



Happy New Year!

By Alexander S. Brown, Minister

WELCOME to 2011! I hope that you all enjoyed a very good time over Christmas and New Year, and that you are looking forward to what 2011 holds for you and your families. I know that Sara, Ada and I had a very enjoyable festive period, which included a trip to cold and snowy St. Louis. Needless to say, we are glad to be back in the warmth of the South!

Every year many of us begin the New Year by making a series of resolutions. For some of us it will be to lose the extra pounds that we put on over Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year. For others it will be a resolution to self-improvement – to learn a language, or to read more, or take up a new hobby. These are all good and noble things to resolve, but at the beginning of this year I would like to issue a challenge to you all – a challenge to get back to basics and to resolve to immerse yourself in the Word and Prayer this coming year.

I urge you to make 2011 a year of the Word and Prayer.

Both these things are things that we all know we *should* be doing as Christians, but are things that we can find surprisingly difficult to actually do. Prayer and Bible Study can easily be squeezed out of our schedules by the sheer busyness of life, and so good intentions can quickly fade away to be replaced by an underlying guilt about our failings. However, I would urge that you take the fresh start of the New Year as a good opportunity to start again, and resolve to make 2011 a year of the Word and Prayer.

TO THIS END I have included *Robert Murray M'Cheyne's Annual Reading Calendar* readings for January in this newsletter. Every month this will be included, in a cut-out bookmark form, so that you can easily keep it in your Bibles and have it for easy reference. Now you are not required to use it, but if you currently do not have an Annual Reading Calendar that you use, or if you are looking for a new one for 2011, I heartily recommend this one, which will take you through the Old Testament once during the year, and through the New Testament and Psalms twice.

Now, M'Cheyne's Calendar will be a little intense for some people, and that is okay. There are many other good annual reading programs out there and I would be happy to share some recommendations. But whether you use the M'Cheyne calendar, or another system, I urge you to be systematically reading through the Bible throughout this year.

As we saw in the Prayer Meeting last year, Psalms 1 and 2 make it clear that we will always meditate on something – it is just the natural way our heart works – and these psalms teach that we have two options. Either we can meditate on the wonder of God as He is revealed in the Gospel, or we can meditate on the many idols that fight for our attention. Either we will meditate on God, or we will be preoccupied by our circumstances, our wants and our desires.

(Continued on the next page)



January Calendar

Each Sunday—

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.,
Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Each Tuesday—

Men's Breakfast Bible Study
Sandcastle Café, 7:30 a.m.

Each Wednesday—

Midweek Prayer Meeting
GIPC, 7:00 p.m.

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| Sun | 1/2 | Guest Minister Rev. Tommy Park, RUF/UNF—
SS, AM Worship
Rev. Karl Dortzbach,
PM Worship |
| Tue | 1/4 | "Beyond the Pages" Book Discussion Group for Women; Taylor home, 6:00 p.m. |
| Thu | 1/6 | Mission Committee Meeting Huddleston home, 6:30 p.m. |
| Sun | 1/9 | Communion Sunday
New SS Class—"Overview of Church History" (9:30 a.m.) |
| Tue | 1/11 | Ladies Bible Study— <i>Psalms</i> (Lesson 11)
Brown home, 6:00 p.m. |
| Tue | 1/18 | Ladies Bible Study— <i>Psalms</i> (Lesson 12, conclusion)
Brown home, 6:00 p.m. |
| Mon | 1/17 | Stated Session Meeting IPC, 6:30 p.m. |
| Thu | 1/20 | B & G Committee Meeting GIPC, 7:00 p.m. |
| Sun | 1/23 | State of the Church Meeting (following AM Worship) |
| Thu | 1/27 | WIC Leadership Team Meeting, Dr. Bowen's office, 5:00 p.m. |

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Happy New Year!

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I urge you to make 2011 a year of meditation on God and the Gospel. I urge you to ponder, relish, imagine, apply, and rehearse God's truth until it becomes real to your heart, and transforms your attitude and behavior. Immerse yourselves in the Word of God, and see how it changes you and, as Tim Keller says, *"leads to blessedness, stability and the ability to grow in all circumstances, freedom and independence from the world's ways, and confidence and assurance in our relationship to God."*

In addition to the Reading Calendar another new feature will be appearing in your monthly newsletters as an aid to meditation – *Fighter Verses*. Every month four or five verses (one per week) will be featured in the newsletter, and it is my hope that many of us will use them as an effective way of storing up Scripture in our hearts. Memorization of the Bible is an important part of meditation upon it and so I hope that you will use these Fighter Verses as an aid to hiding the Word in your heart. Let's just not get to know Scripture by studying it, let's commit to memorizing it and thereby making it part of ourselves.

THE SECOND THING that I would like us to commit to for 2011 is to be people of prayer. We know personally the importance of prayer in our lives, but prayer is also essential to the growth and development of our church. I am sure that you have all heard me use the illustration of C. H. Spurgeon, the great 19th Century preacher, that prayer is the Engine-Room of the church, driving our ministry. But he was not alone in identifying the crucial place of prayer in the health and growth of the church – E. M. Bounds wrote that

"The home church on her knees, fasting and praying, is the great base of spiritual supplies, the sinews of war, and the pledge of victory in her dire and final conflict. Financial resources are not the real sinews of war in this fight. Machinery in itself carries no power to break down heathen walls, open effectual doors and win heathen hearts to Christ. Prayer alone can do the deed."

I ask you to commit to 2011 being a year of prayer. Praying for ourselves, but also driving the ministry of GIPC with our prayers. Let us ever be found before the Throne of Grace asking for the Lord's blessing upon our church – asking for more people, asking for a clearer understanding of the Gospel and its implication, asking for power in the preaching, asking that He would melt hard hearts so that we would see people converted through our ministry. I urge you to commit yourselves to prayer, without it our church is dead-in-the-water.

Of course, one of the most important ways that you can commit yourselves to the Word of God and prayer this year is to make sure that you take advantage of all our meetings at church. For those of you who currently do not come to the Sunday evening services, now is a good time to make a change and resolve to bracket your Lord's Day with public worship. Come and be blessed as we submit ourselves to the reading and preaching of the Word, and to corporate prayer, at the close of the Lord's Day. We also have our weekly mid-week Prayer Meeting, where we gather to study the Word and then join together in corporate prayer for the ministry of our church. If you have not yet come and been a part of this time of fellowship, I invite you to come along this year.

Beloved, the essence of what I am urging is that you resolve to make this New Year a year of hunger for God. Let us resolve to search and scour our Bibles that we might know Christ better, and worship Him more fully. Let us resolve to store the Word in our hearts, that we would carry the Scripture with us wherever we go. Let us resolve to be found praying often – both in our closets and when gathered together. Let us resolve to be joined together as often as we can with the church of Christ seeking to hear what God would say to us through the reading and preaching of the Word. Let us resolve to pursue God in 2011. ▪

Building and Grounds Committee

The B & G Committee will be hosting a Work Day at GIPC in late January to complete the work of prepping and painting several of the classrooms and bathrooms. Watch for details.

Significant Sessional Actions

- Approval was given for Mr. Alexander Brown to preach at Redeemer PCA in Brunswick, GA on the evening of Friday 4th February.
- Approval was given for Rev. Tommy Park (RUF, University of North Florida, Jacksonville) to preach at GIPC in Mr. Brown's absence on Sunday 2nd January.
- Mrs. Sara Brown, Mrs. Dorothy Cason, and Mrs. Connie Reed were approved as members of GIPC by Transfer of Letter.
- Mr. Jonathan Cason was approved as a member of GIPC by Profession of Faith and approved to receive the Sacrament of Christian Baptism.
- The State of the Church Meeting was scheduled for Sunday 23rd January, immediately following the morning worship service.

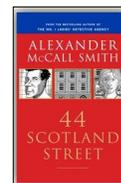
Women In the Church (WIC)

"Beyond the Pages"

Book Discussion Group

—Meeting the first Tuesday of each month at Sue Taylor's home, 6:00 p.m.

The next book to be discussed, on January 4th, is "44 Scotland Street" by Alexander McCall Smith. *This is open to all women.*



Weekly Bible Study:

Psalms: Songs Along the Way

by Kathleen Buswell Nielson.

The Bible Study for Women will resume on Tuesday, January 11th (Lesson 11) and conclude on January 18th (Lesson 12).

Meet at the Brown home, 6:00 p.m.



Bible Reading Plan

Robert Murray McCheyne's calendar for daily readings is a concise course whereby one can read through the whole Bible once a year—the Psalms and the New Testament twice.

Instructions

Please note the four cut-outs below (based on M'Cheyne's calendar) to be used as Bible place-keepers: two for daily family worship and two for secret (private) readings, corresponding to the day of the month.

- 1) The head of the family should previously read over the chapter indicated for the family worship and mark two or three of the most prominent verses upon which he may dwell, giving a few explanatory thoughts, and asking several simple questions.
- 2) The portions read, both for family and private reading, would be greatly illuminated if they were preceded by a moment's silent prayer: *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law"* (Psalm 119:18).
- 3) Let the conversation at the family meals frequently turn upon the chapter read; thus every meal will be a sacrament, being sanctified by the Word and prayer (1 Timothy 4:5).
- 4) Let our private reading precede the dawning of the day. Let God's voice be the first we hear in the morning. Mark two or three of the richest verses and pray over every word and line of them.
- 5) As you meet believers through daily activities, when an easy opportunity offers itself, refer to the chapters read that morning. This will be a blessed exchange for those idle words which waste the soul and grieve the Holy Spirit of God.
- 6) Above all, use the Word as *a lamp to your feet and a light to your path*—your guide in perplexity, your armor in temptation, your food in times of faintness.



Cut out the four Bible place-keepers below to mark each of the daily reading sections.

JANUARY

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him." (Matthew 17:5)

Family Worship

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Genesis	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		9, 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		32	<input type="checkbox"/>

JANUARY

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him." (Matthew 17:5)

Family Worship

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Matthew	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
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24		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Mark	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		3	<input type="checkbox"/>

JANUARY

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him." (Matthew 17:5)

Private

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Ezra	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Nehemiah	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Esther	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		8	<input type="checkbox"/>

JANUARY

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him." (Matthew 17:5)

Private

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	Acts	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
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12		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
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14		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
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24		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Romans	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		3	<input type="checkbox"/>



Fighter Verses

I have stored up Your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. —Psalm 119:11

Fighter Verses are short passages of Scripture selected to equip the believer in the fight of faith. Golden Isles Presbyterian Church is dedicated to memorizing a Fighter Verse each week because memorizing together adds accountability and encouragement.

Why Memorize the Bible?

Memorization works on our hearts to cultivate Christ-like character. It helps us to resist temptation, and it enhances our prayer and worship. Here are a few more reasons—straight from Scripture.

Memorizing . . .

- Is one of the most effective ways to “meditate” on the Word of God “day and night” (Joshua 1:8).
- Helps us treasure God’s Word in our hearts that we might not sin against Him (Psalm 119:11).
- Allows us to meditate on the Lord in the “night watches” (Psalm 63:6) so that we can regard all His ways (Psalm 119:15).
- Helps us in evangelism, making the Word of truth readily available to build our own and other’s faith—since “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

—Source: *The “Fighter Verses” program of intentional Scripture memory available through Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, MN; Rev. John Piper, Pastor for Preaching and Vision. All Scriptures are from the English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV).*

Tips for Memorizing . . .

Say the verse out loud. Say it the same way each time. Say it one phrase at a time. Say it again and again. Ask the Holy Spirit for understanding and seek to apply the verse to your life.

 Cut out the Scripture Memory Verses below. A key to memorizing is “Review, Review, Review.” Be sure to state the reference before and after.

Week beginning JANUARY 2

Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations.

Week beginning JANUARY 9

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

Week beginning JANUARY 16

Romans 11:34-36

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? Or who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Week beginning JANUARY 23

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Week beginning JANUARY 30

Psalms 56:3-4

When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.
In God, whose Word I praise, in God I trust;
I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?