



## Weekly Scripture Readings March 3, 2024

*John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, instructed us to "stay in love with God" by worshipping, studying scripture, attending Communion, fasting and through public and private prayers. In order to help facilitate daily scripture reading and prayer, this insert contains readings for each day as well as a prayer for the week. The scriptures from Monday through Wednesday reference the readings for the prior Sunday, and Thursday through Saturday reference the scriptures for the following Sunday. We hope that these daily scripture readings and prayer will help you to deepen your relationship with God as we seek to live into our call to be disciples of Christ.*

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### **Romans 4:13-25 (NRSV)**

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore, his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

### **Mark 8:27-38 (NRSV)**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' And they answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.' He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the

whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

### **Psalm 19 (NRSV)**

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.  
Day to day pours forth speech,  
and night to night declares knowledge.  
There is no speech, nor are there words;  
their voice is not heard;  
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.  
In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,  
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.  
Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them;  
and nothing is hidden from its heat.  
The law of the LORD is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the decrees of the LORD are sure,  
making wise the simple;  
the precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;  
the fear of the LORD is pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the LORD are true  
and righteous altogether.  
More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey,  
and drippings of the honeycomb.  
Moreover by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.  
But who can detect their errors?  
Clear me from hidden faults.  
Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless,  
and innocent of great transgression.  
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

## **Exodus 20:1-17 (NRSV)**

Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore, the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

### **Daily Scripture Readings**

#### **Monday, February 19**

Psalm 46  
Mark 16

#### **Tuesday, February 20**

Psalm 57  
Luke 1-3

#### **Wednesday, February 21**

Psalm 58  
Luke 4-6

#### **Thursday, February 22**

Psalm 62  
Luke 7-9

#### **Friday, February 23**

Psalm 65  
Luke 10-12

#### **Saturday, February 24**

Psalm 82  
Luke 13-15

**Prayer for the week:** Artist of souls, you sculpted a people for yourself out of the rocks of wilderness and fasting. Help us as we take up your invitation to prayer and simplicity, that the discipline of these forty days may sharpen our hunger for the feast of your holy friendship, and whet our thirst for the living water you offer through Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Next Sunday:** The scripture readings for Sunday, March 10, are Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24 and John 3:14-21. Next week's message, "Will you nurture these persons...." and will be on the passage from 1 Thessalonians. Next week is a contemporary service and we will also receive communion.

**Questions to help you prepare:** What does it mean to be in a community as a church? What does that look like at its best? At its worst? How do we nurture people new in the faith? What is your role in that? How are you being nurtured in the faith?