



Let's Read! July, 2013 Hosted by Open Doors

*Books of Chronicles I and II

* Psalms 74-81

* Proverbs (chapters 17-19)

* Books of 1st and 2nd Corinthians

Hello again!

We're well on the way! This month starts part 2 of our journey through the Bible. Looking back at June, we realize that it was an exciting month. We visited a high school youth group in Lake Worth to share our love of the Bible. We held a competition or two and did verbatim tellings of *Jesus Calming the Waves*, the *Love Chapter*, and the *Prodigal Son*. We were delighted to see that the young people knew their way around the Bible pretty well and were even able to say the 23rd Psalm with us. One student even noticed that our reading chart is missing the Book of Ephesians. And so, an updated chart can now be downloaded from our site, www.OpenDoorsAGF.org.

Also in June we were interviewed and photographed by the Palm Beach Post, and on June 13th they included us in the Neighborhood section of the newspaper. Mentioned in the article were our Bible Read-Thru, our grant program, and our storytelling endeavors. We expect that God will use this exposure to give us some recognition, credibility, and momentum for our various ministries. And now we have to do our part and keep growing, by reading and applying the greatest Book ever compiled! And so, dear readers, here is what the coming month has in store for us:

Chronicles I and II: These Books will sound very familiar to you because almost half of the content recaps earlier writings (especially Samuel and Kings) going all the way back to Genesis. We don't know who the Chronicler is (perhaps Ezra since the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally tied to these Books), but the author is obviously very interested in the Temple and the priesthood. He uses Israel's history (especially David's example) to show that belief in God is the key to saving the Jewish identity during tough times. *Believe in the Lord your God and you will be established; believe in the prophets and you will succeed. (II Chron. 20:20)*. It may get tedious in places but keep in mind that the Chronicles are helpful because they remind us of what is most important: faith, worship, and living as a holy people unto the Lord.

Psalms 74-81: This month's psalms fit in well with the Chronicler's somewhat downcast spirit. We'll find lots of expressions of need, fear, dissatisfaction, and desperation. But where we find such things we also find hope and courage and faith in a God who makes all the difference. In Psalm 77:2, for example, the psalmist speaks to God:

*In days filled with trouble I search for you. And at night I tirelessly lift my hands in prayer, refusing comfort.
When I think of you I feel restless and weak.*

Verses 9-10 says:

Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?

Yes, there are many laments this month, but there are also verses like these:

Restore us, O God of Hosts,; let your face shine, that we may be saved. (80:7)

Be happy and shout to the Lord who makes us strong! Sing praises to the God of Jacob! (81:1)

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it. (81:10)

Proverbs 17-19: You'll enjoy these! So much common sense:

Grandparents are proud of their grandchildren, and children should be proud of their parents. (17:6)

Caring for the poor is lending to the Lord, and you will be well repaid. (19:17)

Corinthians I and II: Paul spent 18 months setting up the church in Corinth (see Acts 18:1-17), probably around 51AD. Corinth was a rough and tumble town where lots could (and did) go wrong after Paul left. He wrote often, and these two letters are quite possibly as many as five letters preserved in what we call *I and II Corinthians*. He addresses issues such as arguing, having divisions among themselves, marriage, food offered to idols, etc. Paul encourages these fledgling Christians to worship God properly, be firm in their belief that God has given them victory over death, and treat each other with the type of extraordinary love (see I Corinth, chap. 13) that sets Christians apart from non-believers. Let's jot down verses from that chapter and from all of our readings—for our next Reflections page. Have a great God-honoring month!