



Read Your Bible

By Mr. Alexander S. Brown, Minister

One of our continuing prayers for our church is that we would be a church that grows in health and strength; that we would be a church that is constantly maturing and developing, and knowing Christ better and better. A Christian can never get to a point where we have enough of Christ, or to a point when we understand the glories of the Gospel enough. If we ever think that we have reached that point, then we are in some spiritual trouble.

The glory of Christ and the wonders of the Gospel are things that should grasp our hearts and our imaginations every day of our lives. They should be things that captivate us, and consume us – things which we hunger and thirst after.

This book is the source of our spiritual strength and health.

But how do we do that? And what if we find ourselves not wanting to do that? Well, as I mentioned last month, we must commit ourselves to pray. If you long to know more of Christ, pray that God would show you more of Christ. If you long to know more of the wonders of the Gospel, pray that God would open the eyes of your heart that you might see more and more the depth of sin and the heights of the love of God shown to us in Christ. And if you don't long for these things, pray that God would change your desires, and ask that He would enliven your heart and your desires and your affections that Christ would captivate you above all things.

However, prayer is not all that we must do in order to cultivate and feed our hunger for Christ and for the Gospel.

We must accompany our praying with Bible reading. It can be so easy for us to take our Bibles for granted. The Bible has become so cheap and easily available that we can begin to lose a sense of its importance, but we must not let our familiarity with the Bible draw us into complacency. This book is the source of our spiritual strength and health.

In Deuteronomy we are reminded about the importance of our Bibles when in chapter 8 God reminds the people about His gracious provision for them as they wandered in the wilderness –

“He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.” (v. 3)

As Israel went through the wilderness they were humbled by God, and shown their utter reliance upon His revelation, and it is a lesson that we would do well to heed.

At the back of every monthly newsletter we have set out a reading calendar to try and help you establish a regular habit of Bible reading. Now that calendar does not suit everyone, but it's a good start. If you have not got in to the habit of regular Bible reading, or find it hard to keep up with the four lists, start small – try one or two of the lists and then work from there. Remember a little Bible reading every day is better than no Bible reading every day! I strongly encourage you to *tole lege* – pick up and read, you will find it good for your soul.

(Continued on the next page)

February Calendar

Sundays

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship

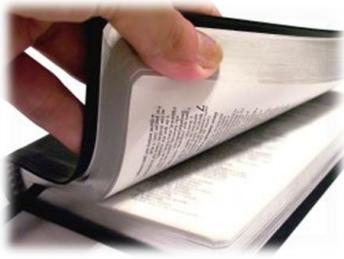
Children's Church, Nursery available

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- Wed 2/1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Ladies Bible Study
(9:30 a.m., GIPC;
child care provided)
 - Wed 2/1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Midweek Prayer Meeting
(6:30 p.m., GIPC)
 - Sat 2/4 Congregational Hymn
Singing Workshop (9:00-
12:00 at IPC—see pg. 3)
 - Sun 2/5 Communion (AM)
 - Tue 2/7 “Beyond the Pages”
Book Group for Women
(2:00 p.m., Taylor home)
 - Sat 2/11 “Second Saturday”
Men's Breakfast &
Bible Study
(8:00 a.m., Brown home)
 - Sun 2/12 GIPC's Annual Meeting
of the Corporation
(see pg. 3)
 - Tue 2/14, 21, 28
Ladies Bible Study
(6:30 p.m., Dr. Diane
Bowen's office)

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Read Your Bible

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Below are eight tips on Bible reading from J. C. Ryle:

1. Begin reading your Bible this very day.

The way to do a thing — is to do it; and the way to read the Bible — is actually to read it! It is not merely meaning, or wishing, or resolving, or intending, or thinking about it — which will advance you one step. You must positively read. There is no royal road in this matter, any more than in the matter of prayer. If you cannot read yourself, you must persuade somebody else to read it to you. But one way or another, through eyes or ears — the words of Scripture must actually pass before your mind.

2. Read the Bible with an earnest desire to understand it.

Do not think for a moment, that the great object is to turn over a certain quantity of printed paper, and that it matters nothing whether you understand it or not. Some ignorant people seem to imagine, that all is done if they advance so many chapters every day, though they may not have a notion what they are all about, and only know that they have pushed on their bookmark ahead so many pages. This is turning Bible reading into a mere ritual form. Settle it down in your mind as a general principle, that a Bible not understood — is a Bible that does no good! Say to yourself often as you read, *“What is this all about?”* Dig for the meaning like a man digging for gold.

3. Read the Bible with child-like faith and humility.

Open your heart — as you open God’s book, and say, *“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening!”* Resolve to believe implicitly whatever you find there, however much it may run counter to your own desires and prejudices. Resolve to receive heartily every statement of truth — whether you like it or not. Beware of that miserable habit into which some readers of the Bible fall — they receive some doctrines because they like them; and they reject others because they are condemning to themselves, or to some relation, or friend. At this rate, the Bible is useless! Are we to be judges of what ought to be in God’s Word? Do we know better than God? Settle it down in your mind — that you will receive all and believe all, and that what you cannot understand — you will take on trust. Remember, when you pray — that you are speaking to God, and God hears you. But, remember, when you read Scripture — that God is speaking to you, and you are not to “dictate,” but to listen!

4. Read the Bible in a spirit of obedience and self-application.

Sit down to the study of it with a daily determination that you will live by its rules, rest on its statements, and act on its commands. Consider, as you travel through every chapter, *“How does this affect my thinking and daily conduct? What does this teach me?”* It is poor work to read the Bible from mere curiosity, and for speculative purposes — in order to fill your head and store your mind with mere opinions; while you do not allow the book to influence your heart and life. That Bible is read best — which is practiced most!

5. Read the Bible daily.

Make it a part of every day’s business to read and meditate on some portion of God’s Word. Private means of grace are just as needful every day for our souls — as food and clothing are for our bodies. Yesterday’s food will not feed the laborer today; and today’s food will not feed the laborer tomorrow. Do as the Israelites did in the wilderness. Gather your manna fresh every morning. Choose your own seasons and hours. Do not scramble over and hurry your reading. Give your Bible the best, and not the worst part of your time! But whatever plan you pursue, let it be a rule of your life to visit the throne of grace and God’s Word every day.

6. Read all of the Bible—and read it in an orderly way.

I fear there are many parts of the Word which some people never read at all. This is to say at the least, a very presumptuous habit. *“All Scripture is profitable.”* [2 Timothy 3:16]. To this habit may be traced that lack of well-proportioned views of truth, which is so common in this day. Some people’s Bible-reading is a system of perpetual ‘dipping and picking’. They do not seem to have an idea of regularly going through the whole book.

7. Read the Bible fairly and honestly.

Determine to take everything in its plain, obvious meaning — and regard all forced interpretations with great suspicion. As a general rule, whatever a verse of the Bible seems to mean — it does mean! Cecil’s rule is a very valuable one, *“The right way of interpreting Scripture is to take it as we find it, without any attempt to force it into any particular theological system.”*

8. Read the Bible with Christ continually in view.

The grand primary object of all Scripture, is to testify of Jesus! Old Testament *ceremonies* are shadows of Christ. Old Testament *judges* are types of Christ. Old Testament *prophecies* are full of Christ’s sufferings, and of Christ’s glory yet to come. The first coming and the second; the Lord’s humiliation and His glorious kingdom; His cross and the crown shine forth everywhere in the Bible. Keep fast hold on this clue, if you would read the Bible aright! ▪

Annual Corporation Meeting

The Session of Golden Isles Presbyterian Church has set Sunday 12th February as the date for the Annual Corporation Meeting, immediately following the Morning Service. Our main item for business is the re-election of our current non-elder Trustees (Jerry Harrell, Diane Chilton, and Wes Currier), who have all confirmed that they are willing to be put up for re-election, and the election of one additional non-elder Trustee.

The Session will accept nominations for the vacant seat until the end of January.

If there is someone that you would like to nominate, having asked them if they are willing to serve, please submit your nomination directly to me — either hand me a note to the effect, or email me directly at abrown@gipc-pca.org.

In the first week of February the Session will review the nominations and agree upon a slate to be presented to the congregation, which will be presented on Sunday 5th February. We will then vote on Sunday 12th February.

What do Trustees do? Trustees, working under the authority and oversight of the Session, manage the civil activities and affairs of the Corporation (i.e., the congregation). That is to say, they are responsible for the buying, selling and mortgaging of property, holding the title to the property of the church, and the management of any special funds entrusted to them. However, the Trustees cannot do anything without the approval of the Session, and they cannot buy, sell or mortgage property without the authority of the Corporation.

Who is qualified to be a Trustee? Unlike the Office Bearers in the church (Elders and Deacons), there are no specific qualifications except that the Trustee must be a member of the congregation, in good standing, aged 18 years or older.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Your brother,

Alexander Brown.

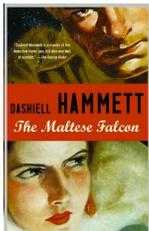
Women In the Church (WIC)

Bible Study— *“Meeting Jesus: Women of Faith from the New Testament”*

The Ladies Bible Study meets on Tuesday evenings (6:30 p.m. at Dr. Diane Bowen’s office) or Wednesday mornings (9:30 a.m. at GIPC, with child care available). Both groups are studying the same material. (Study guides—\$10.)

“Beyond the Pages” Book Group

For February we will read “The Maltese Falcon,” by Dashiell Hammett. This book was also chosen for “The Big Read.”* The Brunswick library is offering free copies of the book, as well as an excellent study guide.



“The Maltese Falcon is not only probably the best detective story we have ever read, it is an exceedingly well written novel.” - The Times Literary Supplement (London)

“Hammett’s prose is clean and entirely unique. His characters are as sharply and economically defined as any in American fiction.” - The New York Times

“A treasure worth killing for. Sam Spade, a slightly shopworn private eye with his own solitary code of ethics. A perfumed grafter named Joel Cairo, a fat man named Gutman, and Brigid O’Shaughnessy, a beautiful and treacherous woman whose loyalties shift at the drop of a dime. These are the ingredients of Dashiell Hammett’s coolly glittering gem of detective fiction, a novel that has haunted generations of readers.”

The Book Group will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 7th at Sue Taylor’s home. Please note the time change for February.

—Sue Taylor, Book Group Chair

*The Big Read is a program designed to restore reading to the center of American culture, and operates in partnership with libraries and art associations across the country. Local Info: www.goldenisesarts.org

Finance Committee

GIPC Monthly Update— Loan Balance

Loan Balance 12/31/11	\$840,102
Principal Paid YTD through 1/31/12	\$ 2,595
Loan Balance	\$837,507
January Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,654
Principal	\$ 2,595
Total Payment	\$ 5,249

Men in the Church

“Second Saturday” Breakfast and Bible Study—

February 11th, 8:00 a.m.

All men are invited to gather for fellowship at the Brown home on Saturday morning, February 11th. The current topic of discussion is *biblical manhood*. (Led by Mr. Brown.)

Significant Sessional Actions

Approval was given for Mr. Brown to preach at the annual “Kirkin’ O’ the Tartan” service at Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, GA on Sunday, 13th May 2012.

“Congregational Hymn Singing Workshop”

Saturday, February 4, 2012

9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. at
Independent Presbyterian Church,
Savannah

Info: 912-236-3346

Featuring Dr. Paul Jones, Organist/Music
Director of Tenth Presbyterian Church,
Philadelphia

Topics: *What are hymns, and why should we sing them? What is “good” church music? How can we sing psalms and hymns, and sing them well?*

“Let the sound of His praise be heard!” -Ps. 66:8

Connect with us!

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FEBRUARY

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

Family Worship

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Genesis	33	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		35, 36	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		39	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		40	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		41	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		42	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		43	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		44	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		45	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		46	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		47	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	48	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16	49	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18	Exodus	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		11, 12*	<input type="checkbox"/>

*through 12:21

FEBRUARY

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

Family Worship

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Mark	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		Luke	1:1-38
15	1:39-80		<input type="checkbox"/>
16	2		<input type="checkbox"/>
17	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
18	4		<input type="checkbox"/>
19	5		<input type="checkbox"/>
20	6		<input type="checkbox"/>
21	7		<input type="checkbox"/>
22	8		<input type="checkbox"/>
23	9		<input type="checkbox"/>
24	10		<input type="checkbox"/>
25	11		<input type="checkbox"/>
26	12		<input type="checkbox"/>
27	13		<input type="checkbox"/>
28	14	<input type="checkbox"/>	

FEBRUARY

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

Private

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Esther	9, 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		1	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	14	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17	16, 17	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19	19	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21	21	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	
23	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	
24	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25	25, 26	<input type="checkbox"/>	
26	27	<input type="checkbox"/>	
27	28	<input type="checkbox"/>	
28	29	<input type="checkbox"/>	

FEBRUARY

"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job 23:12)

Private

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Romans	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		I Corinthians	1
15	2		<input type="checkbox"/>
16	3		<input type="checkbox"/>
17	4		<input type="checkbox"/>
18	5		<input type="checkbox"/>
19	6		<input type="checkbox"/>
20	7		<input type="checkbox"/>
21	8		<input type="checkbox"/>
22	9		<input type="checkbox"/>
23	10		<input type="checkbox"/>
24	11		<input type="checkbox"/>
25	12		<input type="checkbox"/>
26	13		<input type="checkbox"/>
27	14		<input type="checkbox"/>
28	15	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Week beginning JANUARY 29

Psalms 79:9

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for Your name's sake!

Week beginning FEBRUARY 5

Psalms 84:10-12

For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in You!

Week beginning FEBRUARY 12

Romans 14:7-8

For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

Week beginning FEBRUARY 19

Romans 15:1-2

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Week beginning FEBRUARY 26

Psalms 103:1-4

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.