

# Lutheran Church of Australia

## How to read the Bible

### August

## Read through the New Testament

Daily Devotions with thought-starters and prayer

© Pastor Richard Haar

*Get Into It Any Way You Can!*

#### **August 1st - John 14:1-14.**

Reflect: There is no other way to authentically know God than through faith in Jesus Christ! Jesus alone reveals the truth about God. He alone can bring us eternal life!

*Prayer: "Lord, thank you that you have prepared a place for me in heaven. Amen."*

#### **August 2nd - John 14:15-31.**

Reflect: Jesus promises to send us **another** Counselor (comforter) - Jesus is himself our counselor and comforter! He comes to us through the Holy Spirit. We are not alone!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank you for the peace your Holy Spirit brings me. Amen."*

#### **August 3rd - John 15:1-27.**

Reflect: Our union with Jesus brings us life and enables us to bear fruit (live God-pleasing lives). We need to remain in him - keep close to Jesus - at all times!

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to remain in you and to embrace your love and joy. Amen."*

#### **August 4th - John 16:1-15.**

Reflect: Jesus tells us here the various functions (roles or work) of the Holy Spirit. Try to list all of these. Why are each of these important? How do they help us?

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank you for the precious gift of your Holy Spirit! Amen."*

#### **August 5th - John 16:16-33.**

Reflect: In this world we have many troubles. Christians can't escape the burdens of life. And yet we also know Jesus has overcome all of these. He can turn grief into joy!

*Prayer: "Lord, when things get tough, help me to trust in your love for*

*me. Amen."*

**August 6th - John 17:1-26.**

Reflect: Jesus prays that we might be united in him and know his joy; that we might be kept safe from evil; that we might become holy (in him) and serve him in the world.

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, keep me united in love to you and your Church. Amen."*

**August 7th - John 18:1-24.**

Reflect: Throughout his arrest and trial Jesus remained calm and dignified. It's almost as if he were in charge. By contrast, all those around him are anxious and confused.

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to remain loyal and true to you in times of danger. Amen."*

**August 8th - John 18:25-40.**

Reflect: Pilate doesn't quite know how to react to Jesus. There wasn't even a specific legal charge against him! In the end, Pilate simply gives in to public pressure.

*Prayer: "King Jesus, you are the truth, help me to listen to you. Amen."*

**August 9th - John 19:1-22.**

Reflect: Pilate most likely intended the notice on Jesus' cross as a political slur. Nevertheless it spoke the truth: Jesus truly was the crucified King of the Jews!

*Prayer: "Crucified Lord Jesus, Son of God, you are my King! Amen."*

**August 10th - John 19:23-42.**

Reflect: What was finished? Jesus' life was finished and with it his mission of saving the world (of paying for our sins; of bringing us back to God.) was also finished!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank you for saving me by your death on the cross. Amen."*

**August 11th - John 20:1-18.**

Reflect: The women thought they had an appointment with a corpse. Instead they had an encounter with the risen Lord Jesus and became the first Christian evangelists.

*Prayer: "Risen Lord Jesus, help me to tell others how I too have seen you. Amen."*

**August 12th - John 20:19-31.**

Reflect: John wrote his Gospel so that we might not have any doubts about the truth of who Jesus is (the risen Lord!) and the salvation he brings to those who believe in him.

*Prayer: "Risen Lord Jesus, I believe, make my faith in you even stronger. Amen."*

□ **August 13th - John 21:1-25.**

Reflect: Peter had denied Jesus 3 times. Now Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to pledge his love and loyalty 3 times. Jesus welcomes us back like this after we fail too.

*Prayer: "Saviour, thank you that you love, forgive and accept me. Amen."*

**August 14th - Acts 1:1-26.**

Reflect: The Holy Spirit was given to empower Jesus' disciples to believe in him and to witness about him to others. Today, we have the same gift and the same calling!

*Prayer: "Lord, help me both to trust in you and to share you with others. Amen."*

**August 15th - Acts 2:1-28.**

Reflect: We today also need to proclaim the good news about Jesus' death and resurrection (by the Holy Spirit's power) in a language [way] others can understand.

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to share the Gospel more and more effectively. Amen."*

**August 16th - Acts 2:29-47.**

Reflect: The first Christians backed up their message about Jesus with a convincing [communal] life-style. We have a lot of room for improvement with this today!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, may my congregation be a community of faith and love. Amen."*

**August 17th Acts 3:1-26.**

Reflect: The apostles continued Jesus' healing ministry. This helped to authenticate their preaching about repentance and faith (about forgiveness and renewal in Jesus.)

*Prayer: "Lord, help me each day to turn to you for forgiveness and renewal. Amen."*

**August 18th - Acts 4:1-22.**

Reflect: Not only did the apostles continue Jesus' healing ministry, they also underwent persecution like Jesus. This only made them more determined to follow Jesus.

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to always obey God rather than men. Amen."*

**August 19th - Acts 4:23-37.**

Reflect: When we go through tough times we usually simply ask that they be taken away. By contrast, the early Christians asked for boldness [strength] to endure it!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to boldly speak your word and serve you. Amen."*

**August 20th - Acts 5:1-26.**

Reflect: You can't pull the wool over God's eyes. We need to be genuine and truthful in our life of faith! How much respect do you show God in your financial dealings?

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to be genuine about my faith in all things. Amen."*

**August 21st - Acts 5:27-42.**

Reflect: The apostles continued to witness about Jesus, despite the danger. In fact they wore their persecution as a badge of honour! Are we as determined to witness as this?!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to witness about you with courage and joy. Amen."*

**August 22nd - Acts 6:1-15.**

Reflect: Note that the early Church had both internal strife (let **us** take heart!) and external persecution, at the very same time that their numbers were rapidly increasing!

*Prayer: "Lord, use me and my congregation to the spread your Kingdom. Amen."*

**August 23rd - Acts 7:1-29.**

Reflect: Stephen charged the Jewish leadership with resisting God throughout the centuries. They had missed the point as to what God was on about. How about you?

*Prayer: "Heavenly Father, help me to always remain open to your grace. Amen."*

**August 24th - Acts 7:30-60.**

Reflect: The climax of Stephen's speech made his hearers so mad they killed for it. His death was itself a witness: It paralleled Jesus' death - praying for his murderers.

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, give me a forgiving heart like Stephen had. Amen."*

**August 25th - Acts 8:1-25.**

Reflect: The Peter and John laid their hands on the Samaritans and they received the Holy Spirit (the Spirit was not just for the Jews!). This was their "Pentecost Sunday"!

*Prayer: "Lord, thank you that your Spirit is available to all people. Amen."*

**August 26th - Acts 8:26-40.**

Reflect: When witnessing about Jesus to others, you need to begin where people are at. Verse 35 tells us that this is how Philip went about his witnessing.

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to be sensitive to the opportunities for witnessing about you. Amen."*

**August 27th - Acts 9:1-22.**

Reflect: God chooses the most unlikely people to spread his message to others - even murderers like Saul. Even people like you and me!

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to remember the power for ministry comes from you rather than from me. Amen."*

**August 28th - Acts 9:23-43.**

Reflect: Such irony! Saul went to Damascus in order to kill Christians. He himself had to flee from there because he was in danger of being killed for his Christian faith.

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me too to speak fearlessly about you. Amen."*

**August 29th - Acts 10:1-23.**

Reflect: What cultural or racial barriers inhibit your witnessing? What would God have to do in order to convince you that the Gospel is for absolutely everyone?

*Prayer: "Lord, fill my heart full of compassion for those who don't know you. Amen."*

**August 30th - Acts 10:24-48.**

Reflect: In Acts 8 the Spirit was poured out on the Samaritans (half-Jews and half-Gentiles). Here the Spirit is also given to the Gentiles (non-Jews). That's us!!!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank you that you are the Saviour of **all** people! Amen."*

**August 31st - Acts 11:1-30.**

Reflect: Isn't this typical?! When mission starts to really happen, other people in the Church start to criticise! The proper response is to praise God for his goodness!

*Prayer: "Lord, help me to more supportive of those who witness about you. Amen."*