

BIBLE READING NOTES FOR NOVEMBER 2022
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You will find reading the Bible rewarding and encouraging,
but reading the Bible is not always easy!

These guidelines may help you.

Before you read each passage, ask God to speak to you through His Word.

Set aside a special time each day to read the Bible, and stick to it!

Make use of your Bible index to find readings – every Bible has a contents page.

Pray that what you have read will help you live according to God's wishes.

November 1st 2Corinthians 10:12-18

Sometimes a person may become conceited and proud because they have a certain gift. Such pride is foolish and unwise. Those who have that gift in lesser measure may very well have some other gift to a greater degree. Besides, all gifts are not a measure of our own strength or cleverness, but rather tell of the generosity of the Giver of all gifts, God.

November 2nd 2Corinthians 11:1-6

The apostle's behaviour may have seemed a little strange to some of his critics, but that was due entirely to concern for the spiritual welfare of the believers. We have a natural abhorrence of all that appears to be narrow-minded. This leads us to be more sympathetic to the views of others. Such tolerance can all too often lead to corruption of the truth, and eventually, to a loss of faith. We take every care against everything that may endanger our physical health. We ought to take even greater care of our moral and spiritual health.

November 3rd 2Corinthians 11:7-15

From its very beginning the Church has been assailed by those who claim to be leaders, but who have deviated from the truth that is in Christ. The result of this is that, instead of leading people to Christ as they claim, they in fact lead the innocent and ignorant astray. There are many who sincerely expound their own views of the faith and of the manner of Christian living. Their teaching must always be measured against the Truth that is Christ.

November 4th 2Corinthians 11:16-33

The false teachers of whom we read yesterday support their claims by referring to their own personal training or experience. Paul reminds his friends in Corinth of his own past ancestry and of what he has endured for the sake of Christ. What a catalogue of suffering is there. And what an inspiration to those of us who are so easily discouraged and frustrated. The value of our Christian faith depends on how much we are prepared to suffer for it.

November 5th 2Corinthians 12:1-6

In these verses Paul is referring to himself, and to some spiritual experience he had known. What that experience was we will never know. Only when a man or woman has known a similar experience can he or she grasp what Paul is meaning here. But, whatever that experience may have been, it was sufficient to convince Paul beyond all doubt of the reality of the risen Christ.

November 6th 2Corinthians 12:7-10

Paul suffered from some physical complaint. No one is really sure what it was. It was a source of pain and he wanted to be rid of it. But his prayers were not answered – at least, not as he wanted. A lesser man would have turned away from Christ because of this, but Paul has given the grace to link his spiritual experience and his physical complaint together.

November 7th 2Corinthians 12:11-18

Paul is very conscious that all he has been saying might seem boastful. He does not intend to boast; his sole concern is that others may come to share his own experience of Christ. The Church must constantly seek new members to join its ranks. Why? To increase the total strength of the Church? To increase the financial resources of the Church? To show the world that we are a ‘successful’ Church? Or do we want to win new members for no other reason than that God loves them for what they are in themselves – children of God?

November 8th 2Corinthians 12:19-21

What would Paul think of the fellowships and churches of which we are members if he were to visit us? We may be satisfied that our congregation is going well, but how does Christ see it? After all, it is His Church.

November 9th 2Corinthians 13:1-4

In our modern age the concepts of wrong, guilt, moral responsibility and punishment have been so devalued that those words have almost lost their meaning, but they have not been devalued by God. In the eyes of God, wrong is still wrong. Mercy is not a privilege we may demand; it is a gift only God may bestow.

November 10th 2Corinthians 13:5-10

Paul urges the Corinthians to ‘put themselves to the test’ in order to find out whether they were living in faith or not. Then he adds, ‘Surely you know that Christ is in you?’ Those who are in a living relationship with Christ need not fear the judgement; those who are not in that living relationship with Christ have been judged already.

November 11th 2Corinthians 13:11-13

The letter ends with the well-known words of the three-fold blessing. Surely we can desire nothing better for loved ones and friends than that they may know the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Those words are perhaps so well known to Christians that we think little of them. Should a man possess the whole world, yet lack such grace, love and fellowship, then he is indeed a poor man. If a man possesses those three, even though he have nothing else, then he is a man greatly to be envied.

November 12th Exodus 18:13-27

Moses received both comfort and practical advice from Jethro. Often an outsider sees what is required more clearly than those deeply involved in the situation. Assistants were appointed to aid Moses in the many burdens he had to bear. There is a corporate responsibility in the Church of God.

November 13th Exodus 19:1-8

The Israelites had been learning to trust God. When God is revealed to any one it is not for that person’s benefit alone but that they might become an agent of God’s Divine Will. When

God called Moses it was to lead the people of Israel out of slavery. It is an important stage in our spiritual pilgrimage when we pass from following to helping.

November 14th Exodus 19:9-15

God is a God of purity, and those called to serve God must be as pure as it is possible for mortal beings to be. We can never be pure as God is pure. That is why there was a boundary on the mountain that they dare not cross. No matter how pure a person is, they are still a sinner at heart, and so separated from God. Reconciliation with God comes only through Christ.

November 15th Exodus 19:16-25

We can know two kinds of fear. There is the fear that comes through a lack of trust in God; one feels at the mercy of great forces. Such fear disappears when one learns to trust God even in dangerous situations. There is another fear that comes upon the person of faith when they are aware of the presence of God. It is not fear in the sense of terror, but rather the sense of awe and wonder at the majesty of God.

November 16th Exodus 20:1-17

The ten commandments are often seen as a limit on human freedom. They were meant, instead, as a guide to the people of God. Those who would serve God must serve on God's terms, and not on their own, and here is God giving some outline of the kind of life that honours God. Such laws can be no more than a guide because the relationship between God and His people is based on grace and love, not on legalism or formal obedience.

November 17th Exodus 20:22-26

From the beginning man has felt the need for special places to worship God. They may be special in that they are convenient meeting places. Or they may be special because, for some reason, there is a real sense of God's presence there. In this natural longing for a place of worship, there lay a real danger – it could so easily become a place to be worshipped. This is so obvious in our own time – many worship the church building rather than God Himself. When man begins to shape, design and beautify, he becomes more impressed by his own handicraft than by the handiwork of God.

November 18th Exodus 21:1-11

Many worry about the link between religion and politics. Some say that there should be no link at all, and so they try to live a 'religious' life without being involved in the affairs of this earthly life. Others try to keep religion separate from the rest of life. If faith means anything at all, then it must be reflected in our daily affairs.

November 19th Exodus 21:12-27

Moses turns to violence in society. First, we must distinguish between accidental and deliberate violence. Second, deliberate violence must be punished. Committing a crime is like incurring a debt. A debt must be repaid, either by the person incurring it, or by another paying for him. Similarly, a crime must be 'repaid', and the payment must be borne either by the person who committed the crime, or by someone else bearing it for him. Third, the 'repayment', punishment, must be appropriate to the crime. There must be no wild vengeance, but 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'.

November 20th Exodus 22:1-15

Yesterday we read of how crime could only be expiated through punishment. Today we read of something rather similar; the repayment of those who have suffered loss either through accident or deliberate violence. Those who suffer such loss have a right to be recompensed by the person who was responsible for their loss. But the compensation must not exceed the loss.

November 21st Exodus 21:28-36

If the bull was not known to be dangerous then the owner incurs only the loss of his bull. However, if he knew that the bull was dangerous but did nothing to ensure the safety of others, then not only was the bull destroyed, but the owner was punished as well. Not many own bulls nowadays, but the underlying principles of this passage are still relevant. We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and care of others.

November 22nd Exodus 23:1-9

How easy it is to be swayed by the apparent importance of a rich man, and to think little of a poor man. These are all the matters of which we are guilty day after day. The Christian has a particular responsibility to watch out for such faults in his dealings with others.

November 23rd Exodus 23:20-33

How often the promises and instructions of God go together. God instructs us that we might enjoy what God has promised. We do not experience God's promises unless and until we are obedient to God's instructions.

November 24th Exodus 24:1-11

God is beyond the range of human vision, yet there are times when God can be so real that it is though God is actually seen. Moses and the others may not have seen God as God is to be seen in glory, yet they were so conscious of God's Divine presence. One can think of other times when God was revealed to others; Isaiah in the Temple, the Mount of Transfiguration. Such vision is perhaps the greatest blessing any man or woman may have in this life, yet it is not necessary for faith.

November 25th Exodus 32:1-6

Aaron was one of those who saw God on the mountain yet here he allows himself to be led into a great sin. Moses was their spiritual leader, and in his absence the Israelites turned away from God. They had not yet developed their own spiritual faith. Each of us must accept Christ as our only spiritual head, and not be dependent on other humans. But notice how easily man tries to make a 'god' for himself. Such a 'god' might be wealth, or power, some hobby, or ambition; good in themselves, but absolutely no use as 'gods'.

November 26th Exodus 32:7-14

We so emphasize the love, mercy and forgiveness of God that we forget that God is capable of other emotions such as anger. Many think that God should not be angry. This is because our human anger is, so often, unjustified. But there are times when it is right to be angry at injustice or inhumanity. In this instance God is angry because God's people have so deliberately turned, not in ignorance but in blatant disobedience. If we have confidence in God's mercy, so also should we fear God's anger.

November 27th Exodus 32:15-24

Aaron's moral and personal weakness could not have been more clearly exposed. Here is a man who has given most valuable service to his nation, but when he was left in control he failed miserably. There are some who make excellent assistants but who can never be in a

position of final responsibility. We so easily criticize our leaders in both Church and state – but leadership is a gift given to few.

November 28th Exodus 32:25-35

The spiritual crisis of which we have been reading these past few days is followed by a time of recommitment and of rooting out. In every generation the people of God are infiltrated by those who do not really share their faith. It may be that some have entered the church without fully realising the obligations. Others may have failed to develop their initial faith. The presence of such persons weakens the Church and prevents it from being what it ought to be. In every generation the call goes out – ‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’

November 29th Exodus 33:1-6

To preserve our physical health we do all we can to avoid infection or injury. We are not so careful about moral or spiritual danger. We must learn to recognize anything that weakens our resolve or provokes some spiritual crisis in our lives. We will all make mistakes but there is no need to walk into danger. There are times when we must deny ourselves certain *pleasures*, not because they are wrong, but because of their potential danger.

November 30th Exodus 33:7-11

When the Israelites set up camp, the sacred Tent of the Presence would be placed outside. There is great significance in this. God is ever with God’s people, yet in another sense God is ever separated from them. In our worship and prayers we must not regard God as being so different that God is apart from us. Yet, on the other hand, we must never reduce God to our level as though God were a part of us. There is a difficult balance to maintain here.