



# Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of  
Niles

Volume 1 / Issue 9

WHAT WE ARE DOING? AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO?

IN THIS ISSUE

## WELCOME

This week's reading is Psalm 72 (ESV).  
Titled, Give the King Your Justice  
OF SOLOMON.

72 Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the royal  
son!<sup>2</sup> May he judge your people with  
righteousness, and your poor with  
justice!<sup>3</sup> Let the mountains bear  
prosperity for the people, and the hills,  
in righteousness!<sup>4</sup> May he defend the  
cause of the poor of the people, give  
deliverance to the children of the  
needy,  
and crush the oppressor!<sup>5</sup> May they fear  
you while the sun endures, and as long  
as the moon, throughout all  
generations!

<sup>6</sup> May he be like rain that falls on the  
mown grass, like showers that water  
the earth!<sup>7</sup> In his days may the righteous  
flourish, and peace abound, till the  
moon be no more!<sup>8</sup> May he have  
dominion from sea to sea, and from the  
River<sup>[b]</sup> to the ends of the earth!<sup>9</sup> May  
desert tribes bow down before him, and  
his enemies lick the dust!<sup>10</sup> May the  
kings of Tarshish and of the  
coastlands render him tribute;  
may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring  
gifts!<sup>11</sup> May all kings fall down before  
him, all nations serve him!<sup>12</sup> For he

delivers the needy when he calls, the  
poor and him who has no helper.<sup>13</sup> He  
has pity on the weak and the needy,  
and saves the lives of the needy.<sup>14</sup> From  
oppression and violence he redeems  
their life, and precious is their blood in  
his sight.<sup>15</sup> Long may he live; may gold  
of Sheba be given to him! May prayer  
be made for him continually, and  
blessings invoked for him all the  
day!<sup>16</sup> May there be abundance of grain  
in the land; on the tops of the  
mountains may it wave; may its fruit be  
like Lebanon; and may people blossom  
in the cities like the grass of the  
field!<sup>17</sup> May his name endure  
forever, his fame continue as long as  
the sun! May people be blessed in  
him, all nations call him  
blessed!<sup>18</sup> Blessed be the LORD, the God  
of Israel, who alone does wondrous  
things.<sup>19</sup> Blessed be his glorious name  
forever; may the whole earth be filled  
with his glory! Amen and Amen!<sup>20</sup> The  
prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are  
ended.

This is a royal psalm, praying that the  
heirs of David's line (beginning with  
Solomon) might have success in the task  
that God has assigned the king (namely,  
ruling God's people well, protecting the  
poor and needy and bringing blessing to  
all nations of the earth.)

This also explains why Christian witness,  
when it is true to the messianic picture  
of the Bible, is so much more than the  
basic gospel proclamation and also  
fosters social justice and the moral  
transformation of whole societies.  
Solomon is setting out not only the goal  
of his reign but for the reigns of his  
heirs.

**These have not been the easiest times  
and some of us might be struggling on  
account of the imposed isolation.  
Maybe it's the lack of fellowship or  
maybe the loss of a steady income is  
bearing down. As a church family we  
are there for you. If you have need(s)  
please reach out and let us know how  
we can be of assistance.**

**We have begun a virtual Bible Study on  
Wednesday evenings from 6:30pm –  
7:30pm over Zoom. Please feel free to  
join us. Information follows.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/7570102283?pwd=YTI1ZUs3M2JiZWdOTEpyaVlobkFIOTog>

Or via audio connection  
312-626-6799, US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 757 010 2283#  
Password: 498061#,



The Watchman's Notes  
Offering biblical messages, perspectives  
and views on  
Biblical & moral issues and current  
events.

A Ministry of Chuck Vitel, Pastor – Bible  
Teacher

*"For thus the Lord said to me: Go, set a  
watchman; let him announce what he  
sees." Isaiah 21:6 [ESV]*

May 7, 2020

"KNOW YOUR BIBLE"

The next two Issues of The Watchman's  
Notes for this week and next week will  
focus on The Word of God [The Bible].  
Issue #8 is "Know Your Bible" [The  
Storyline of Redemption] and Issue #9 is  
"How God gave man the Bible."

Christian leaders around the world  
declared 2020 as the *"Year of the  
Bible."* No one knew at the time of this  
declaration that a global pandemic was  
just around the corner. But God did.  
Today, we are in the midst of the  
*Coronavirus [COVID-19] pandemic* busy  
doing our best to deal with it. Just a few  
months ago, people had other things on  
their mind.

Only God knew how important this year  
was going to be. One Christian  
Missionary leader said, *"This could be  
the greatest opportunity of our lifetime  
to see people reengage with the Word of  
God (The Bible) and come to Jesus."* The  
timing is nothing less than providential.

The biggest obstacles to people getting  
into the Bible are either they don't have  
the time or they don't understand it, so  
why bother. Now people have the time,  
because of the social distancing and  
stay-at-home orders [Quarantine],  
people are reading the Bible again and  
some for the first time.

Perhaps, it's time to *"Be still and listen  
to His voice."* *Read and study the Word  
of God.*

(The Storyline is Redemption)

*"When your words came, I ate them;  
they were my joy and my heart's  
delight,*

*For I bear your name, O LORD God  
Almighty." (Jeremiah 15:16)*

Let me begin by telling you something  
about myself that you may not know. I  
became a *Born-Again believer* in Jesus  
Christ in March of 1975 – I became a child  
of the One True King – I've been saved,  
I've been changed, and I've been set  
free. And ever since I became a child of  
the One True King, I've been studying,  
teaching and preaching the Bible. This is  
all by God's "Amazing Grace." Over the  
decades I have cultivated a great love  
and respect for the Bible, the Word of  
God, God's Truth. Not only have I have  
read the Bible, studied it, taught it, but I  
also have worked hard to apply the  
teachings to my life. So, in this issue of  
*The Watchman's Notes*, I want to talk to  
you about the Bible.

The word "Bible" comes from the Latin  
and Greek words meaning "Book," a  
fitting name, since the Bible is "the  
Book" for all people, for all time. It's a  
Book like no other, in a class by itself.  
The Bible is actually a "*Library of 66  
Books*" and 1,189 Chapters. The English  
Bible is comprised of two Testaments [or  
Covenants, the OT & NT], with a total of  
66 different books, 39 in the OT and 27  
in the NT.

40 different human authors contributed  
to the Bible, *inspired of God*, to write  
over a period of about 1500 years. The  
Bible was written from three different  
continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe and  
written in different places and at  
different times - in the wilderness, in a  
dungeon, tents, hillsides, palaces,  
prison and an island. The Bible was  
written in three languages: Hebrew,  
Aramaic and Greek. The authors were  
kings, fishermen, priests, government

officials, farmers, shepherds, and even  
a doctor.

The subject matter includes hundreds of  
controversial topics – and yet the biblical  
authors spoke with harmony and  
continuity with one theme from Genesis  
to Revelation.

The Bible has been read by more people  
and published in more languages than  
any other book. There have been more  
copies produced of its entirety and more  
portions and selections than any other  
book in history. The Bible has  
withstood the attacks of its enemies and  
the criticism of many people for many  
generations. No other book has been so  
analyzed, dissected, scrutinized or  
vilified. No other document of antiquity,  
or book, or writings has the *manuscript  
reliability* of the Bible – or can even begin  
to approach its reliability and  
trustworthiness.

From all of this diversity - comes an  
incredible, supernatural unity, with a  
common theme woven throughout.  
"There is one unfolding story throughout  
the Bible: "God's Redemption of  
mankind through Jesus Christ." Jesus is  
the central character in the Bible – the  
whole Book is really about Him.  
Redemption is hinted at in the beginning  
– (Genesis 3:15) -and developed as the  
main theme, coming to a climax with the  
Advent (coming) of Christ. Jesus Christ is  
the fulfillment of both religion and  
spirituality.

Jesus is the One to whom we are  
accountable – which all religions point  
to. Jesus is the One to whom we need to  
connect – which true spirituality points  
to. Jesus is more than a historical figure  
– in fact, He is more than a man, or some  
Prophet. He is God in the flesh, and His  
coming to earth as a human baby (the  
Incarnation) was the most important  
event in the history of the world. God  
Himself became a man (took upon  
Himself the flesh of man) in order to give  
us a clear, understandable picture of  
who He is. He is the Redeemer of the  
world – the One true Messiah.

People often ask: *What is God like?* He is like Jesus; Jesus is God in human form (John 1:14; 14:9).

Since I have given you the "Storyline of the Bible" – *the Redemption of Mankind through Jesus Christ*" – let me define, "What is Christian Redemption?" What does it mean to be redeemed by the blood of our Lord Jesus? The word "Redeem" means to *purchase back* or to *buy back* – or to regain possession again by payment of a stipulated price. It means to *ransom* or to *liberate* or *rescue* from captivity or bondage – or from any liability or obligation.

(Psalm 25:22) says, "Redeem Israel, O God, from all their troubles." Theologically speaking: *Redeem* mean to *rescue and deliver from the bondage of sin and the penalties of God's violated law or standards*. The Apostle Paul says in (Gal. 3:13) – "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

In other words, Christian Redemption means: that Jesus Christ paid the penalty of our sins. He made *amends* for us – He serves as an equivalent or offset for our sins – He *atoned* for our sins - or compensated for the forgiveness of mankind's sins. In Christian Theology: *atonement* is the reconciliation of God and humankind through Jesus Christ, who *covered our sins* through His blood or death on the Cross. The Bible tells us that everyone in the world is in need of "Redemption." Because our natural condition or nature is characterized by sin, guilt and disobedience. (Romans 3:23) says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory [the standards] of God." However, Christ's redemption has freed us from that sin and guilt.

(Romans 3:24) adds these words – "We are justified [declared righteous] freely by His grace – through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." His death on the Cross was in exchange for our life. The Bible is very clear on this matter – "that redemption is only possible through His blood – that is by His death." (Col. 1:14).

(Ephesians 2:8-9) tells us: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

That my friends is "The Storyline of what the Bible is all about!" The Bible, *the Word and Truth of God*, can be trusted; it is reliable, accurate, and sufficient – the total answer to man's total need. It is in the Holy Scriptures that we find the answers to life's ultimate questions: Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? What is the purpose of my existence?

(2 Tim. 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NIV) tell us - "All Scripture is inspired of God (breathe out by God) and is useful for many things" and "no scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. The thought and the revelation are divine in origin and the expression of the communication is human – Holy men of God spoke as they were carried along [superintended] by the Holy Spirit of God."

I. Old Testament (1445—400 B. C.) – Starts with the Creation of the universe and closes about 400 years before the First Coming (Advent) of Jesus Christ. There are 39 separate Books in the Old Testament:

- Law > 5 Books – (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
- History > 12 Books – (Joshua – Esther)
- Wisdom > 5 Books – (JOB – Solomon)
- Major Prophets > 5 Books – (Isaiah – Daniel)
- Minor Prophets > 12 Books – (Hosea – Malachi)

The 39 Books of the O.T. focused on the history of Israel and the promise of the coming Savior We can divide the whole Old Testament this way: Genesis 1-11 > God creates the human race. Genesis 12 to Malachi 4 > God creates the Hebrew race.

In the Old Testament, we learn that God prepared His chosen people, the Hebrew

race, the nation of Israel to be the instrument to bring salvation to the world. And God gave Israel two important promises:

- [1] God would send His Messiah, the Anointed One as the Redeemer – he would be a King from the line of David.
- [2] God would establish a new covenant or agreement to restore His relationship with His people.

The time between the last writings of the Old Testament and the appearance of Christ is known as the "Intertestamental" (or "between the testaments") period. It lasted from the prophet Malachi's time (around 400 BC) to the preaching of John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus (about AD 25).

Because there was no prophetic word from God [spoken or written] during the period from Malachi to John, this period of time is known as the "400 silent years." Though God was silent during these years – God was still at work in the world and history continued on. The events of the *Intertestamental Period* set the stage for Jesus Christ and had a profound impact on the Jewish people.

The "400 years of silence" of the *Intertestamental Period* were broken by the greatest story ever told—the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Between the two Testaments - From the moment that Adam and Eve sinned, God has been working out His Plan of Redemption. *Even through Israel's failures, God's plan remained intact. The New Testament Era begins*, and it tells the story of how hope came, not only for the Jews but for the entire world. Christ's fulfillment of prophecy was anticipated and recognized by many who sought Him out. The stories in the N.T. of the Roman centurion, the wise men, and the Pharisee Nicodemus – all show how Jesus was recognized as the Messiah by those from many different cultures.

II. New Testament (AD 45 – AD 95)  
A total of 27 Books are found in The New Testament - written from approximately A.D. 45

[Book of James] to approximately A.D. 95 [Book of Revelation]. The New Testament was written in “Koine Greek” (common Greek, the everyday form of the Greek language in the first century A.D.)

- Gospels > 4 Books - (Matthew through John)
- History > 1 Book - (the Book of Acts),
- Pauline Epistles > 13 Books (Romans through Philemon)
- General Epistles > 8 Books (Hebrews through Jude)
- Prophecy > 1 Book - (Revelation)

That is the Bible in a nutshell. Let me summarize it for you.

- God creates man. (Genesis 1 & 2)
- Man rebels. (Genesis 3)
- God initiates redemption. (Genesis 12 – Malachi)
- God accomplishes redemption. (New Testament)
- God gives birth to the church. (Acts)
- God completes redemption. (Revelation)

If we imagine the Bible as a great sanctuary and every book in the Bible as a seat in the sanctuary, then we can say wherever you go in the Bible, you’ve got a great view because you can see Jesus everywhere – in every book – all 66 of them.

And in the Book of Revelation (the last Book in the Bible) it is summed up with these words – “*He’s the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*” Jesus is the Theme of the Bible. The whole book is about Him. If you know the Bible, but you don’t know Jesus, you’ve missed the whole point.

*Of His kingdom there will be no end. He shall reign forever and ever and ever.  
King of Kings and Lord of Lords.  
Hallelujah! Amen.*

*“Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this Book.” (Revelation 22:7)*

(Revelation 22:19-21(NIV) adds. “*And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*”

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.*

Pastor Vitel’s message this week not only describes and defines the Bible but it should serve as a challenge to us. He quotes an evangelist and author who is leading the “Year of the Bible” initiative. Regarding what we are currently facing today, in 2020, that “*Only God knew how important this year was going to be,*” and, “*This could be the greatest opportunity of our lifetime to see people reengage with the Word of God (The Bible) and come to Jesus.*”

These are certainly unique times we’re living in. As we’re all sheltering at home, let’s take this opportunity to spend extra time with our Bibles. We should take inventory of our relationship with God and his Word. It should be our desire to glean encouragement and gain the tools necessary to share the gospel with those we come in contact.

Reading the Bible is our most immediate exposure to God. We all know the transformative power of sitting under preaching, but it’s God’s Word where the power lies. As we have had to change our routines these past weeks, let us develop a new routine where we pick up our bibles, or our devices, and study God’s Word.

Borrowing from *The Finish Line*, Al Nuzikowski wrote, “If you are going to witness to others, you need to know the truth. How will you know the truth unless you spend time in His book? Read, ponder and apply it to your life.”

“And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, ‘Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.’” Acts 15:7

We need study in order to understand God’s Word. I think sometimes we, as I heard it described, try to “overstand” God’s Word. What that means is that we go into the Bible to find solutions to our problems with God, our friends, family, and ourselves. We go through the Bible collecting data, attacking it and in doing so, we miss the true intent of the scriptures and we fail to understand its purpose and goal.

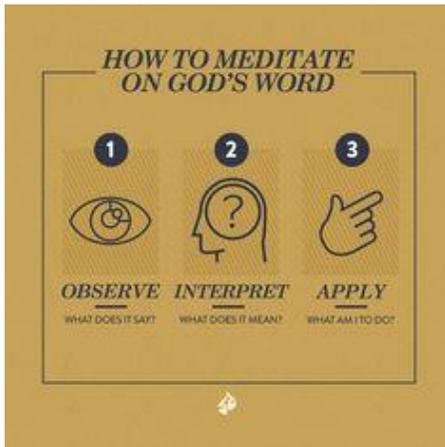
The key to understanding is the Holy Spirit. Borrowing from Al again, “The Holy Spirit was called the ‘helper’”. We need a “helper”. How do we get this help? If we are willing to yield ourselves to Him, we may freely draw on the resources of God’s Spirit. He is always there to attend to our needs. Since trusting Jesus as our Savior we have never been alone or helpless, even if that was how we felt. He is always present and actively working in our lives.

Here are two ways which the Holy Spirit can help us understand the Bible.

1. He Teaches Us. *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.* (John 14:26). Because He is God, the Spirit is a teacher who surpasses all others. He guides us as we read God’s Word and helps us interpret it accurately. As we faithfully read it, asking the Spirit to teach us, He will help us understand it.

2. He Reveals Truth to Us. *Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.* (1 Cor. 2:12). What is promised is divine knowledge, which reaches far beyond ourselves and this universe, and it is found in God's Word. We may not understand immediately what a passage means or how to apply it, but if we'll keep seeking and searching God's Word, the Spirit will give us understanding. However, if we give up reading the Word, we'll lack the wisdom that comes only from God.

I'll leave you with the following acronym, **B**asic **I**nstructions **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth.





## PRAYER LIST

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for loss:

All the families that have lost loved ones this past year. Remember those who have recently lost loved ones due to COVID 19. The family of Mary Grace Reyes.

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for physical needs:

Maria Hatfield, Erwin and Elizabeth Lickman, Gloria-Lynn Fernandez, Betty Matson, Ronaldo Claveria, Anne Benliro's co-worker's husband—Oscar with Covid-19.

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Ministry Needs:

The Pastoral Search Committee, Pulpit Supply, Our Deacons, Financial support of the church during the Virus

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Sister Ministries:

BIEM Ministries, Orchard Church, Pastors Davis, Billow, Eddy Bartolome, Pastor and Sue Vitel

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for Spiritual Needs:

Leonard Hatfield, Carol Pelfrey's family, Daniel Ruhlman

### ✓ Continuing Prayers for:

The spread of the Gospel, Our Government, Our Nation, Our Community, Our Neighbors, Our Families, Erwin & Elizabeth Lickman living together at Bella Terra Nursing Home

Mylin Lardizabal - My husband, Errol, and I are both nurses and Errol did get assigned to work in ICU to take care of Covid patients, he will have to work on the unit for at least a month. We were told that we will be pulled to other areas as needed. Please pray for us that we will stay healthy to take care of others. Our biggest concern is not getting our girls and our friends sick and that includes our church family.

Liza Mitchell in her role as a health care worker at Vi Independent and Assisted Living Facility she has responsibility over those with Covid 19 .

Pray for our members that have lost employment and for those who still have jobs and need to interact with others on a daily basis. Pray for those still working that God will protect.

**Lift up all our health professionals and their families who are on the front line of this pandemic.**

**Praise to answered prayer - Dewain Karnes has been able to secure full time employment. Brian Mitchell has been cleared for unrestricted work following his surgery several months ago.**

**If you have prayer requests or updates on your family we encourage to submit them to the Newsletter email address at the end of this newsletter.**

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