

September 29, 2025 | 1 Timothy 1

First Timothy is written by Paul to a younger leader named Timothy. Paul has left Timothy in Ephesus to lead the church there. He is giving Timothy instructions on how to lead well. Paul is concerned because the people in the church of Ephesus are pursuing beliefs that are false or of minor importance. He wants them to refocus on Jesus and the fact that he came to save people.

We have all experienced distractions. We start out the day planning to get something important done and find ourselves at the end of the day having been very busy, but not getting the job done. The job of Christians and the church is to stay true to Jesus' message and bring people to him. At the end of the day, how much of that has happened? Today would be a great day to refocus!

September 30, 2025 | 1 Timothy 2

Paul gives some important instructions on prayer. He encourages Christians to pray for their political leaders. He reminds us it is a privilege to be given access to God through Jesus. In Ephesus, it appears there are different issues that need to be addressed for men and women. The men appear to be having such strong disagreements with each other that they forget they should be coming together for prayer. The women seem to have problems with trying to draw attention to themselves and taking control in situations where they should not.

It is far too common for people in churches to do the kinds of things Paul is talking about; we want to win the argument, get the attention, or be in charge. Paul says to pray instead. When you find yourself with strained relationships, do you try to win, or do you start praying for yourself and the other people?

October 1, 2025 | 1 Timothy 3

Paul defines the qualifications for those who are leaders in the church. These qualities should be true of everyone, but a person should not be a spiritual leader without these qualifications. Leaders should be held to a higher standard of character and behavior.

Leadership is less about being in charge and more about being the right kind of person. If you are or want to be a church leader, are these things true of you?

October 2, 2025 | 1 Timothy 4

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October 3, 2025 | 1 Timothy 5

Because Timothy is a young man, he needs to be careful how he corrects people in the church, especially those who are older than he is. Paul also gives advice on how to care for widows. In that culture, widows were often left with no income. The church was to care for those who had no other options, but also to encourage those who could find good ways to support themselves to do so.

Paul's advice to Timothy on correcting older people is designed for those people to accept the correction. In an ideal world, people would listen to correction no matter the age of the person correcting them. We don't live in an ideal world though, so we would be wise to find the best possible way to correct someone so it is accepted. The goal isn't to win, but to be helpful.

October 4, 2025 | 1 Timothy 1:15

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 5, 2025 | 1 Timothy 3:16

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 6, 2025 | 1 Timothy 6

Paul continues to give advice about relationships by giving advice to slaves. The Roman Empire had many slaves, and obviously some had come to Christ. Paul is not speaking in favor of slavery, but giving advice to those who find themselves in that situation. He also warns Timothy not to be deceived by false teachers; instead, he is to live a godly and contented life.

We are so used to people having rights, we find it difficult to understand Paul's priorities when it comes to slaves. He wants them to work in a way that makes God look the best. We think about fairness for ourselves before we think about what is best from God's perspective. God's desires are more important than ours, but we don't always see it that way.

October 7, 2025 | 2 Timothy 1

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October 8, 2025 | 2 Timothy 2

Paul challenges Timothy to be like a soldier or athlete. Soldiers and athletes sacrifice their comfort for something they value more. If people are willing to sacrifice for their country or to win a competition, how much more should we be willing to do so for Jesus?

October 9, 2025 | 2 Timothy 3

Timothy is also warned about turning away from God due to temptation, deceivers, and persecution. He is told that all of these will increase as we near Christ's return. Paul reminds him that the Bible will keep him on the right path.

We can certainly see that many of the things Paul lists are on the rise. We need the Bible more than ever to be the unchanging standard of what we should believe and how we should act.

October 10, 2025 | 2 Timothy 4

Paul's final words strongly urge Timothy to continue to work hard at spreading the message of Jesus. He wants Timothy to take the risk of visiting him. Given Paul's situation, he has few friends left. It would be easy in Paul's situation to be depressed. He is about to die and feels very much alone. Instead, he encourages others. He is willing to die for the message of Jesus and wants Timothy to have the same level of dedication. Will your final words be ones of complaint or encouragement?

October 11, 2025 | 1 Timothy 6:12

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 12, 2025 | 2 Timothy 3:16

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 13, 2025 | Titus 1

The book of Titus has a similar background to 1st Timothy. Paul had left Titus in Crete to oversee the churches there and is now writing this letter to give him some instructions. Paul repeats his instructions on the qualifications for leaders in a church and warns Titus against those who want to lead for their own personal gain.

It is clear, when it comes to church leadership, Paul is more interested in character than wealth, power, or education. Job applicants fill their resumes with accomplishments, but God is interested in who we are on the inside. People do the right things and make the best decisions when they are people of character, led by God's Spirit.

October 14, 2025 | Titus 2

Paul is telling Titus that the different kinds of people in the church have different rolls to fill. The older should teach the younger, while slaves are to do their work well and honestly.

We have responsibilities in the church as well. To some, we are the older ones and to others, we are younger. We are to be faithful to God in all we do and look for ways to help those who are less experienced in their faith. We all live under the authority of others and should do that in ways which make Jesus look good.

October 15, 2025 | Titus 3

Paul reminds Titus that Christians should be the ones who try to treat everyone well. They should not be the ones who specialize in arguments.

Christians can often be the harshest critics of others - especially when people do things they consider wrong. Jesus would be better represented by Christians following the advice of this chapter.

October 16, 2025 | Philemon 1

This is a short but fascinating book. Paul has introduced a slave to Jesus, and the slave now has to deal with the fact that he stole from his master and ran away. As only God could bring together, Paul knows the master, Philemon, as well. Had Paul outright condemned slavery, Christianity would have become a religion embraced by slaves, not because they wanted to follow Jesus, but because they no longer wanted to be slaves. Masters would not have listened to the message of Jesus because they would have felt economically threatened. A person's relationship with Jesus is even more important than a person's view of or relationship with slavery. Nevertheless, Paul challenges Philemon to do the right thing and strongly implies that the right thing is to forgive his slave and give him his freedom.

There are issues today that get people stirred up. Some issues can get Christians so riled up they stop acting like Christians. A person's relationship with Christ is more important than his or her view on any other important issue of our day. We should help people come to Christ and encourage Christians to do the right thing without making some other issue the focus of our lives.

October 17, 2025 | John 1

John is the last of the four accounts of Jesus' life and ministry we have in the New Testament – and it's quite different from the other three Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). It highlights many stories and teachings not recorded elsewhere. It is generally believed to be written by John, one of Jesus' followers (not to be confused with John the Baptist).

John doesn't leave us guessing as to why he recorded the events in this life-changing book. Toward the end of it he clarifies that he wrote "so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of that name" (20:31). As you read through John, be asking yourself, "What does this reveal about Jesus?"

Chapter 1 opens with an introduction about who Jesus really is. Take it all in, and be amazed! The scene then quickly shifts to the heightened expectation at that time that God's Rescuer, that is, the Messiah, or Christ, was perhaps at hand. Watch closely how John the Baptist, Andrew, Simon, and Nathanael all make sense of this newcomer, Jesus from Nazareth. What strikes you about these encounters?

October 18, 2025 | Titus 3:5

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October 19, 2025 | John 1:12

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October 20, 2025 | John 2

Jesus' ministry is about to begin, but first he attends the wedding of a family friend. It is here Jesus first reveals something about his glory, and this compels his disciples to believe in him (verse 11). They see what perhaps we do not - that Jesus' miracle is a "sign" pointing to the reality that he is the promised Jewish Messiah (after all, those are no ordinary jars in which he turns water into wine; note verse 6). What first pointed you to Jesus as Someone you could trust?

The chapter continues with Jesus entering Jerusalem when one of the most important Jewish celebrations was about to begin – Passover, where God is remembered for saving his people. What Jesus finds, however, is far from true worship. In fact, "God's house," the Temple, has been turned into a market.

How easily our hearts are turned away from what is most important. In what ways have you experienced this in your life?

Finally, Jesus shocks the Jewish leaders with why he really came – and he leaves their heads spinning as to the location of the true Temple, the place where God dwells. What do you make of verses 18-22?

October 21, 2025 | John 3

Today's chapter contains what is probably the most famous verse in the Bible – John 3:16. But pay close attention to the story in which these deeply comforting words appear. What surprises you about this encounter? In what ways do you perhaps identify with Nicodemus – a well-educated and deeply religious man who knew his stuff, but struggled to make sense of how he could be in relationship with God? You'll also notice Jesus speaking of "the Son of Man," which is one of his favorite ways to refer to himself, and noting how his sacrifice, and our response of believing in him, is the key to how we can be "born again," or "have eternal life." Let your heart dwell on these amazing truths.

The chapter concludes with John the Baptist shedding even more light on how important Jesus really is. His humble comment in verse 30 is worth thinking through in your own life.

October 22, 2025 | John 4

The first part of this chapter records a conversation that, culturally speaking, should never have happened. A faithful Jew would never talk to a Samaritan, and certainly not a Samaritan woman – much less one with a sordid past. But this is what is amazing about Jesus! He challenges our assumptions and offers grace to those we think least deserve it. The result is that this woman, along with many others in her village, becomes a life changed by Christ. Pay close attention to how this transformation happens and realize we can, and should, have such life-giving conversations about Jesus with others today (see verses 34-38).

The chapter concludes with what John refers to as "the second miraculous sign" pointing to who Jesus really is. Read through the story of the little boy's healing, and ask yourself, "What kind of person has that kind of power where just a word will heal someone at a distance?" Also take note of the concern Jesus expresses in verse 38. What do you make of his comment? Is it possible that people might focus more on the "sign" than on what, or who, the sign is pointing us to? Can you relate to that in your own life?

October 23, 2025 | John 5

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October 24, 2025 | John 6

The majority of this chapter has to do with bread – both the miracle of Jesus feeding the huge crowd with five loaves and two fish, and his detailed explanation of how he is “the bread of life,” who has come down from heaven so that people can live forever. Don’t miss the second miracle in verses 16-21, and what it further reveals about Jesus as well. What Jesus is doing in these passages is helping people see that he does what only God can do – feed people from heaven, just like God did with the Israelites centuries earlier at the time of Moses and the exodus from Egypt. But, of course, something even deeper is going on here with Jesus than satisfying physical hunger. Are you grasping it?

The people seem to make that connection initially (verse 14), as they were expecting God to do something like this when the Messiah came, but ultimately they find Jesus’ teaching about himself hard to accept, and we are told that “at this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him” (verse 66).

This is an important moment for those of us who claim to be Jesus’ followers. We will not always understand what Jesus is saying or doing in our lives, and the question is: will we continue to stick with him even when we’re confused? Peter’s words in verses 68-69 let us know what following Jesus is really all about.

October 25, 2025 | John 3:16

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 26, 2025 | John 5:24

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

October 27, 2025 | John 7

By this time, there was quite a buzz about this miracle-working Jesus, and as he heads down to Jerusalem at the time of the Festival of Shelters, or Tabernacles (see Leviticus 23:33-34), that buzz intensifies. Who is this man, really? What do you make of him at this point?

This particular festival looks back on the time of Moses and the exodus, when God’s people were wandering through the wilderness and living in portable shelters or tents. As he did in the previous chapter, Jesus makes a dramatic connection between himself and this significant time in Israel’s history. Just as God had miraculously quenched the thirst of his people in the desert (see Exodus 17:1-7), Jesus boldly claims, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me!” (verse 37). What do you make of this invitation, and how do you respond to it?

Finally, you may have noticed that twice in this chapter Jesus says, “my time has not yet come” (and we encountered it in chapter 2 as well). As we will eventually see, this statement refers to his sacrificial death on the cross for our sins, which is the whole reason Jesus came, and of which he will have much more to say as we go along.

October 28, 2025 | John 8

Before jumping into this chapter, you may have noticed that John 7:53-8:11 is bracketed with a comment that “the most ancient Greek manuscripts do not include” the story. This is one of the very few places in the New Testament where we have a passage that was almost certainly not in the original writing. It doesn’t mean the story was made up (it is consistent with what we know about Jesus), simply that someone probably added it to John’s Gospel at a later time.

When we pick up the chapter in verse 12, Jesus makes the second of his eight “I am” statements that John records for us – “I am the light of the world.” This one is also connected with the time of Moses and the exodus. Just as God appeared as a light to guide the Israelites (see Numbers 9:15-23), Jesus is now the light we are to follow in our daily lives. How has he proved to be a faithful guide in your life?

The chapter continues with a rather contentious conversation between Jesus and the people who are still trying to make sense of who he is (see verses 25, 53). Then, in verse 58, Jesus makes the most amazing declaration of all, calling himself “I AM,” which is God’s personal name! You see, this is not just a good teacher offering some helpful tips for how to live well; he is claiming to be God in human flesh – just as John told us at the beginning of his Gospel! How do you respond to this claim?

October 29, 2025 | John 9

Chapter 9 is essentially a living story of just how Jesus functions as “the light of the world” (and it serves as the inspiration for one of the most famous Christian hymns, “Amazing Grace”; note verse 25, “I was blind, but now I see!”). While a blind man is literally healed here, the underlying issue is spiritual blindness, which is what Jesus came to heal in all of us. How have you experienced such blindness in your life or in the lives of others?

This story is also great at encouraging us to share our faith with others to the best of our ability – even if we feel we don’t really know all that much. Look at it again with this in mind, and think through what we can learn from this man’s simple, yet bold, telling of what he has experienced as a life changed by Christ.

October 30, 2025 | John 10

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October 31, 2025 | John 11

We have now reached what is the climactic sign which reveals who Jesus really is – the raising of his dear friend, Lazarus, from the dead. John has recorded some amazing miracles performed by Jesus up to this point, but nothing quite like this. What kind of person has that kind of power to raise the dead? Read through the story, and be amazed both at Jesus’ power, but also at his tender love for the members of this family.

Give careful attention to what he shares with Martha in verses 25-26, which is yet another “I am . . .” saying of Jesus. How do you respond to his words there? And how do you reconcile them with what is about to happen to Jesus – his own death?

Finally, this miracle encouraged many to believe in Jesus, but it also led the religious leaders to settle once and for all that Jesus must die. Clearly, all of the Bible knowledge in the world (and these guys had a lot!) and the conviction that someone has spiritual power (and they believed Jesus did – see verse 47) are not enough to keep our hearts sensitive to what God is doing in our midst. That should give us pause. What can you be doing to keep your heart tender toward God?

November 1, 2025 | John 8:12

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November 2, 2025 | John 10:10

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November 3, 2025 | John 12

It is the week before Passover – that special celebration where the Jews remember how, centuries earlier, God saved them from death and released them from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. And yet a greater bondage remains, which Jesus will break forever by his sacrificial death on the cross (refer back to 8:34-36). This chapter moves us explicitly in this direction.

First, Mary, one of the sisters of Lazarus, honors Jesus in such an extravagant and unusual way that Jesus sees it as an act of preparation for his burial – which of course, assumes his impending death. Is this what Mary understood, or was it simply an outpouring of love and gratitude? Second, after entering Jerusalem in such a way as to reveal more of his glory as God's anointed King, Jesus speaks openly about the necessity of his death. His time, or hour, he tells us, has finally come.

What is heartbreaking, however, is that “most of the people still did not believe in him” (verse 37) – after all they had heard and seen from this amazing man. And so Jesus concludes by actually shouting to the crowd, making it as clear as he possibly can. Let his shouts resonate in your heart.

November 4, 2025 | John 13

As this chapter reveals, Jesus knows what is coming – his death on the cross, preceded by the betrayal of one of his followers (Judas), and the repeated denial of another (Simon Peter). It is no wonder he was “deeply troubled” at this meal (verse 21, probably the Last Supper). And yet, in an extraordinary act of humility, he shows his disciples just why he came – not to be served, but to serve. Disciples normally served their teachers. And when it came to foot-washing, it was typically a household servant who took care of this common act of hospitality. But Jesus turns all of this on its head and rightly asks his followers, including us today, “Do you understand what I was doing?” (verse 12). Do we?

Later that evening, Jesus makes his point again, reflecting back on the foot-washing, but almost certainly looking ahead to his sacrificial death as well. After reading the entire chapter, go back and read verses 34-35 slowly, reflecting on how we can better live out the example of Jesus in our world today.

November 5, 2025 | John 14

Jesus wasn't the only one feeling deeply troubled at this point; his disciples were growing more and more distraught as well, with all of this talk of their Lord leaving them and not being able to follow where he was going. And so Jesus, in this chapter and the next two, gives his confused followers “a gift – peace of mind and heart” (verse 27). What an incredible act of love, given that Jesus' heart was so heavy at this time. As you read through the chapter, which of his words encourage you the most, and why?

November 6, 2025 | John 15

Jesus' encouraging words to his disciples continue, and while we aren't told this explicitly, the group is probably now outside, most likely among grapevines. This prompts Jesus to share his most vivid teaching about the absolute necessity of our dependence on him if we want to experience the life that is truly life. (He may also be reflecting on Isaiah 5:1-7.) As you read the first half of this chapter, be thinking through how you can better "remain in Me," as Jesus commands.

The second half of the chapter understandably follows the first – as we seek to remain in Jesus, with his words remaining in us, we may find it a rough journey. The life of following Jesus is never presented in Scripture as an easy life, and so Jesus prepares his disciples for the challenges that lay ahead. We would do well to take these words to heart as we follow Jesus in our world today.

November 7 2025 | John 16

As we move into chapter 16, where Jesus' encouraging words to his disciples continue, we come across the fourth time he explicitly mentions "the Advocate," who is "the Spirit of Truth" – an amazing gift Jesus promises to send to his followers upon his departure from this world (see 14:16-17, 26; 15:26, and 16:7). What can we piece together at this point about the difference the Spirit makes as we seek to remain faithful to Jesus today?

In the remainder of the chapter, Jesus makes one last attempt at helping his disciples understand what is about to happen, noting how their grief will eventually turn to unspeakable joy. They seem to be tracking with him, and they confidently affirm their faith in him. But Jesus knows how weak they really are, and how they will ultimately abandon him when all hope appears to be lost. And yet he never gives up on them, just as he will never give up on us! To reinforce this wonderful truth, the final verse of the chapter, verse 33, is worth memorizing.

November 8, 2025 | John 13:34

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November 9, 2025 | John 14:6

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November ,10 2025 | John 17

There's something beautiful about hearing someone offer heartfelt prayers to God, and here we have the amazing privilege of listening in on Jesus as he prays both for his mission and the mission of his followers. This includes us! And while we can't say for sure, it is likely that this sacred moment takes place in Gethsemane, where Jesus had asked his disciples to "Sit here while I go and pray" (Mark 14:32). In a few short hours, Jesus will be arrested, and his agonizing journey to the cross will begin. But notice the confidence and faith with which he prays at this most trying hour!

What stands out to you about this prayer? And how does it encourage you in your own prayer life?

November 11, 2025 | John 18

Back in chapter 13, Jesus predicted that Judas would betray him and Peter would deny him, and here we read about the fulfillment of those prophetic words. Nevertheless, while Jesus knew this was coming, it must have been heartbreaking for him to watch these men he loved so deeply turn against him. And yet, it is clear in this chapter that Jesus is in control of what is happening to him (just as he said back in 10:17-18). He is not looking to fight back or resist arrest; he is doing exactly what his Father had sent him into the world to do – to be the good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep (10:11). Pilate, the Roman governor, declares that Jesus is innocent – and so he is! – but the religious leaders are determined to see him executed. Once again, their spiritual blindness should give us pause. How did they not recognize their King, their Deliverer, when they were face-to-face with him? How do we sometimes miss seeing him?

November 12, 2025 | John 19

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November 13, 2025 | John 2

Death seems like the last word – game over. But what if the power of death could be broken? What if what Jesus said earlier to his friend Martha, who was grieving the death of her brother, Lazarus, was true: “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this?” (11:25-26)? These words would ring hollow if Jesus himself remained powerless over the grave. We just read of his tragic death and hasty burial. Is that it? Game over? Read on!

November 14, 2025 | John 21

Before reading the final chapter of John’s Gospel, notice a couple of significant things from the previous chapter. First, in 20:21, Jesus clarifies that we, his followers, are to continue his mission. That is, we are sent into the world just like he was to serve others so they might experience the life-changing power of Christ. Second, in 20:30-31, John reminds us that this mission is what his book is really all about. He’s not interested in just telling a story; he wants to see more and more lives changed by Christ! This final chapter shows Jesus moving his disciples in that very direction. And the last thing he says to Peter should ring in our ears as well: “As for you, follow me.”

November 15, 2025 | John 17:21

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November 16, 2025 | John 20:31

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November 17, 2025 | 1 John 1

Around the time John wrote his Gospel, he also penned a few letters that were included in the New Testament. The first of these, 1 John, does not read like a typical letter as no names are mentioned, but it serves as a direct word of encouragement to Christians in the late first century who were struggling in their faith. False teachers had confused their thinking as to the truth about Jesus and what it means to live as his followers, so John writes to set matters straight. He clearly loves these fellow-believers and mentions multiple times why he is writing to them – see 1:4, 2:12-14, 26 and 5:13. When we are in need of assurance as followers of Jesus, there is no better place to go than 1 John!

As you read the first chapter, note the use of “we.” John is speaking on behalf of the apostles – those who were eyewitnesses to Jesus’ life and, especially, his resurrection. They know the truth about Jesus better than anyone, so look closely at what they affirm in verses 1-4

The second half of the chapter begins to show where the false teachers got it wrong. Anyone can claim to have a relationship with God, but how can we know that such a claim is valid? In particular, how does our attitude toward sin factor into this question? This is exactly where John goes.

November 18, 2025 | 1 John 2

Chapter 2 begins with a deeply encouraging message about how God resolves the dilemma of sin in our lives. Take this to heart! But John also urges us to live in such a way that gives evidence that we truly know God. Once again, anyone can say “I know God,” but what should characterize the lives of those who truly know him? The answer, John says, has everything to do with obeying God’s commands, especially the command to love one another. (Sound familiar? Look back at what Jesus said in John 13:34-35.)

John then continues this theme of love as it relates to the things of this world, in particular about loving the truth about Jesus. This again is where the false teachers got it wrong. These guys were not true Christians; they were “antichrists” – leading people astray with their supposedly special, secret knowledge about Jesus and about how life works. How does John’s evaluation of them encourage you to be faithful to Jesus in your life?

November 19, 2025 | 1 John 3

Having just raised the idea of being “God’s children” at the end of the previous chapter, John launches into a moment of wonder and amazement regarding this core aspect of our identity. Let your heart explode with gratitude at what he is affirming here! John also reminds us that having a heavenly Father who loves us deeply shapes our own character and actions so they look more and more like his. This is the crux of the rest of this chapter.

In particular, as John returns to the matter of sin in our lives, keep that idea of becoming more like our heavenly Father in mind. It’s not that we stop sinning altogether (remember 1:8-2:2), but rather that sin will no longer be the dominating pattern of our lives if we are truly part of God’s family. Instead, we will be marked more and more by love for one another. Pay close attention to how John helps us understand what real love is as he breaks this down for us in verses 16-20. Then ask yourself, “What are some specific ways I can love others better this week?”

November 20, 2025 | 1 John 4

John reminds us once again of how to distinguish teachers we can trust from those who are leading us astray. Anyone can claim, “I love God,” but do they also acknowledge the truth about Jesus that has been passed down to us by the apostles (compiled now in our New Testament)? Are they marked by love for others? Those who are truly born of God, who have God’s Spirit living in them, will give evidence of both of these vital commitments. John is repeating himself here, but are we listening? Read through verses 17-21 slowly – what is God saying to you in them that you most need to hear right now?

November 21, 2025 | 1 John 5

The Christian faith, not surprisingly, is all about Christ, and as John brings this letter to a close, he keeps Jesus front and center. Those who are truly children of God are those who believe that “Jesus is the Christ” (verse 1) that is, the Messiah, God’s promised Deliverer. To put it another way, they believe “Jesus is the Son of God” (verse 5), meaning that “He is the only true God, and he is eternal life” (verse 20). Everything about Jesus’ life and ministry revealed these great truths (see verses 6-10 in this chapter, and John’s Gospel as a whole).

Is this where you have landed concerning Jesus? Then be encouraged! As John declares with confidence, “I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life” (verse 13).

Of course, such faith, hope and the life which flows from it, does not mean we will find it easy going in this world. On the contrary, we need to pray for each other and help each other hang in there. But notice, as you read the last few paragraphs of the letter, that we are secure in Christ. Once more, be encouraged!

November 22, 2025 | 1 John 1:9

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

November 23, 2025 | 1 John 5:13

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

November 24, 2025 | 2 John 1

John’s second letter, while much shorter than the first, covers very similar ground. He is urging a particular church, referred to as “the chosen lady,” to stand strong against false teachers who deny the truth about Jesus and promote something other than a life of love. Put in the positive, these dear believers are to be “living according to the truth” (verse 4) which is clarified as “the truth about Christ” (verse 10). This way of life is revealed in their love for one another. Once again, John wants what Jesus said back in John 13:34-35 to be ringing in their ears – and in our ears as well.

Given such a strong emphasis on “the truth” (mentioned five times in the first four verses), be praying for the leaders of your church, that they would know, teach and live the truth, creating a community of Christ-followers who are truly walking in love.

November 25, 2025 | 3 John

John’s third letter is not written to a church, but to a particular leader, Gaius, whom John clearly loves. Gaius has been doing his best to make sure his church is being taught the truth about Christ and is walking in love. He has been welcoming the traveling teachers who are preaching and living the truth (compare 2 John 10-11), but he has met with resistance from a local teacher, Diotrephes. This teacher

“loves to be the leader” and has been throwing his weight around to the detriment of the church. There is no place in spiritual leadership for this kind of attitude or abuse, and John will deal with him shortly. In contrast, John is sending along Demetrius, who is spoken highly of not only by the apostle and his team, but by the truth itself. What a great way to characterize a godly teacher! We should embrace such leaders and thank God for their devotion to the truth. Can you think of a leader you can encourage today?

November 26, 2025 | Jude 1

Traditionally, it is believed, Jude was one of Jesus’ brothers, and his brief letter is appropriately tied to John’s letters as they all address the problem of false teachers in the church. But Jude is even more fired up about this issue than John, painting a dark but clear picture of the judgment awaiting such ungodly people. For us, it simply means that we must take the truth about Christ seriously, seeking to know it, defend it and live consistently with it.

As you read the heart of the letter where Jude describes these “shameless shepherds who care only for themselves,” think about how you could be the opposite of these false teachers. And look closely at Jude’s positive encouragement in verses 20-23. What stands out to you as something you can do to help others in their faith?

November 27, 2025 | Revelation 1

The book of Revelation is written by John, one of Jesus’ followers. It is a recording of visions John experienced while in exile on an island named Patmos. The visions are addressed to seven churches located in what we call Turkey today and tell of things which will happen in the future. Although the events described are clearly in the future when John writes them down, there is debate over which ones are in the past or future for us living 2000 years later. As is typical for people who see visions of heavenly beings, John is overwhelmed. He is told not to be afraid and to write down the things he sees.

The one talking to John is Jesus in his heavenly form. Although John had been close to Jesus when he was in human form, John is now terrified by him. Jesus is both our close Friend and God. We have the privilege of knowing him and loving him, but we must also honor him.

November 28, 2025 | Revelation 2

Four of the churches to whom Revelation is written are addressed in this chapter. They are told of their current situation, strengths, and weaknesses. The church in Smyrna is warned about upcoming persecution.

We can learn from how these churches are addressed as well. John may say some things you find true of yourself or your church. Leaving our first love probably describes a lot of people. The enthusiasm we have for our relationship with Jesus can come and go. Like Thyatira, we can sometimes tolerate wrong behavior. God wants us to turn away from these things so we can make it to the end of our lives still being faithful to him.

November 29, 2025 | 2 John 1:6

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

November 30, 2025 | Revelation 1:8

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week’s readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 1, 2025 | Revelation

The remaining three churches are covered in this chapter. Sardis looks good but isn't, Philadelphia is doing the best it can in a negative situation and Laodicea think it's in good shape but isn't.

We'd all like to think we are like Philadelphia, but maybe we are self-deceived like Sardis or Laodicea. We need to focus on the basics of living our lives for Jesus and not be distracted by pursuing wealth, reputation or comfort. We want to be those people who stick it out in hard times and stand out as those who have not soiled their clothes.

December 2, 2025 | Revelation 4

John is summoned into heaven to see God in his glory. God can only be described in human terms that are inadequate to do the scene justice. The description is similar to descriptions in Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 26. As in those descriptions, God is praised by all the heavenly beings.

We look forward to the day when we can join in this praise of God. Living in this world, we see God's glory in only limited ways and, thus, can only praise him in limited ways as well. One day, we will be in his presence and praise him forever!

December 3, 2025 | Revelation 5

John sees a book or scroll that is sealed by seven seals. The opening of the book will reveal God's plan for the future, but no being in heaven is considered worthy of opening it except for Jesus.

Jesus' unique role as God and the one who died on our behalf makes him uniquely qualified to fulfill God's plan for humanity. When we praise him on earth, we get a glimpse of what we will do in heaven for all eternity. Jesus is worthy of our praise because of what he did for us on the cross!

December 4, 2025 | Revelation 6

Six of the seven seals are broken in this chapter. If you have never read Revelation before, you were probably expecting the breaking of the seals to be a good thing. Unfortunately, they represent conquest, war, famine, large numbers of people dying, people dying for their faith and natural disasters. This is part of God's judgment against those who have rejected Jesus.

The trouble we see in the world causes people to wonder why there is so much pain. The world we see today is not as God created it to be. It was humanity who introduced sin. Even after sin came into the world, God provided a way back to him through the death of Jesus. Many still reject him, and the kinds of judgments we see in this chapter are the result.

December 5, 2025 | Revelation 7

Here there is a pause in the descriptions of the judgments against those who rejected Jesus, and the deliverance of those who have accepted Jesus is described. One hundred and forty-four thousand Jews and a countless number of Gentiles or non-Jews are delivered.

We would love to see everyone delivered, but that is not how it is. One hundred forty-four thousand may sound like a big number, but small compared to the total number of Jews. The multitude of non-Jews who are delivered is big, but God's judgment is carried out on many more. Jesus creates a strong dividing line for all people. Those who trust him are saved. Those who don't trust him are condemned (John 3:18).

December 6, 2025 | Revelation 4:11

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 7, 2025 | Revelation 7:12

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 8, 2025 | Revelation 8

The seventh seal is the worst because it releases seven trumpets that are also judgments. But before the judgments, we are told of prayers being offered to God along with incense being burned in a golden incense burner. The first four trumpet judgments are described in this chapter. The first burns one-third of the earth; the second makes one-third of the oceans uninhabitable by people and fish; the third makes a third of the drinking water undrinkable; and the fourth removes a third of the light from the sun, moon and stars.

The contrast between the events in heaven and on earth is extreme. In heaven, prayers are being offered to God mixed with the smell of incense. It's encouraging to realize how our prayers are valued in heaven. Our quick requests for help are presented to God by angels as a wonderful smelling aroma. God seems to value our prayers more than we do sometimes.

December 9, 2025 | Revelation 9

The fifth trumpet judgment releases what seem to be demonic forces to torture people. The torture is so severe people would prefer to be dead. The sixth trumpet involves the deaths of one-third of all people. The trumpet judgments are unimaginably terrible. Even if they are not being described literally, this is the level of terror people will experience. It is hard to imagine all of this is part of God's plan of judgment for those who have rebelled against him. We should not be able to read this without thinking of those we would like to see trust Jesus. God is ready to extend deliverance to all who follow him. The alternative is terrible!

December 10, 2025 | Revelation 10

As with the seals, there is a pause between the sixth and seventh trumpet. An angel comes from heaven with a small book or scroll. He stands on the land and the sea and extends his hand to heaven to signify that God created the heavens, the earth and the sea and is about to pass his final judgment on all of his creation. John is told to eat the book, which will taste sweet, but will sour his stomach. His knowledge of God's coming judgment is both good and bad. Good in that evil will be destroyed, but bad in that many will be condemned. John must make this known so people will turn to Jesus before it is too late.

2 Peter 3:9 talks about Jesus delaying the end so everyone has the opportunity to come to Jesus. However as this chapter emphasizes, that day will eventually come. The end for someone we know could be their death or the return of Jesus. We should be like John and make sure those we know and love understand God's love and coming judgment.

December 11, 2025 | Revelation 11

There are lots of details in this chapter including the measuring of the temple, two witnesses, olive trees, lampstands, etc. Bible teachers debate the meanings of each, but there are a couple of things that are very clear. First, as seen in the witnesses, God will continue to try to reach the people who have rejected him, just as he has always done throughout human history. The second is that, ultimately, Jesus will win.

We have read of many terrible things that have happened and will happen, but God is never defeated. He will rule over all.

These two major ideas of God continuing to reach out to those who have rejected him and God's ultimate victory should be the basis of our lives. We are placed here on the earth to represent Jesus to others, (2 Corinthians 5:20) and we do that knowing what will happen in the end. You may be the only witness to Jesus someone may know. You may be someone's best chance to be a part of God's kingdom.

December 12, 2025 | Revelation 12

Satan's past, present and future are described here. Satan opposed Jesus when he attempted to have him killed as a baby. Currently, Satan is in heaven accusing Jesus's followers of wrongdoing. In the future, Satan will oppose Jesus' return to the earth. None of this works; Jesus is always the victor.

For us today, Satan is accusing us of wrongdoing before God. This is pointless because Jesus has died for our sin, but Satan points out our failures anyway. It's interesting that before we sin, Satan tries to convince us that sin is not that big of a problem. After we sin, he uses it to try to get God to turn against us. It's good we can read of Satan's defeat and complete inability to stand up to God's power!

December 13, 2025 | Revelation 11:15

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 14, 2025 | Revelation 12:10

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 15, 2025 | Revelation 13

Two beasts, both given power by Satan, are described here. The first beast uses political power to resist God and the second uses false religion. These beasts can be seen throughout human history, but probably also refer to future leaders who will have incredible power prior to Jesus' return.

We live in a troubled world with ongoing conflict, much of it using religion as justification. These conflicts come and go, but we never reach the end of them. In fact, they seem to perpetually get worse. These conflicts are evidence that humanity cannot solve its own problems. We not only need Jesus to solve our personal sin problems, but the world needs him as well.

December 16, 2025 | Revelation 14

Just prior to God's final judgment, it is emphasized that there are still people coming to Jesus. People still have a choice: they can follow Jesus or the beast. Angels warn of coming judgment and continue to make available eternal good news that is available to everyone.

The biblical view of human history is one of God continually reaching out to people and most people rejecting what he is offering. Revelation is a scary book filled with evil and judgment, but it is also filled with hope. God will judge, but he continues to make salvation available. We, and the people we know, are headed for judgment. Even today, we can turn to Jesus or reject what God is offering.

December 17, 2025 | Revelation 15

Seven more judgments are introduced. We are told these are the final ones. God's judgment on humanity has nearly reached its completion. God is praised because all will see his righteousness.

It may seem odd to praise God for his righteousness in the midst of announcements of his wrath. God's righteousness causes him to love everyone, but it also causes him to reject people's sin. He has always provided a way for us to be forgiven, but those who reject forgiveness will not escape judgment.

December 18, 2025 | Revelation 16

These judgments are similar to the trumpet judgments of chapter 8 except these are not limited to one-third of the earth. It is pointed out that despite these judgments, people do not turn to God. In fact, they insult God because of what they are experiencing. The sixth bowl judgment sets the stage for the battle of Armageddon in chapter 19.

The suffering in this chapter is supposed to cause people to realize their rejection of God was a mistake. Instead, they become more opposed to God.

Perspective is everything. Those who oppose God see everything as one more reason to reject God; those who follow him see things as one more reason to honor him. Hopefully you are following him more and more and finding countless reasons to honor him.

December 19, 2025 | Revelation 17

Babylon was the capitol city of an empire which had defeated Israel in the Old Testament. Although this could be predicting that there will be a new Babylon that rises in opposition to God, it is probably symbolic of the capitol of whatever empire will align with the Antichrist in opposition to God. It will enjoy wealth and power and try to defeat Jesus (the Lamb), but this success will be short-lived.

We often see people and groups opposed to God that seem to be succeeding. The opposition may be denying God's existence, or cursing him, or openly behaving in ways God says are wrong. It may not appear that God is doing anything about it, but he will. We can rescue people from God's judgment by leading them to Jesus so their names can be written in the book of life mentioned in verse 8.

December 20, 2025 | Revelation 15:4

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 21, 2025 | Revelation 16:7

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 22, 2025 | Revelation 18

This chapter continues to talk about the destruction of Babylon that stands in opposition to God. Babylon is described as having great power as a result of wealth and trade. Its wealth even gives it power over kings and nations. But all this will be worthless when God decides to judge.

Typically we spend lots of time and energy concerning ourselves with money. Financial success can come between us and God and cause us to sin. In verse 4, we are warned against doing that. In eternity, it's not going to matter how much money you had in life, but it will matter how you got it. Did you honor God with your money or yourself?

December 23, 2025 | Revelation 19

This chapter is what all of creation is waiting for – the return of Jesus. All of heaven rejoices and prepares for the biggest celebration of all time. But before things can come to an end, a battle must be fought against Satan and all his allies.

In the end, we want to be on the side that wins. Jesus will be King of kings, not only because he is powerful, but because he is the Lamb who died for us so he could be in an eternal relationship with us. We should worship him now as that King!

December 24, 2025 | Revelation 20

A brief description is given of the 1000 year reign of Jesus. Satan and his followers are imprisoned and Jesus and his followers rule. Satan is released at the end of the 1000 years and is again defeated and punished forever along with those not written in the book of life are punished too.

Based on this brief description, it is impossible to answer all the questions people might have about Jesus' reign. What we do know is Satan lives in continual rebellion against God, despite knowing the outcome, and that Satan and those who have not trusted Jesus will be judged. People sometimes wonder about all the evil in the world today. We wonder why God allows it to continue to happen. We don't know how long it will continue, but we do know it will end. Jesus will judge, and that judgment will let nothing go unpunished. The punishment is eternity in the lake of fire for those who do not trust Jesus or Jesus' death on the cross.

December 25, 2025 | Revelation 21

The new heaven and new earth are described. An amazing place where everything is beautiful and nothing wrong ever happens; eternal joy, peace and freedom from sin.

We tell jokes about pearly gates and streets of gold, but the Bible says we can experience these things. There are things we enjoy about this life, but what is to come is so much greater.

December 26, 2025 | Revelation 22

John's vision concludes with the assurance that the things he has seen will happen. He has been told these things so he can tell others of what is to come. It is a warning to everyone not to be on the wrong side when Jesus returns.

The outcome for all of us is one side or the other. There is no middle ground of not accepting, but not fully rejecting Jesus. Tomorrow may be too late. The end could come soon!

December 27, 2025 | Revelation 21:4

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.

December 28, 2025 | Revelation 22:20

Today can be used to reflect on or memorize this key verse from this week's readings. The day can also be used to catch up if you missed a day in the readings.