



SUMMER READING PLAN

DAY EPHESIANS 1:1-14

36

Approximately 700,000 gallons of water flow over Niagara Falls every second. That much water is mindboggling. The stunning beauty takes your breath away. We cannot hope to capture its grandeur with a picture. It is just too much. You must simply soak up as much as you can. Paul stood before the Niagara of God's grace and penned today's passage. He gushes: We have every spiritual enrichment needed for our lives. God has held nothing back. Every member of the Trinity is fully involved. The Father chose you before you were born to be His son or daughter. The Son gave His life to redeem you from death. The Spirit has sealed you as a sign of God's undying, unbreakable, unstoppable commitment to you. And that is just the beginning. What else can we do but stand in awe?

DAY EPHESIANS 5:1-33

37

Remember playing follow the leader? Wherever the leader went, you went. Whatever the leader did, you did. That's the idea in today's passage. Christians are to imitate Christ. Our words echoing His heart. Growing in purity. As generous as the One who gave His life. We can put others first. The way He loved inspiring us to sacrifice too. We learn to do better over time to please our Savior. Anything else just doesn't fit our new life. It's time to go on to better things. Maybe we find it so hard to follow the leader because we hardly acknowledge what Jesus has done for us. The next time you struggle to do what Jesus did, think about how He did it for you first. Like the best of leaders, He doesn't ask you to do anything He hasn't done first.

DAY 1 PETER 4:12-19

38

Suffering stinks. Especially when you didn't do anything to deserve it. Our tendency when we suffer is to complain, claim our rights, or get even. It is certainly wise to avoid suffering. We shouldn't seek it. But when it comes, and Jesus promises it will, we are called to suffer well. American Christians tend to struggle with persecution. Around the world, believers are beheaded, burned, or put behind bars simply because they love Jesus. No matter the cost, they refuse to renounce Christ. They put us to shame with their willingness to suffer for the name of the One they love. What about you? If your co-workers are hostile, if a neighbor tries to get under your skin, if you lose business because of what you believe—how will you respond? Will you praise God and continue to do what is good and right?

DAY PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

39

You cannot fit the Atlantic Ocean in a Coke bottle. But in a feat that boggles the mind, the Maker of the universe, though greater than time and space in every way, was born as a baby boy. Today's reading gives a glimpse into all that Jesus set aside to come as our Savior. He did not come to rule, but to rescue. So He lived among us, like one of us. He shared our hunger, our hurts, our thirst, and our temptations. It was normal for Him to eat with the messiest of us. He was never above meeting people where they were so that He could love them and lead them somewhere better. That's our King. He is worthy of all our admiration and praise.

DAY REVELATION 21:1-22:5

40

"Are we there yet?" Who hasn't heard this plaintive cry coming from the back seat? Sometimes the road feels long, and the destination seems unreachable. We wonder the same thing about life too. We travel broken roads from our first cry to our final breath. Our souls cry out for Eden. We yearn for the way things were meant to be—before Paradise was shattered by sin. On that fateful day, a great rift was torn between God and humanity. For centuries God has labored to restore what was ruined. His cosmic plan does have a conclusion. There is a day coming when God says, "It is done." No more death; no more tears; no more curse. The cross healed the rift. And one day, we will reach the greatest destination—we "will see His face," and Paradise will be restored.

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