

# Prayer and Study Guide

Daily Scripture Readings – 11/11/18

**Monday** – Read Acts 17:1-15 and I Thessalonians 2:17-3:13. **Because of you.** One person's faith can really make a difference, and a church's ministry can make such an impact that it transforms a community. When you are going through a challenging time in your life it can be very encouraging to see how someone you know has remained strong in faith. Paul says it this way: <sup>7</sup> *So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith.* <sup>8</sup> *It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.* <sup>9</sup> *How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence.* Because of you, God is changing lives. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our church to continue to see people's needs and to meet those needs.

**Tuesday** – Read Matthew 25:31-46. **Missional Ministry.** Jesus has great compassion for the poor and the needy. In this story, Jesus helps us to understand how important it is for us to put our faith into action by ministering to people in need. In essence, Jesus says, *"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."* In our church, we join in this kind of ministry through our hospitality to new people in our church, in our ministry with the students at John Marshall High School and North Highland Elementary School, through our ministry with Skyline Urban Ministry, and through our ministry with Circle of Care. We also remember that God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to others. If you would like to serve in one of our Missional Ministries or as a greeter, contact Rev. Michael Carpenter. Spend some time in prayer asking God to give you opportunities to use your gifts for ministry to minister to someone who is in need.

**Wednesday** – Read Philippians 1:1-11. **Lives Are Being Changed.** Because of you, God is changing lives. Just as the Apostle Paul wrote to his fellow Christians in the Philippian Church to thank them for the way they joined him in serving God to bless people, we want to thank you for the way you give generously and join in ministry that blesses people inside and outside of our church. Because of you, hungry students have food to eat on the weekend. Because of you, students will take pride in their appearance when they earn the opportunity to select clothing from our Bear Cave Clothing Closet. Thank you for remembering that you are blessed to be a blessing. Thank God for the opportunities God gives you to bless people. If you would like to serve in one of our Missional Ministries at John Marshall, contact Stephanie Henry or Christie Baker.

**Thursday** – Read II Corinthians 9:1-9 and Proverbs 18:16. **You reap what you sow.** My backyard has some bare spots under a tree where the grass doesn't grow, so in the fall I plant grass seed in these spots. Over the last two years I have noticed that the most grass grows in the places where I throw the most seed. Paul is right: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Thank you for the generous way you invest in the ministries of our church. As we each give of our time and our resources, God is able to work through us to produce an abundant harvest of ministry.

**Friday** – Read II Corinthians 9:10-15. **Prayers of Thankfulness.** The Apostle Paul was writing to the Corinthians who had more wealth than many other people in the world. He taught them that when you are obedient to God you become rich relationally, and you choose not to spend everything on yourself but to be generous on every occasion. When you are faithful to the call that God has on your life, there will be people in our community who will thank God because of your generosity and the way you serve. Imagine someone kneeling or folding their hands at mealtime and thanking God because of what you did. As you pray, offer thanks to God for the way the people in our church are changing lives in our community by serving and giving generously.

**Saturday** – Read Leviticus 27:30-34. **The Tithe Provides for God's Work through God's Church.** In the Old Testament there were three kinds of tithes. Each year the prescribed tithe amounted to 23 1/3% of income before any buildings or special offerings. This scripture describes the tithe that was given annually to support the local priesthood. This is similar to the way we give to support the ministry of our local church today. The tithe provides for God's work through God's church. Think of all of the ways the ministry of our church touches people's lives in our community and even around the world. We become part of each of those ministries through our giving. The tithe is holy to the LORD. Giving a tithe is one of the ways we express our trust and faith in God to continue to provide for us. Spend some time prayerfully considering: "God, what percentage of my income are you calling me to give?"

**Lectionary Readings:** Ruth 3:1-4:17; Psalm 127; Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44.

Find this Prayer and Study Guide at [www.nicholshillsumc.org](http://www.nicholshillsumc.org).