Done." What is God's will? What does it look like in practical terms? God's will for us is to love God with all that we are and all that we have. So what exactly does that look like? What does it mean to love and be loved by God? When we can love God obediently and receive God's love (which includes care, nurture and discipline), then we can turn with the same love to our neighbors (Mt. 22:39). So how does this look in your life? Do you really love God by being obedient to his commands (John 14, verses 15 and 21)? Do you really love God by patterning your life like Jesus, dying to self so more of Jesus can live in you?

Consider how you know what God wants. What is entailed in knowing God better (see John 14, verses 20-21)? How did Jesus know God? What part of being in God's will might you be missing? What might need to change? Who holds you accountable and walks with you to help you be in God's will? God's will be done starts with us, before it starts with others. So when you pray, "Thy will be done," what do you need to do to bring your life in accordance with His will?

Friday, May 27th – Matthew 6:5-8

We close by reading what came before Matthew's teaching of the Lord's Prayer. There are two components to prayer that are discouraged. The first is prayer that is done for show and personal admiration (verses 5-6). This is prayer that puts the focus on the *pray-er* rather than on God. Does this mean we should never pray publicly? No! But it does mean that we need to be humble with a heart completely focused on God. The second matter is what we call manipulative prayer—babbling on so that somehow God "owes" us. How many times do you say the same thing over and over when you pray? Prayer should be an honest, reverent conversation with God. How would you feel if during a conversation, someone kept using language that "battered you up?" When children do it to parents, the parents impatiently ask, "What do you want?" They see an ulterior motive and a lack of sincerity. So Jesus provides a format that teaches us how to avoid these things. Read the prayer as written in verses 9-13. How do these words eliminate the attention-grabbing and the manipulation trap? End this portion of the study by *praying* the prayer – taking time during the first section (verses 9-10) to enter into a dialogue with God, asking whether or not you honor God's name; sense His omnipresence; honestly seek His kingdom; and obediently live within God's will. Then stop and listen to God's answer.

Saturday, May 28th – To prepare for Tomorrow's worship, please read Matthew 5:17-20.