

Reading Schedule for July 3-9, 2017

After feeling led of God to speak on Psalms, it seemed right that we would focus on the book during the month of July through the Reading Schedule. You will see why after spending time in Psalms this week. My plan is to progress through the whole book this month, even though we will only be able to read 31 different Psalms

July 3 – Psalm 14: “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.” (v.1) There are two reasons that I have chosen this Psalm for our reading today. The first is this growing sense of rejection to the evidence of God’s existence. To even suggest that there is intelligent design behind our creation for some is unthinkable. But evidence is everywhere that God is alive and well. He has shown himself through creation. He stirs within us a consciousness that there is a Being bigger than ourselves. And he has expressed himself so marvelously through his Son Jesus Christ. An atheist truly is foolish. Secondly, I am also drawn to verse 3, that says that no one can match up to God’s standard. This verse is used in Romans 3 as a part of the Apostle Paul’s teaching regarding the need for grace and the very reason Jesus came to forgive us of our sins. All have sinned and fall short and fall short of the glory of God. No one except Jesus has lived a complete, holy and perfect life . . . sinless. But because we all fall short, we must turn to Jesus for forgiveness and salvation. There is a sense of the Gospel in this Psalm as well. How do you respond to this Psalm? Let encourage you to close your day with Proverbs 3.

July 4 – Psalm 16: “You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (v.11) I was going to cite verse 10, because this is the one that is quoted in the New Testament regarding the resurrection. David said constantly that God did not leave him in the grave. Many people fear death because they can neither control it nor understand it. As believers, we can be assured that God will not forget us when we die. In fact, the one who died on our behalf did not see decay. David is thinking of the marvel of having a relationship with God now and the assurance of eternal pleasures forever. Jesus, the resurrected one, has supplied this for you and me. How does this Psalm encourage you? Let encourage you to close your day with Proverbs 4.

July 5 – Psalm 19: “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.” (v.14) This verse has been a part of my prayers over the years. It helps me to set my heart right and to dedicate my day to the Lord. I want my words and my thoughts to be pleasing to God. I need his help for this to happen. But I also love this Psalm because it talks about the marvel of creation and the nourishment of God’s Word. There is so much in this Psalm that I could point out, but I will let you contemplate God’s message to you through it. My main point is to encourage you to begin each day determined that God’s ways will guide you in what you say and how you think. How do you respond to that challenge? Please read Proverbs 5 as well.

July 6 – Psalm 24: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (v.1) Too often we think the things we possess belong to us, whether it is the house we live in, or the car we drive, or the money we possess, it is ours; we have earned it. But this is clear, that everything, including the breath in your nostrils, is from God. Because the earth is the Lord’s, we are just stewards and caretakers of

all the good things that he allows us to enjoy. We must give proper management to his resources. Even as Jesus shared a parable about the talents, which was a measure of money, he was challenging us to be good stewards. Remember the words of Jesus that will be announced to us when we enter eternity – Well done good and faithful servant. We are a servant of the Lord, and everything we enjoy and possess are his. How does this shape your thinking about the materialistic world we live in? Let encourage you to close your day with Proverbs 6.

July 7 – Psalm 27: “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.” (v.14) You will recognize this Psalm from my message on June 25th. It is how I ended that sermon. I did not plan to preach on this Psalm during the series this summer, but I should. It is a marvelous Psalm from beginning to end. The last verse is the most challenging to me. So much of this Psalm is uplifting to me. But this truth is stretching to me. I am called to be patient and wait on the Lord. This will take determination and eager fortitude. I live in a world of instant gratification and find myself becoming impatient so easily. But verse 11 is stated right – “Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path.” When I pray that prayer, I am asking God to develop in me his characteristics. I know that God is patient. What stands out to you in this Psalm? Please read Proverbs 7 as well.

July 8 – Psalm 32: “Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.’ And you forgave the guilt of my sin.” (v.5) Verse 3 & 4 reveal to me what happens in my life when I hold things in. If I hide my sin, or pretend it isn’t there, it doesn’t go away. Confession really means to agree with God. God already knows every thought, every attitude and every behavior that you have. Acknowledging your sin and confessing your susceptibility to selfishness is what God uses to turn you in a new direction. Confession goes hand-in-hand with repentance. This Psalm is very powerful and has great possibilities to work in your life. For example, verse 8 says, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.” Ask him to teach you his truth. Seek him through his Word and you will learn what it means to obey him. Do you agree? How do you respond to this Psalm? Also read Proverbs 8 at the close of day.

July 9 – Psalm 37: “Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” (vv. 3 & 4) This is a long Psalm, but these two verses are my favorites. I’ve especially thought about this idea of delighting in the Lord. It comes up so many times in Scripture. When I am focused on God’s way, then my prayers are attuned to his will. Jesus said if we abide in him, we can ask anything in his name and he will provide it. But abiding in the Lord means to be in step with him. As I commit my way to him and I trust in him, my prayers will be in line with his will. And we know if we pray according to God’s will, we have what we have asked of him. The more you know the Lord and absorb his Word, the more you will know what he really desires for you. He wants the best for you, and you can learn to pray that, which will lead to God answering according to your request. What else stands out to you in this marvelous Psalm? Also read Proverbs 9.

Prayers: Praying for our country always seems appropriate, but during our annual celebration of Independence Day, I think it becomes even more front and center. Pray for our country and our leaders.