

December 26

1 John 1:5-2:6

In these verses, John writes that God is light and love, and that through Christ our sins can be forgiven.

Question to Consider:

John concludes this passage by saying, "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." Honestly reflect on your daily living. What needs to change so that you "walk as Jesus did?"

Prayer:

Forgiving God, I thank you for shining light into darkness and for sending Jesus to bring hope into my life and into the world. Please help me to grow in my relationship with you so that each day I come closer to walking as Jesus did. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 27

1 John 3:11-24

In this passage, John writes about the sacrificial love of Jesus.

Question to Consider:

John says, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us." Pause for a moment and think about that. What does it mean to *you* that Jesus laid down his life for you?

Prayer:

Loving God, I thank you for Jesus and for the sacrifice that he made. It was the ultimate act of love. Although I may not be asked to make the same choice he made, I pray that I will always have a loving spirit that is willing to sacrifice for others. I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

December 28

1 John 4:7-20

In these verses, John tells us to love one another.

Question to Consider:

John says that it is impossible for us to truly love God and at the same time feel hatred toward another person. Do you think he is correct? If so, are there any relationships you need to work on in order to truly love God?

Prayer:

Father God, your love is perfect. Mine is not, but I pray that I grow as a person of love every day. Please help me to recognize when my relationship with another person needs improvement, and then guide me. I pray in the name of Christ, Amen.

December 29

Revelation 2:1-7

This is the first of seven letters to churches. In this one, Jesus both praises and criticizes the church at Ephesus.

Question to Consider:

The church is criticized because it flamed brightly for the Lord initially, but over the time the flame had gotten smaller and weaker. Think of your own faith journey. Is the flame in your heart as bright as it once was?

Prayer:

Merciful God, I know that I am human and prone to losing my way. Help me to never forsake you, and to remain strong in my relationship with you. I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

December 30

Revelation 3:14-22

This is the last of the seven letters to churches. In this one, Jesus gives his harshest criticism of all to the church at Laodicea.

Question to Consider:

The problem for the church at Laodicea was that its faith had become tepid – neither hot nor cold. Why do you think *that* church received the harshest criticism?

Prayer:

Almighty God, fan the flame in my spirit and help me to keep it red hot. I pray that I am never lukewarm in my faith, but rather I pray that I am always deeply committed to you. In the name of Christ I pray, Amen.

December 31

Revelation 21:1-7

These verses describe the victory, when the old order passes away and we see God, the new heaven, and the new earth.

Question to Consider:

These verses paint a vivid picture of hope for the future, our ultimate future with God. On this New Year's Eve, let's focus on the hope we have for today. What do you hope for in the new year? What are your dreams for the next 12 months?

Prayer:

God of Hope, on this New Year's eve, I thank you for being the source of hope. I thank you for life and for the promise of each new day. As a new year is about to begin, I give it to you in a spirit of trust, and hope. I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.