

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding an open Bible. The person is wearing a grey button-down shirt. The Bible is open to a page with text, and the person's right hand is resting on the pages. The lighting is warm and focused on the hands and the book.

NEW TESTAMENT

in a year - June

Daily Bible Reading Plan

JUN 1

MARK 10:17-31

DONE

1. What basic wrong assumption was made by this man about salvation and eternal life? Cf. Eph. 2:9. Why did Jesus stress to him the demands of the Law? What was the real hindrance that held him back?
2. Why did Jesus say it would be hard for those with riches to enter the kingdom? Cf. Luke 14:33. Are there any things in my life that are holding up spiritual progress?
3. What promises does Jesus make to those who are willing to renounce earthly wealth to follow him without reservation? What is the meaning of the warning in verse 31? Cf. 1 Cor. 13:3.

JUN 2

MARK 10:32-52

DONE

1. Verses 32-34, 45. What new aspects of his sufferings does Jesus introduce here? Cf. 9:31. Why does he continue to stress this subject? Why were his disciples amazed and afraid, and what ought we to be?
2. What motives do you think were behind the request of James and John, and what was the meaning of Christ's reply to them? Do our aims in life also reveal the same spiritual shallowness? What is the governing principle of true Christian greatness?
3. What were the progressive steps which led Bartimaeus to the recovery of his sight? What can we learn from this incident that will both guide and encourage us when trying to help those who are spiritually blind to find their way to Christ?

JUN 3

MARK 11:1-33

DONE

1. Verses 1-6. When the two disciples were sent out by the Lord on this special errand, in what ways were they put to the test, and how would they benefit from the experience? Do we display the same faith and boldness in our service for Christ?
2. In what way does the fig tree described here typify Israel as a nation? What was Jesus seeking to teach his disciples from this acted parable? Before passing judgment, ought we not first to search out our own hearts? Cf. Rom. 11:20, 21.
3. Verses 20-25. What does Jesus say here are the essential conditions of effective prayer? What more does prayer involve apart from just asking for pleasant things we desire? Cf. Mark 14:35, 36.
4. Why did Jesus refuse to answer the question put to him by the Jewish leaders? What was the point of his question to them? Was he trying to be evasive? What was the root of the trouble, and how is this a warning to us? Cf. Heb. 3:12

JUN 4

MARK 12:1-27

DONE

1. Verses 1-12. How does this parable clarify Christ's unique position in relation to both to God and to the prophets? What does it teach us about the character of the motives that lay behind his final rejection?
2. Verses 13-17. How does this incident reveal both the wisdom of Christ and the insincerity of his questioners? What important truth was Jesus trying to convey to them, and of what relevance is this to us? Cf. Rom. 13:1, 2, 6, 7.

3. Verses 18-27. The Sadducees were obviously attempting to make spiritual truth look ridiculous by interpreting it with the grossest of literalness. How does Christ show them their mistake? On what grounds does he base the certainty of the resurrection?

JUN 5

MARK 12:28-44

DONE

1. Verses 28-34. Jesus pronounced this scribe to be 'not far from the kingdom of God'. What would he have needed to do to enter in?

2. Verses 41-44. Jesus did not deny that the rich gave much, but merely stated that the widow had given more. What does this teach us about the way God measures our giving? How do we match up to this standard? Cf. 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7.

3. The scribes undoubtedly had an intellectual mastery of Scripture and they professed to accept its authority without question. Why then did Christ condemn them and in what way is this a warning to us? Cf. Luke 12:47, 48

JUN 6

MARK 13:1-37

DONE

1. What is foretold here? How are Christ's followers to act when it happens? To whom are they to look for deliverance? Of what are they to beware? What can we learn from such a passage concerning God's sovereignty and man's responsibility?

2. Among the many puzzling details of this passage concerning the coming of the Son of man, what are the facts about which we can be certain? What particular error do we need to avoid?

3. If we are expecting Christ to return, what difference should this make to the way we live our lives, and why? Cf. 2 Pet. 3:10a, 11b, 14.

JUN 7

MARK 14:1-25

DONE

1. Verses 1-9. What some said about the value of the ointment and the need of the poor was perfectly true. Why then did Jesus commend Mary for her extravagance? What does this incident teach us about right priorities in Christian service?

2. Verses 10-21. What do these verses suggest was the motive that lay behind Judas' act of betrayal? Is our own attitude one of condemnation, or are we prepared to share the solemn heart-searching of verse 19?

3. Verses 22-25. Consider the use here of the words 'bread', 'blood', 'my', 'gave', 'take', 'drank', 'covenant'. What light do they throw on the nature and method of salvation? Cf. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

JUN 8

MARK 14:26-52

DONE

1. Verses 26-31. Peter evidently found it much easier to apply the Lord's words to the other disciples than to himself. What wrong attitude does this reveal? Do we ever refuse to accept what the Lord is plainly trying to teach us?

2. Verses 32-50. What causes our Lord's distress? What is meant here by 'the hour' and 'this cup'? Why

was Jesus ready, in a way his disciples were not, for what had to be faced? What exactly was his petition? Was it answered, and if so, how? Cf. Heb. 5:7, 8; Ps. 119:50, 92.

JUN 9

MARK 14:53-72

DONE

The object of the Jewish council was to find legal grounds for putting Jesus to death. It had been previously decided that he must die (14:1), but some ground must be sought, which would justify their action in condemning him, and enable them to secure Pilate's confirmation of the verdict. Cf. Luke 23:1, 2.

1. Verses 53-65. Note that the one definite charge, on which the decision to have Jesus put to death was taken, was his claim to be the Christ. Cf. 15:26. How did Jesus declare that his claim would be vindicated? Cf. Acts 2:32-36. What is your attitude to his claim?
2. Observe the experiences through which Peter passed on this eventful night. What were the contributing factors that finally led up to his denial of Christ? See 14:29, 37, 50, 54. What can we learn from all this that will help us to be prepared for temptation?

JUN 10

MARK 15:1-41

DONE

The main concern of the Jewish leaders now was to get their verdict carried into effect. For this they required the Roman governor's decision, for the Romans reserved themselves the right of capital punishment.

1. Notice the amazing silence of Jesus (verses 4, 5; Cf. 14:60, 61a). Try, also, to picture the mocking of the soldiers, remembering that Jesus had just been scourged, a punishment of brutal severity. Why did Jesus submit without protest to such treatment, and why did God allow it to happen to him? Cf. Phil. 2:8; 1 Pet. 2:22-24.
2. With what words did the passers-by and the chief priests and scribes mock and revile Jesus? What have you seen, which they failed to see, which makes you believe that, nevertheless, he is the Christ?
3. What is the answer to the question in verse 34? What is the significance of the rending of the veil, and what consequent benefit can we now enjoy? Cf. Is. 59:2; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:8; 10:18-22.

JUN 11

MARK 15:42 - 16:8

DONE

1. What deliberate acts of Joseph are mentioned here? Considering who he was and the situation at the time, what qualities of character are shown by his behavior? Which of these qualities is most lacking in my life?
2. Although the women who went to anoint the body of Christ were told that he had risen and they could see the empty tomb, and although they were given the privilege and the command to tell others, yet 'they said nothing to anyone' (16:8). Why was this? What did they still need to give them calmness, conviction and boldness in testimony? Are you at all like them?

JUN 12

MARK 16:9-20

DONE

1. What three appearances of the risen Christ are recorded in these verses? What were the reasons for the rebuke of verse 14? Is our spiritual perception and growth hindered by the same two besetting sins?

Cf. Heb. 3:12, 13.

2. If we truly believe what is recorded in verse 19, what challenge and encouragement are there for us in verses 15 and 20? And what does verse 16 reveal concerning the issue with which the gospel confronts us, when it is preached? Cf. Rom. 10:11-15.

EPISTLE OF GALATIANS

In order for us understand this letter, the particular situation with which Paul was dealing needs to be understood. Paul had preached the gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ to the Galatians, who were of Gentile race. They had welcomed him with enthusiasm, and many had believed (4:14, 15). But they had later been visited by Jewish-minded Christian teachers who had told them that it was not enough simply to believe on Jesus Christ: they must also be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. These teachers had further cast doubts on Paul's apostleship, and had sought to undermine his authority. We can understand with what mingled sorrow, indignation and deep concern Paul refutes the teaching of the legalists, and defends both his own position and the truth of the gospel which he had proclaimed.

The question at issue assumes a different form today, but is none the less vital. Is acceptance with God to be obtained by any effort of ours, or is it, as the gospel declares, the free gift of God's grace through the redemptive work of Christ, to be obtained by faith alone? The enduring value of the epistle lies in the answer given by Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit, to the question.

This book can be outlined as follows:

Introduction (1:1-12)

I. Justification by Faith Declared (1:13 – 2:21)

- Declared through his testimony (1:13-24)
- Declared in Jerusalem (2:1-10)
- Declared in the correcting of Peter (2:11-21)

II. Justification by Faith Defended (3:2 – 4:31)

- Argument based on experience (3:1-5)
- Argument based on the Bible (3:6-14)
- Argument based on logic (3:15-29)
- Argument based on history (4:1-7)
- Argument based on sympathy (4:8-20)
- Argument based on allegory (4:21-31)

III. Justification by Faith Dedicated (5:1 – 6:17)

Conclusion (6:18)

JUN 13

GALATIANS 1

DONE

1. What does Paul say in Verses 1-10: (a) about God; (b) about Christ; (c) about himself; and (d) about the gospel? Note these things carefully, for they lay the foundation on which the epistle rests.

2. Verses 11-24. How does Paul show that the gospel is a revelation of God? What does his personal testimony demonstrate? What significance has this for the Christian?

JUN 14

GALATIANS 2

DONE

1. Verses 1-10. Why does Paul consider his Jerusalem visit significant? What issues were at stake, and what facts were confirmed?
2. Verses 11-21. What were Paul's motives for his opposition to Peter? How does he justify the stand which he took? Try to express in your own words the truths declared in verses 16 and 20.
3. What can we learn from this chapter concerning the principles that should govern Christian fellowship, church unity and ministerial co-operation?

JUN 15

GALATIANS 3:1-18

DONE

1. Unravel the arguments used by Paul in these verses to demonstrate that justification and enjoyment of the gift of the Spirit are by faith in Christ, and not by 'works of the law' (i.e. our own law-keeping).
2. Verses 10-18. Distinguish between law and promise and between works and faith as bases in God's dealing with men. What two benefits has Christ made available for us by his redeeming work?

JUN 16

GAL 3:19 – 4:7

DONE

1. 3:19-24. Paul seems to have made light of the law. How does he state its purpose in this passage?
2. In what way does 3:25-4:7 demonstrate the amazing privileges and position of a Christian? Make a list of them in your own words.

JUN 17

GAL 4:8 – 5:1

DONE

1. According to this passage, what does Christian freedom imply?
2. In what ways is Paul's reaction to the Galatian' condition indicative and illustrative of pastoral concern? Do we know any similar concern for the spiritual well-being of others?
3. Verses 21-31. Paul uses Gen 16 as an allegory. In this picture, what is the position of those 'under law', and what, in contrast, that of believers? What is the point of Paul's quotation of: (a) Isa 54:1 and (b) Gen 21:10-12?

JUN 18

GAL 5:2-24

DONE

Spiritual freedom may be lost in two ways: (a) by false teaching, in this case the teaching of the necessity of circumcision (verse 2-12); and (b) by living to please self (verses 13-15). The secret of victory is to give the Holy Spirit full sway within us by obeying his promptings. He will subdue the flesh, and bring forth in us the fruit of Christ-like living (verse 16-25).

1. Verses 2-12. To be circumcised meant taking the way of the law. What four results would follow if the Galatians did so? What is the way of the gospel?

2. Verses 13-15. How should the Christian use his freedom?

3. Verses 16-24. Seek to grasp the antithesis between 'flesh' and 'spirit'. What should be the attitude of the Christian towards each? Note that the right attitude demands expression in positive action.

JUN 19

GAL 5:25 – 6:18

DONE

1. 5:25-6:10. What is the effect of 'living by the Spirit' in the realm of social relationships? Make a list of what you find, and test your own relation to fellow Christians by it.

2. What, according to 6:11-16, is the core of Christianity? What must be given up in order to embrace it?

3. Gather together from the epistle as a whole the teaching given about: (a) the cross of Christ, and (b) the Holy Spirit.

EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

This epistle, together with Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, form a group known as the 'Prison' epistles, because all four were, as is generally believed, written from Rome when Paul was a prisoner there, as described in Acts 28:16, 30-31. The words 'at Ephesus' (1:1) are omitted in a number of important manuscripts, and this has led many to suppose that the epistle was not intended for Ephesus alone, but for all the churches of the Lycus valley, of which the church at Ephesus was the chief.

It was God's purpose from before the foundation of the world to form a people for himself. But mankind fell into sin and death, and only when Christ came was it revealed that God's purpose was to find accomplishment through the creation of a new humanity in Christ, made up of both Jew and Gentile, reconciled to God and to one another through the blood of the cross, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This 'new man' consists of the whole redeemed community of which Christ is the head, and stands in contrast to the 'old man' whose head is Adam, and which is under the dominion of the world, the devil and the flesh, and is subject to divine condemnation.

This new humanity in Christ is the theme of the epistle. The doctrine of individual salvation by faith, as expounded in Romans and Galatians, is here less prominent, and the apostle dwells rather on the corporate aspects of salvation under the image of the church as the body of Christ, together with the vision of a final oneness of all things in him.

JUN 20

EPH 1:1-14

DONE

These verses deal with God's purpose to form a people for himself and to sum up all things in Christ. Note the reiteration of 'in Christ' or 'in him'

1. In verses 3-6 we are shown this people as conceived in the mind of God. What do we learn here concerning God's choice of us, his gifts to us, and his purpose for us? Do such thoughts immediately move us, as they moved Paul, to say 'Praise be to...God'?

2. In verses 7-14 we are shown this same people in process of redemption from sin. What parts are played in this work by: (a) God the father, (b) God the Son, (c) God of the Holy Spirit? Of what benefits are we assured here? What response is necessary on our part for their enjoyment?

JUN 21

EPH 1:15-23

DONE

1. What can we learn from this example concerning the way to pray for our fellow-Christians? When we do so, what ought to be our chief interest and concern? What are three great spiritual truths that the apostle prays that his readers may grasp?
2. Consider Christ's position as set forth in verses 20-23 in relation to: (a) God, (b) other powers and authorities, (c) the universe, and (d) the church. In the light of these verses has our concept of Christ been big enough?

JUN 22

EPH 2

DONE

1. Verse 1-10. Work out the contrast between man's condition by nature and his position in Christ. What are we said here to be saved: (a) from, and (b) for or to enjoy? How has this amazing change been affected, and how does its enjoyment become ours?
2. Verses 11-22. Before Christ came, Jew and Gentile remained separate - kept apart in the temple courts by a 'dividing wall' (verse 14). How did God deal with this situation through Christ's coming? What is now the position of believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, in relation to: (a) God, and (b) one another? What three metaphors are used in verses 19-22 to show the complete equality of privilege that Gentile believers enjoy in Christ with those of Jewish birth.

JUN 23

EPH 3

DONE

The apostle shows that the union of Jews and Gentiles in one body in Christ was in God's purpose from the beginning, through only now fully revealed to men.

1. Verses 1-13. What are Paul's personal calling and commission in relation to: (a) the gospel, and (b) the Gentiles? Why was he chosen, and how was he qualified, for such service? Do you share his conviction that to suffer in such a cause is something to glory in rather than to be depressed about?
2. Verses 14-21. Trace the progressive stages in Paul's prayer for his readers. What blessings would its full answer bring into our lives? What guarantees that such an answer is more than possible? What ought we also to learn concerning the way to pray for our fellow-Christians?
3. What are the things included in the eternal purpose of God in Christ, in which Paul all and members of Christ's church are called to share? How can we more fully enter into our calling?

JUN 24

EPH 5

DONE

1. Express in your own words the difference between the unity described in 4:3-7, as already existing among Christians, and that mentioned in 4:13-16, which Christians are to seek. How is the first to be preserved and how is the second to be attained?
2. From 4:25-5:2 list the things which must be put away, and those which ought to take their place. Notice also in each case the reason given by the apostle why we must live thus.
3. In what ways does Paul's fourfold description of the life of the Gentile world (4:17-19) apply to the life of the non-Christian today? In contrast, what three principals are to govern the behavior of Christians (4:20-24)

JUN 25

EPH 5:3-6:9

DONE

1. 5:3-20. What are the positive motives and guiding principals of worthy Christian action, which the apostle emphasizes here? Add further items to your list of actions, words and thoughts which ought: (a) to be abandoned, and (b) to be expressed. Test your own life in this light. Why is constant watchfulness so necessary? What help does God give to make such living possible?

2. 5:21-6:9. The opening verses states a governing principal. Consider how it is applied here to the common personal relations of everyday life-particularly those of wives, children and servants. What are the distinctive complementary responsibilities of husbands, parents and masters? Particularly notice in each case how the person concerned is in his (or herself) to Christ.

JUN 26

EPH 6:10-24

DONE

1. Why is conflict inevitable for all who belong to Christ? What is its character? What dangers that beset us are particularly in mind here? Cf. 2 Cor. 10:3-5; 11:3. By what achievement is victory repeatedly described here? How alone may it be achieved?

2. Some interpreters take 'truth' to mean inward sincerity and 'righteousness' to mean integrity and fidelity. Others think 'truth' here means the truth of the gospel, as in 4:21, and take 'righteousness' to mean 'the righteousness of God' given to us in Christ (see Rom. 3:22). Can you find a decisive answer? How alone can we make our standing sure before God, men and the devil? Cf. Rom. 5:1, 8:33, 34; Pss. 15;24:3; 51:6

3. Verses 18-20. Consider what is implied here about Christian praying - concerning its place, its character, its demands, its scope, and its particular interests and requests. Measure your praying by these standards.

EPISTLE OF PHILIPPIANS

DONE

Paul had a special love for the Christians in the church at Philippi (see 1:8; 4:1). From the beginning they had entered into his labors and sufferings with financial support and prayerful personal interest (1:5, 19; 4:15, 16). Shortly before this letter was written they had greatly encouraged him by sending a gift to Rome, where he was a prisoner (4:10, 14, 18). His letter is marked to an unusual degree by personal affection for his readers, and consists largely of an account of his personal experience of Christ, with a special reference to his circumstances as a prisoner.

The church in Philippi seems to have been singularly free from both serious error in doctrine and moral lapses. At the same time there were threatening dangers. A measure of friction had arisen between certain members, and in the earlier part of the letter Paul urges the importance of being of one mind in the Lord. He also warns them against other dangers, and urges them to stand fast in the Lord. It is in this connection that the main doctrinal passages of the letter occur, namely in 2:5-11 and 3:1-21.

The letter is dominated by a spirit of joy and peace, and is an outstanding witness to the power of Christ to lift the person weighed down with the sorrow and suffering of earth to rejoicing and gladness in the Lord.

JUN 27

PHIL 1:1-11

DONE

1. Verses 3-7. Why is the joy with which Paul remembers the Philippians remarkable? Cf. Acts 16:22, 1 Thess. 2:2. How had they made up for the treatment given to Paul at the start? What made him sure that they were now permanently on the right road?

2. Verses 8-11. What twofold preparations for the return of Christ does Paul pray that the Philippians will make? Is it really they who are to make it? Cf. 2:12, 13. How will this preparation be reflected in their character and behavior? Express Paul's petitions for them in your own words, and then use them in your own praying.

JUN 28

PHIL 1:12-26

DONE

1. The things that had happened to Paul must have seemed calamitous to those who loved him. Why did he himself view the situation differently? What lesson about suffering may a Christian draw from Paul's attitude?

2. What was Paul's attitude as a Christian: (a) to life, and (b) to death? What were his reasons for choosing one rather than the other? What were his overriding concerns? Have you faced every possibility that lies before you in the same way?

3. What temptation in Christian service is it clear from this passage that Paul steadfastly resisted? How had others succumbed? What kind of slant might their preaching have had in relation to Paul? In what shape does the same temptation come to us? What should be our chief reason for joy? Cf. John 3:25-30

JUN 29

PHIL 1:27-2:30

DONE

1. Make a list of the things: (a) to be desired, and (b) to be avoided in one's life as a member of a company of Christians. Then pray, and by God's grace determine, that these things shall be: (a) realized and (b) avoided in your own Christian fellowship. Note especially the direct connection between these things and witness to those who are not Christians.

2. What two qualities of personal character and conduct are shown here to be supremely exemplified in the incarnation and the redemptive work of the Son of God? What grounds have we for hoping to be able to have and to express the same qualities? How ought we to act as a result?

3. What is said here or can be inferred about the character and career of Epaphroditus? Note carefully how the two workers mentioned here personally exemplified the virtues considered under the previous study, i.e., they had the mind of Christ. Compare verses 20, 21 with 4, 5; and verses 29, 30 with 5-8. Examine your own life in relation to these standards.

JUN 30

PHIL 3:1-11

DONE

1. What three characteristics of the true people of God are given in verse 3? How far are they true of me?

2. Examine carefully the reasons for 'confidence in the flesh' which Paul enumerates in verses 4-6. Are there not many churchgoers today who are relying on just such grounds as these? What choice does Paul show needs to be made in order to become one?