

Lutheran Church of Australia

How to read the Bible

December

Read through the New Testament

Daily Devotions with thought-starters and prayer

□ Pastor Richard Haar

Get Into It Any Way You Can!

December 1st - Philippians 3:1-21.

Reflect: Being right with God doesn't come by our own efforts but through faith in Christ! This message is the greatest treasure in life - to be trusted and celebrated!

Prayer: "Saviour, help me to treasure your Gospel and to live by it. Amen."

December 2nd - Philippians 4:1-23.

Reflect: Joy is more than mere happiness. It is knowing that we are loved, forgiven, and cared for by Christ. Focusing on Jesus enables us to **rejoice always** in his love.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, give me your healing peace and fill me with your joy. Amen."

December 3rd - Colossians 1:1-29.

Reflect: The Gospel is that - **In Christ**, God has brought us redemption (forgiveness of sins), revealed himself to us (verse 15); and reconciled us to himself, making us holy.

Prayer: "Heavenly Father, thank you for your saving grace in Christ. Amen."

December 4th - Colossians 2:1-23.

Reflect: Through our baptism, we have been buried with Christ and raised with Christ. This means forgiveness, new life, and freedom from human rules and regulations.

Prayer: "Lord, help me to faithfully and joyfully live in you. Amen."

December 5th - Colossians 3:1-25.

Reflect: Only when we become heavenly minded, do we become any

earthly use! Christ's love and forgiveness brings unity, peace and transformed relationships.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to always keep my focus on you! Amen."

December 6th - Colossians 4:1-18.

Reflect: We should undergird our efforts in witnessing with much prayer (verses 2-4 & 12). We also need to be ready make full use of every witnessing opportunity we get!

Prayer: "Lord, may my life and my words faithfully point others to you. Amen."

December 7th - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10.

Reflect: The blessings of **faith**, **hope** and **love** are something we can give thanks for continuously. They also empower us for Christian service and witnessing to Christ.

Prayer: "Gracious Lord, make my life an example of faith, hope and love. Amen."

December 8th - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20.

Reflect: All too often we are influenced by human opinions of us rather than doing what pleases God. Paul urges us to live lives worthy of God, despite any opposition to it.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to honour and please you in all that I do. Amen."

December 9th - 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13.

Reflect: Ultimately what counts most is faith and love (compare verse 6 with 12-13). It is the Lord himself who alone can increase love and strengthen faith. Ask him to!

Prayer: "Saviour, use me as a channel of your saving love in the world. Amen."

December 10th - 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18.

Reflect: We do not grieve as those without hope of life beyond death. On the contrary, although death is still painful, we can face it with the sure hope of the resurrection.

Prayer: "Risen Lord Jesus, help me to face death with faith and hope in you. Amen."

December 11th - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28.

Reflect: Paul's recipe for a God-pleasing life is: Live as people of the day; be always joyful; be constant in prayer; be thankful in everything; and remain open to the Spirit.

Prayer: "Lord, sanctify me through and through and keep me faithful to you. Amen."

December 12th - 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12.

Reflect: To reject the Gospel meanings to embrace the alternative:

God's righteous judgment. But accepting the Gospel means living with a sure hope for eternity!

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, make my faith, love and hope all increase. Amen."

December 13th - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17.

Reflect: Some people will try to deceive us or persecute us so that we give up our faith in Christ. So be on your guard, stand firm and hold on to the teaching of the Gospel.

Prayer: "Lord, thank you for your love, grace, encouragement, and hope. Amen."

December 14th - 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18.

Reflect: Paul warns us against being idle or lazy. Instead we should energetically do what is good, in Jesus' name. Remember: God is faithful, even when we are not!

Prayer: "Lord, help me to faithfully obey you and to serve others. Amen."

December 15th - 1 Timothy 1:1-20.

Reflect: The true mark of spiritual maturity is love, which grows out of a pure heart; a good conscience, and a sincere faith. And to admit to being the "chief of sinners".

Prayer: "Lord, I do not deserve your forgiveness. Thank you for your mercy. Amen."

December 16th - 1 Timothy 2:1-15.

Reflect: When was the last time you prayed for the government and our nation? When was the last time you prayed for the salvation of your fellow citizens? Do it now.

Prayer: "Lord, you want everyone to be saved. Make me want that too. Amen."

December 17th - 1 Timothy 3:1-16.

Reflect: These obligations for Church leaders are what God expects of **every** Christian. Leaders are especially urged to live like this, so they can be good **examples** for others!

Prayer: "Lord, help me to act in ways that encourage others to believe in you. Amen."

December 18th - 1 Timothy 4:1-16.

Reflect: We too are challenged to set an example for other Christians in the way we speak; how we live our lives; the love we show; our depth of faith; and in being pure.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, by your grace and power, help me to grow in godliness. Amen."

December 19th - 1 Timothy 5:1-25.

Reflect: We are to treat our fellow Christians like beloved family

members: with love and respect. The first place for Christian service is within our own family (verse 8)!

Prayer: "Lord, make me a blessing to my family and my congregation. Amen."

December 20th - 1 Timothy 6:1-21.

Reflect: Our world tells us to love money and to find happiness through it. God tells us that the love of money is destructive. Instead strive for godliness and contentment.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, break the control money has over my life. Amen."

December 21st - 2 Timothy 1:1-18.

Reflect: We don't need to be ashamed or frightened about witnessing to Christ. The Spirit **empowers** us to do it (verse 7), and grace **motivates** us to do it (verses 9-12)!

Prayer: "Lord, help me not to be ashamed because I know and trust you! Amen."

December 22nd - 2 Timothy 2:1-26.

Reflect: We might be handicapped (chained), but God's Word isn't! We might be faithless, but God never will be! This gives us the courage to keep on serving God.

Prayer: "Lord, use me in your service despite my weaknesses and sin. Amen."

December 23rd - 2 Timothy 3:1-17.

Reflect: Verses 1-4 sound as though they were straight from today's newspaper! In this sea of uncertainty and godlessness, God's Word alone is a sure guide and anchor!

Prayer: "Lord God, teach me to love and obey your Word. Amen."

December 24th - 2 Timothy 4:1-22.

Reflect: If your life were coming to an end, could you confidently say with Paul, "I have fought the fight, finished the race, kept the faith"? If not, what needs to change?

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, stand by my side and give me strength to follow you. Amen."

December 25th - Titus 1:1-16.

Reflect: Paul lists the qualities needed for Christian leadership in terms of "being" (character), out of which flows the "doing" (behaviour). So too for every Christian.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, grant me a godly character, which acts in love. Amen."

December 26th - Titus 2:1-15.

Reflect: Which piece of advice given here speaks to you the most? What needs to change in your life so you can become a better

witness to the Good News about Jesus?

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to live a self-controlled, upright and godly life. Amen."

December 27th - Titus 3:1-15.

Reflect: The heart of the Gospel is this: That God saved us not because of the righteous things we had done (not because we deserved it), but because of his mercy (grace).

Prayer: "Lord, thank you for your grace and the promise of eternal life. Amen."

December 28th - Philemon 1-25.

Reflect: What strikes you most about Paul's appeal to Philemon? How often do you genuinely allow others to freely make their own choices in their dealings with you?

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, free me from the desire to control or manipulate others. Amen."

December 29th - Hebrews 1:1-14.

Reflect: Jesus is the mouthpiece of God, in fact, he is the "exact representation of God's being". To know Jesus is to know God for who he is. Compare with John 14:6-7.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, God incarnate, help me to trust in you always. Amen."

December 30th - Hebrews 2:1-18.

Reflect: Jesus not only shares the Father's glory, he also shares our humanity. His suffering and death has brought us forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

Prayer: "Saviour Jesus, thank you that I can bring all my troubles to you. Amen."

December 31st - Hebrews 3:1-19.

Reflect: At all times we need to **keep our focus on Jesus!** We daily need to repent and confess our sins to him and to sincerely trust in his forgiveness and his love for us.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to always keep my focus on you. Amen."