

THE DAILY READING BIBLE

1 CORINTHIANS 5-7 MALACHI THE TRINITARIAN GOD

60 daily readings with full Bible text

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Volume 2

1 CORINTHIANS 5-7 MALACHI THE TRINITARIAN GOD

The Daily Reading Bible (Volume 2)

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INTRODUCTION

Readng our Bibles regularly is getting harder. That, at least, seems to be the common experience of many Christians. We could waste lots of ink speculating on the reasons for this: is it the frenetic pace of life these days? Is it spiritual laziness? Is it the impact of postmodernism on our culture and the lack of certainty when it comes to interpreting the written word?

But a better option than speculating on the reasons, we thought, was to provide a new resource for Christians to help them get back into a more regular habit of reflecting daily on God's Word. So back in June 2001, we decided to start including a section called 'Bible Brief' in our monthly magazine, *The Briefing* (see www.matthiasmedia.com/briefing for more information about *The Briefing*). The 'Bible Brief' provided 20 short readings each month—acknowledging that there will be days we miss or days when we want to do something a bit different—with questions, thoughts to ponder, and suggestions to get started in prayer.

Now, some four years later, we have a good collection of 'Bible Briefs', and it's time to offer them to a wider audience in a format that will, we hope, be even more convenient and useful.

This second volume contains 60 readings, all designed to be done in 15–20 minutes. These short daily Bible readings are designed

to help you feed regularly from God's word. They won't cover every issue in each passage, nor even every passage from each Bible book. In other words, *they are no substitute for the in-depth study of the Scriptures* that you may undertake personally, in small groups or through listening to sermons.

With the kind permission of our friends at Crossway Bibles, we've been able to make this a complete package to take with you—we've included the English Standard Version Bible text with each daily study. So you can take this one book with you and have everything you need—on the train, on the bus, or to the park at lunchtime—wherever and whenever you can get 20 minutes to yourself.

How to use these readings

- *With a penitent heart*, the true prerequisite for all Bible reading. Open with prayer (perhaps using the prayer suggested at the beginning of each set of studies).
- *With 15–20 minutes* of peace and quiet. If you can take longer, and want to read and pray further—great! But we have designed the readings to be done in a fairly short space of time.
- *With an accurate modern translation*. We recommend and have included the new ESV translation. The writers of the studies refer to this translation. Contact us for further details about the ESV or visit www.crossway.org.

- *With a pen.* Even if you only jot down brief ideas, writing focuses the mind.
- *As a guide and help, not a straitjacket.* Feel free to dig further into the passage, to notice and ponder things that the questions don't point to.
- *As a launch-pad for prayer.* Use the prayer ideas at the end of each reading as a starting point for your daily prayer. Many of the points that will arise from the readings will be things you can pray for yourself, and also for others (family, friends, neighbours, etc.). Why not compile a list of people you want to pray for (you can write them in the blank space below), and use the prayer ideas from each reading to pray for the next person on your list?

This second volume includes:

- studies on 1 Corinthians 5-7 (written by the staff team at Christ Church, Gladesville in Sydney)
- studies on Malachi (written by Simon Flinders, a staffworker with St Thomas' Anglican Church, North Sydney)
- studies on the trinitarian God (also written by the staff team at Christ Church, Gladesville).

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Please note: the main section of Scripture for each study is reproduced before the questions. Other Scripture references are reproduced as footnotes at the bottom of the page, or, where the passages are too long to be included as footnotes, in the appendix.

PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR:

1 CORINTHIANS 5-7

INTRODUCTION

In this volume, we return to our studies in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. As we might expect, we continue to see the many ways in which the gospel bears on our relationships—with 'notorious sinners', in law courts, marriages, families and churches. There is also a particular interest in our bodies—how we view them, what we do with them, and what their final destination is. Our studies also include helpful adventures into other parts of Scripture—allowing the whole word of God to illumine our understanding of this vital letter.

NB: In a few of the studies we will spend 2-3 days on one passage—giving you the chance to really suck the marrow out of the passage.

Here's an opening prayer you might like to use before each of the next 20 studies:

Dear Father,

Thank you that you raised up our Lord Jesus, and that you will one day raise us up by that same power. I pray that today, as I study this letter, you will help me to know more of your mind and rejoice in your will, for Christ's sake.

Amen

NB: Tick the box when you've completed each study ✓

READING 1

1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-13

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. ² And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

³ For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

⁸ Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰ not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.

¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. ¹² For what

have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? ¹³ God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

1. *1 Corinthians 5 gets us thinking about the notion of 'holiness'. For some background, briefly read over Leviticus chapter 18 (printed for you in the appendix, pp. 52-53). Leviticus 18-21 is the so-called 'Holiness Code' for Israel, outlining how Israel is to be holy (that is, set apart). Why do you think Israel was given a holiness code like this one?*

2. *Do Christians today have a 'Holiness Code'? If so, what do you think it is? How is it different to the code given to Israel? How is it similar?*

PONDER What does it mean for us to be 'set apart' for God?

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that you will desire to live your life for God and that you will find his ways attractive. Take some time now to confess any sin in your life, remembering God's readiness to forgive (1 John 2:1-2).¹

READING 2

1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-2

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. ² And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

1. *What is the sin Paul speaks of here?*

2. *What should have been the Corinthians' attitude to this sin in their church? What attitude have they taken instead?*

PONDER In what ways can we deceive ourselves about our sin, and the sin of others? (cf. Isa 47:10-11).²

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that you will take sin as seriously as God does.

READING 3

1 CORINTHIANS 5:3-5

For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is

present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

1. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

2. You felt secure in your wickedness, you said, "No one sees me"; your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray,

and you said in your heart,

"I am, and there is no one besides me."

¹¹ But evil shall come upon you, which you will not know how to charm away; disaster shall fall upon you, for which you will not be able to atone; and ruin shall come upon you suddenly, of which you know nothing.

1. *What authority does Paul have over the Corinthian church?*
2. *Does Paul have authority over your life? Why is this the case?*
3. *What could it mean to "deliver this man to Satan"?*

PONDER How can Paul have authority over the Corinthians even when he is not physically present with them?

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that as you continue to study Paul's letter, you will grow in your understanding of what it means to be a Christian, and the wonderful blessings the Christian life brings.

READING 4

1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1. *What attitude does Paul call them to account for?*
2. *What does it mean for you that Christ is your Passover?*

3. *What does it mean to celebrate the festival with unleavened bread, in sincerity and truth?*

PONDER What does it mean to be sincere as Christians?

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that you will live to please God, in all sincerity and truth.

POINTERS For background to the Passover, see Exodus 12-13 (printed for you in the appendix, pp. 53-55).

READING 5

1 CORINTHIANS 5:9-13

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰ not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality

or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. ¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? ¹³ God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

1. From verses 9-11, what did the Corinthians misunderstand about Paul's last letter?

3. How should we deal with other people's sin?

2. What should be the differences between the non-believer's behaviour, and Christian behaviour?

PONDER Consider Luke 17:1-4.³

PRAYER IDEAS Pray for the holiness of your church.

READING 6

1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-8

When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? ² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! ⁴ So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? ⁵ I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers, ⁶ but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers? ⁷ To have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? ⁸ But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers!

1. What are the Corinthians rebuked for?

2. How should such disputes be resolved? What reasons does Paul give for this?

3. "Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?" (v. 7). When do you find it difficult to not cling to your rights?

PONDER Consider Philippians 2:4-8.⁴

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that your attitude would be like that of Christ Jesus.

3. And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!" ² It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin. ³ Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, ⁴ and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

4. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.