

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A first century church in the 21st century”

Bible Reading Plan

Week 4

- Gen 41-42; *Mark 16*
- Gen 43-44; Ps 24; Gal 1
- Gen 45-46; Ps 108; Gal 2
- Gen 47-48; Ps 25; Gal 3
- Gen 49-50; Galatians 4

Leading Services

Announcements: Mike V.

Morning:

Song Leader: Zack V.

Opening Prayer: Richard L.

Lord's Table: Larry L.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Roger H.

Evening: No Services

Song Leader:

Opening Prayer:

Closing Prayer:

Scripture Reading:
(Zephaniah 3.8-13)

Sermons:

AM: Our Blessings & Obligations

PM:



Prayer

The Bible constantly commends prayer. A number of references associate prayer with something else. Consider just a few of prayer's counterparts.

Prayer and faith. “All things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive” (Matthew 21:22). “But he must ask in faith, without any doubting. . .” (James 1:6). Our faith in God is what motivates us to pray. Every request must be made in full assurance of God's ability to grant what we ask.

Prayer and submission. “This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14). We must have as much trust in God's wisdom as we do in His power. That trust leads us to ask only for what is in keeping with His will, and then to graciously accept His response.

Prayer and forgiveness. “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions” (Mark 11:25-26).

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Prayer's Counterparts

Prayer and watchfulness: “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 25:41). It makes no sense to pray “do not lead us into temptation” (Matthew 6:13) and then make little effort to avoid it or perhaps even hasten to places where it is the greatest. 1 Peter 4:7 links sound judgment and prayer.

Prayer and righteousness: “For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12). “Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension” (1 Timothy 2:8). The prayers of those who ignore God’s instruction are an abomination to Him (Proverbs 28:9).

Prayer and gratitude: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Prayer must never deteriorate into a mere wish list. There is so much for which we need to praise God and give thanks!

Prayer and encouragement: “Now he was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart” (Luke 18:1). Constant communion with our heavenly Father keeps us focused and able to overcome doubt, fear, and discouragement. “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

- Frank Himmel

Noteworthy News (Current events in the light of Scripture)

Rich Man, Poor Man

Elon Musk now ranks as the world’s richest person, with a total worth of \$188.7 billion, moving ahead of Jeff Bezos, Amazon CEO, whose worth is almost \$187 billion (nypost.com). We do not begrudge their wealth or covet their riches (Col. 3:5).

The world measures wealth in hard currency, physical assets, and material possessions. Jesus teaches us to measure wealth in spiritual and eternal terms. “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26)

Neither Musk, Bezos, nor other uber-wealthy people are Christians. Their souls are lost. When measured by that reality, they are poor, indeed. They need the riches of God’s mercy and grace in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:4, 7; Col. 2:2). One is impoverished without the “unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8).

Musk has been married three times, and the woman he lives with is not his wife. Sound familiar (Jno. 4:17-18)? Bezos was married for twenty-five years before he and his wife divorced in 2019. Jesus spoke clearly about the permanency of marriage and the sin of divorce without the cause of fornication (Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9). Rich or poor?

Accepting the “reproach of Christ” was greater wealth to Moses than the “treasures in Egypt” (Heb. 11:26). After all, riches are deceitful (Mk. 4:19). If we are “rich in this present age,” we must not “trust in uncertain riches but in the living God” who richly blesses us. Such faith compels using wealth to do good, give, and share, thereby laying up treasures in heaven (1 Tim. 6:9, 17-19; Matt. 6:19-21).

Christians are the richest people on earth.

- Joe R. Price.
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