

The
New
Testament
in a Year

Week 44

Gospel of John 21
1st Letter of John 1-4

This week's reflections were written by

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General Questions for Reflection

You might pick one part of each chapter
and think about these questions.

- What does this tell me about God
(including Jesus and the Holy Spirit)?
- What does this tell me about our world?
- What does it tell me about me?
- What does it say about following Jesus?
- Is there something here I'd like to learn
more about?

Why not use these thoughts to shape your
prayer today.

Monday

John 21

The 21st Chapter of John reads like an inspiring epilogue, designed to strengthen the faith of believers. Jesus' *bodily* resurrection is given further attention. Jesus appears to the disciples again. This time, he is preparing and sharing a meal of bread and fish for the disciples. It is after that breakfast when Peter affirms his devoted love of Jesus. Three times, he declares it. One can't help but recall Peter's three denials of Jesus and their sharp contrast to this scene.

In final scenes of this Gospel, Jesus speaks with a prophetic voice; his words offer some resolution problems raised in the stories of Peter and the beloved disciple. Through Jesus, the readers learn that Peter will walk the martyr's road while John would live on to testify to "these things" about Jesus.

The writer of chapter 21 supposes that many, many books could be written but would still fail to contain all the testimonies about Jesus. *Are we writing those stories as 21st century Christians? Can we call ourselves witnesses to Christ's power??*

Tuesday

1st Letter of John 1

The opening of this epistle establishes one of the themes that travels through the letter. The opening testifies to the sacred connection all followers of Jesus Christ share with him, with God and with one-another. The writer proclaims that God "is light"; in him, there is no darkness at all. Followers, who walk with God, walk in that light and with one another.

The writer cautions the readers about darkness. The fellowship cannot be maintained if people say they are following God but walk in darkness. Thankfully, no one has to remain in that darkness. In the light of God, sins are cleansed and confessions reap a harvest of forgiveness.

What does it mean to walk in darkness? Is sin something we talk about easily? Why or why not? What makes confession challenging?

Wednesday

1st Letter of John 2

The same themes of light and dark are lifted up here. Walking in light is connected with loving one another and loving God. People who walk in light do not desire worldly things; they do not deceive—nor can they be deceived by anti-Christ.

How can we recognize followers of God? What does it mean to walk with God? What does a righteous life look like?

Thursday

1st Letter of John 3

This portion of the epistle reminds readers that a righteous life is lived out in truth and action. Living in loving relationship with one another unites us. Better still, the Holy Spirit will abide in each person and in that unity.

What is a loving action? Is it possible to be a Christ-follower without being in relationship with and to one another?

Friday

1st Letter of John 4

This difficult piece seems to address the struggles John's community was having with those who claimed they were following Jesus, but did not believe that Jesus was fully divine AND fully human---people who challenged the notion of the bodily resurrection. Those who did not profess their faith in a fully resurrected Jesus, were not walking in "the same light" as John's community.

One suggestion John offers his community is to "test" the spirits of those who claim to be from God. If they cannot confess Jesus Christ as "flesh from God" then they are walking in darkness and carry the spirit of the antichrist in them. What those people say about God will be in error.

This section concludes with the same theme of uniting love---a love that connects followers of God through their faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Readers are reminded that they can love because God loved them first.

What are the challenges Christians face today when it comes to professing their faith in Jesus? What can we do to remain strong in our faith?