



Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2007

From Pastor John . . .

With the beginning of a new year, I do not believe there is any better subject to discuss than reading the Bible from cover to cover this year. 2006 is now behind us and whatever failures or shortcomings we may have had, there is no changing it. But, looking ahead to this fresh new year, it sure is nice to set out some goals. I believe one notable goal to make in your life as a Christian is to read through the Bible.

At Gospel Baptist Church, we have encouraged people to read through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation for a number of years now. Believe it or not, out of all the wonderful programs we have had, the fantastic preachers who have come by and the things we have challenged people to do, nothing has come close to being as effective as our annual "Read through the Bible" campaign. The testimonies that have been given to us year after year actually amaze me. But, I guess they shouldn't because great things happen when people expose themselves to the everlasting Word of God.

In this publication you will be challenged by some testimonies of those who rose to the challenge and decided to read their Bible through. As you see what God has done on their behalf, ask yourself one question, "How can I afford not to read approximately three chapters a day and get through the Bible this year?" Attempt something great for God this year and see how He will, in turn, use it to change you in a miraculous way!

John Boutchia, Assistant Pastor

Testimony from Sandy Dodd, Church Secretary

Before the year 2001, I had never read the Bible through, let alone in one year. Coming from a Catholic background, I never would have. Somewhere in my upbringing, I believed that the Bible's sole purpose was to be used by the priests alone in order to inform people what God wanted them (priests) to teach the people.

I was taught the Lord's Prayer among other things as a way of repentance to a man who could then go before God for me. The Ten Commandments were also taught and I was instructed that the Blessed Mother Mary of God could also pray for me. My parents did not attend church, but sent me and my siblings. In turn, I did not feel I could go to my parents for guidance, as they knew no more about the Bible than what I was taught.

On a Sunday, close to the end of 2000, Pastor gave a challenge to the congregation to read through the Bible in a year and I took hold of the challenge. It was slow going and I did not finish. What I did get from that experience was encouragement from Pastor Lytell and I often wondered why I never received this before from any other pastor. Why was I kept so long in the dark not knowing God? The following year I tried again to read my Bible and with a few gentle pushes from the pastor, I made it.

That year, I learned that God not only judges man, but that He is also a God of love. He provided salvation for us as Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He gave His life for me, not just others. I personally am known and loved by God.

The more I read my Bible, the more I find out about Him. He gave me a chance to serve. But, how would I serve Him if I didn't know Him? I started by helping in Awana. Along with the children, I learned to memorize Bible verses. The growing continues and another year of challenges awaits me.

I later learned from God's Word that there are millions dying and going to hell and that it is my duty to tell others. "Who? Me? I can't talk to other people." Yes, you can: start with children was the response I got from God and His Word. So, I started to teach a second grade Sunday school class.

John 15:16 says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." My friends, do not let Satan rob you of your fruit; God can use you even if you think you have nothing to offer. All you need to do is surrender to His will. Since that first year, I have read my Bible through each year and have grown yet closer to God, my Father. I have been blessed in more ways than I could even begin to tell you. God only knows what this next year brings, but would I have ever known Him? Would I have ever grown? Or, would I still be where I was before 2001, simply a bench warmer?

May I challenge you this year to read God's Word. Possibly, like me, you won't make it, but keep trying. Watch and see how God blesses your life as you get to know Him (Isaiah 40:31).

I thank my God for a pastor who put this challenge before me.

Gratefully saved and joyfully serving,
Sandy Dodd

Interesting Quotes About The Bible

"I am sorry for the men who do not read the Bible every day; I wonder why they deprive themselves of the strength and of the pleasure. It is one of the most singular books in the world, for every time you open it, some old text that you have read a score of times suddenly beams with a new meaning. There is no other book that I know that yields its meaning so personally, that seems to fit itself so intimately to the very spirit [person] that is seeking its guidance."

Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States of America

When the president of the American Bible Society was asked how to keep a leather-bound Bible from stiffening and cracking, he gave this interesting reply: "There is one oil that is especially good for treatment of leather on Bibles. In fact, it will ensure that your Bible will stay in good condition. It is not sold, but you can find it in the palm of the human hand."

"It is impossible to righteously govern the world without God and the Bible."

George Washington, 1st president of the United States of America

Testimony From Allen Michael, Associate Member GBC

I have once again taken the challenge to read my Bible through at Gospel Baptist Church. God has used this challenge in very significant ways and it has taught me that by putting Him first, He indeed will bless. Last summer while in Indiana, God provided me with a couple of incidents that were a great blessing to me and others. One morning at about 7:30, the phone rang and it was my sister who is a very religious Pentecostal lady. She wanted to know if I would come over and talk to a young man about 20 years of age who lived down the street from her. He was moving away that day and wanted to talk to someone about God.

Since this was the ideal situation that many Christians hope and pray for, I went to her house to talk to him. He had been involved with some drugs and felt that God might be able to help him. I explained the Gospel to him and led him through the Roman's road and he then accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. I believe that this could be a lesson to us that we should pray for opportunities because we never know when God is going to provide us with an opportunity to lead a soul to Christ.

Another blessing since I have put God first in Bible reading came with my sister and brother-in-law. When I personally came to know Christ as my Savior at the age of 28, God changed me completely. The Bible says in II Corinthians 5:17, Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. I naturally was concerned about the spiritual conditions of my sisters and their respective husbands.

I went and visited my sister and her husband, Don, and talked with them about the Lord. I made two visits with them and after the second visit, my sister called and stated that it might be best if I didn't come back for that kind of a visit for a while. She said that Don just wasn't ready yet. Therefore, I decided to just pray for them and wait for God to deal with them.

About two years ago, my sister and her husband started to go out to dinner with us again. They seemed more receptive and I began talking about the Lord again. Then, two months ago, we went out to lunch and as they brought us home, I invited them in for a while and unlike other times, they decided to come in. I took the opportunity once again to present the Word of God to them and this time they accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

After about 37 years of wondering and praying, I often wondered if it would ever happen. I assume that the lesson that God would have us to learn from this is that we should never give up hope for our loved ones and others because you never know when God is going to answer your prayers. It is the Word of God and prayer that keeps us prepared to fulfill God's will. II Timothy 2:15 expresses this point so well, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

For me, this is a great incentive to not only read the Bible, but to study it also.

Sincerely, Allen Michael

Testimony from Bob Morris, Chairman, Board of Trustees, GBC

Thank God I am a child of the King. I was saved at 12 years old and went to church regularly. Through the years, I heard the Bible preached by my dad, who was a pastor, and by many of the old saints of God. Since I have been at Gospel Baptist Church for a few years, I have become very grateful to Pastor Lytell for his faithful preaching and teaching of the Word of God. But, one of the most encouraging things that he has done for me is to challenge me to read through the Bible. I have never been much of a reader and when presenting that to Pastor Lytell, he then

challenged me to listen to the Word of God on CD. The Bible says in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

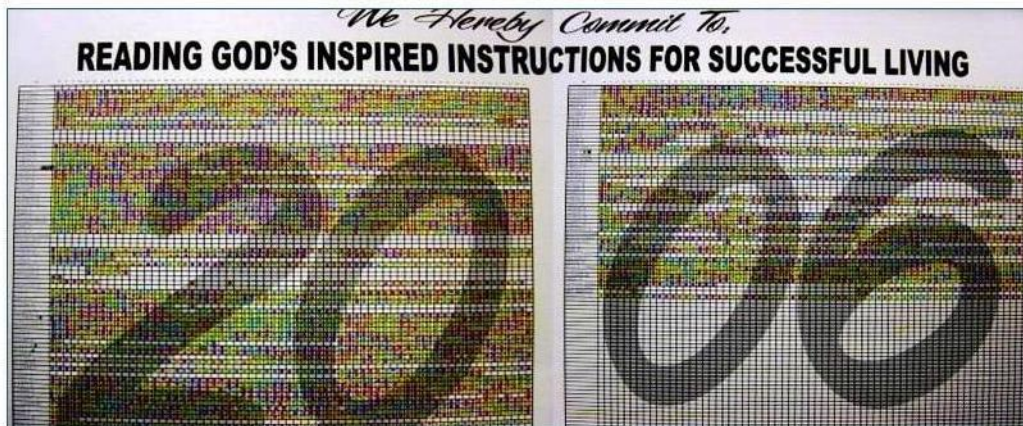
In taking this Bible listening challenge, I am embarrassed to tell you that while listening to the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, I thought the CD was skipping while I drove. Little did I know that these four Gospels all shared the life of Jesus and his ministry in a very similar way and that I was getting much of the same information, but from a different Gospel writer. Listening to these Gospels has helped me put that all in perspective.

One other thing that amazed me was that the many things I had heard as a kid preached to me came back as I embarked in my Bible listening. I would hear a verse that reminded me of something from a sermon years ago. Something I had been taught was now reinforced in my Bible listening program.

This past year, 2006, I have now had the privilege of listening through the Bible three times. All I can say is that it truly has changed my life. Thank you Pastor Lytell for giving this great challenge to me.

Bob Morris

GBC's Bible Reading Board For 2006



More Interesting Quotes About The Bible

"Within the covers of one single book, the Bible, are all the answers to all the problems that face us today -- if only we would read and believe."

Ronald Reagan, 40th president of the United States of America

"Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of your liberties; write its precepts in your heart and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

Ulysses S. Grant, 18th President of the United States of America