

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Daniel's Training in Babylon Daniel 1**

"In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom." Daniel 1:20

Day 1: Read Daniel 1:1–21.

1. Though it might surprise the conquering King Nebuchadnezzar, God is behind all the events narrated in this book. Find three things God does in this chapter. (vss. 2, 9, 17). How has God acted similarly to these in your life.
2. The book opens with an account of the conquest of Israel by her enemy Babylon in 605 B.C. Why has the Lord allowed this disaster to happen? (2 Chronicles 36, especially. vss. 15–17)
3. Are you feeling "in exile" yourself? Are you feeling discouraged by the consequences that some sin has brought upon you? What is God's encouragement to you? (Jeremiah 29:13–14; 33:3, 8-9)

Day 2: Read Daniel 1:1–21.

4. Babylon is like a sword in God's hand, devouring Israel because of her sin. But what faulty conclusion does Babylon draw about her own culpability? (Jeremiah 50:7) In contrast, how does God see the deeds of Babylon? (Jeremiah 50:11–14)
5. What great reversals of fortune does God have planned for Israel and Babylon? (Jeremiah 50:18–19) What should you keep in mind when it seems that the forces of evil are winning? (2 Thess. 1:6–10).
6. Israel has been driven far from the land and the temple. Is God no longer with her? From where are Daniel and his friends receiving the help that is evident in this first chapter? (Ezekiel 11:16)

Day 3: Read Daniel 1:8–21.

7. Evidently, Daniel and his friends will cooperate and not resist service to the pagan king. Are they doing right in this, or should they be plotting insurrection? (Jeremiah 29:4–7)
8. What is the hope, the light at the end of the tunnel, that Jeremiah holds out to the exiles in his letter instructing them to seek the good of their land of exile? (Jeremiah 29:10–11)

Day 4: Read Daniel 1: 8–21.

9. Daniel will obey Jeremiah's command to seek the good of his nation of exile. But how does Daniel show that though he will go along with Babylonian language and literature studies, and will allow himself to be subjected to a name change, his allegiance to Babylon is not absolute? (vs. 8)

10. Some commentators suggest that Daniel's refusal of the king's delicacies was a private choice to discipline himself against seduction into a lifestyle of indulgence. Have you ever made such a private choice, and did it help you to be stronger in later trials and temptations?

11. In taking his stand, how does Daniel exhibit the wisdom and tact he is known for (2:14)?

12. How do Daniel's tactful dealings with the officials give us a model of wisdom in being involved with culture while maintaining our distinctive faith? How does God show his favor upon Daniel's gesture of faith? (vs. 15)

13. What would become clear to the Babylonian captives when Daniel and his friends emerge from a meager diet "healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food" (vs. 15)? Who gets the credit and the glory?

Day 5: Read Daniel 1:8–21.

14. Contrast Daniel's fearlessness with the official's fear. (vss. 8, 10) Why can a child of God afford to be fearless whereas men of this world are always in fear? (Psalm 27:1)

15. What does God give Daniel and his companions? (vs. 17) Is there a place for Christians being versed in the knowledge and customs of the world? (See also Acts 17:17–18)

16. How did your study of Daniel inspire you personally this week to serve God with wisdom, faith, tact, fearlessness, and wholeheartedness?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Knowing God and the Difference it Makes****Daniel 2:1–23**

“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his.” Dan. 2:20

Day 1: Read Daniel 2:1–13.

1. How does King Nebuchadnezzar react to his “forgotten” dreams? What does this reveal about him?

2. Plot verses 1–13 on an imaginary “tension” graph. Through the events and dialogue in these verses, trace how the tension mounts. What might lie at the heart of the king’s frustration and anger? (See Ecclesiastes 2:1–11 and Rom. 1:25, 28–31.)

3. Many things have the ability to disturb the peace and security of our lives. God often uses these things to get our attention. Share a time when he did this for you.

Day 2: Read Daniel 2:1–23.

4. On the surface, the contest seems to be between the king’s advisors and Daniel; but who are the real contestants, and what is the real contest? (See Is. 46:6–10; 47:13–14a.)

5. What is Daniel’s response to the king’s demand? Compare Daniel’s response with that of the king’s other advisors. (See especially vs. 11.)

6. What clues do verses 14–19 give into Daniel’s state of mind? What difference does knowing God make in Daniel’s life?

7. What difference does knowing God make in the way you have faced the challenges of your own life? Be specific.

Day 3: Read Daniel 2:14–23 with 1 Corinthians 1:18—2:16.

8. Look at the way the word “wisdom” is used in verses 14, 20, and 23. Write three definitions of wisdom based on each of these verses.

9. From 1 Corinthians 1:18—2:16, summarize the New Testament teaching on wisdom (see especially vss. 1:20, 30; 2:10b–16).

10. What is the source of true wisdom (for us and for Daniel, too)?

Day 4: Read Daniel 2:17–23.

11. What do Daniel and his friends pray for?

12. Upon being shown the secret of the king’s dream, what is Daniel’s immediate reaction?

13. In verse 19 we read that “the mystery” is revealed to Daniel. From Daniel’s prayer of praise what clues do we get about the content of the mystery?

Day 5: Read Daniel 2:1–23.

14. In this passage, what echoes do you see of God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2–3?

15. What do we learn about God in this chapter? How is this an encouragement to you?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION

An Unshakable Kingdom Daniel 2:24-49

“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” Daniel 2:44a

Day 1: Read Daniel 2:24–28.

1. What loving action does Daniel take towards the astrologers whom Nebuchadnezzar wants to kill for their ineffectiveness? How do you think it is possible for Daniel to show compassion to his enemies? Can you describe a time when God prompted you to do something for someone who in effect was your enemy?

2. How does Daniel respond to the king’s question? How is his answer similar to what the astrologers reply in Daniel 2:10–11? What is the one important difference?

3. How does Daniel emphasize to King Nebuchadnezzar that God is indeed in control? (vs. 28)

Day 2: Read Daniel 2:28–35.

4. Why has God revealed the mystery of Nebuchadnezzar's dream? (vs. 30)

5. What is the origin of the rock as Daniel describes it? (vs. 34)

6. What does the rock do to the statue? How are the remains of the statue described? (vs. 35, see also Psalm 1:4)

Day 3: Read Daniel 2:36–45.

7. The four kingdoms of the statue have traditionally been identified as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. After Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom of Babylon sports the golden arches, how does Daniel describe each of the remaining kingdoms?

Second Kingdom–

Third Kingdom–

Fourth Kingdom–

8. What do you notice about the worth of each succeeding kingdom?
9. What is the fifth Kingdom? List Daniel's descriptive phrases about the fifth Kingdom. (vss. 35, 44)
10. What themes flow from this vision of the fifth Kingdom?
 - a. Who is the rock? (I Peter 2:4–8)
 - b. Who creates the Kingdom? (vs. 44)
 - c. How does the Kingdom (mountain) grow? (see Matthew 13:31–33)
 - d. What happens to every other kingdom? (Luke 20:18)

Day 4: Read Daniel 2:36–45.

11. This message of God's sovereignty must have brought great hope to God's people, who were living through dark times. What further assurances do we have from God's word? (Reflect on Revelation 11:15, Hebrews 12:28.) If you are going through a difficult time now, explain how these truths might give you comfort and encouragement.
12. Nebuchadnezzar must have taken great pride and assurance in Babylon's golden position, yet ultimately it as well as every other kingdom is left blowing in the wind. What shaky kingdoms might you be trusting in for your security and happiness, instead of God's unshakeable kingdom?
13. Spend a few moments praying, asking God to reveal the counterfeit kingdoms in your life. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:9–10)

Day 5: Read Daniel 2:46–49.

14. At the beginning of this chapter, Daniel is in imminent danger of being executed. How has his position changed as the curtain closes on this chapter? How has Nebuchadnezzar's position changed? (vs. 46)

15. God's giving Daniel this interpretation of the dream was specific and supernatural at this momentous time in history. What unveils minds and illuminates hearts to understand what God has revealed through Jesus? (Look at 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 3:14–18; James 1:5; Colossians 2:6–10.)

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Faithfulness in the Fire Daniel 3**

“Then Nebuchadnezzar said, ‘Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king’s command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.’”

Daniel 3:28

Day 1: Read Daniel 3:1–7.

1. What have we learned so far about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? (1:1–7, 18–20; 2:49)

2. What is the occasion for the events in this chapter?

3. This 90-foot statue is impressive, but who is all this to-do really about? (See Dan. 2:36–38.)

4. Commentator Tremper Longman III notes that “behind every idol is the *self*.” This is certainly true in Nebuchadnezzar’s case. Idols such as this Babylonian one are not common in our time and place. But if “idol” is defined as the thing, person, or goal that is the focus of your thoughts and desires, what are the idols in your life? How is it true that behind such idols lurks the self?

Day 2: Read Daniel 3:8–18.

5. What possible motivation do you see in the accusers of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? (cf. 1:19–20) How would you describe the way they speak to the king?

6. How would you characterize Nebuchadnezzar’s attitude as he interrogates the three Israelites?

7. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are in a tight spot, yet they boldly assert before an offended king, “we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter.”
 - a. What two-part explanation do they give for why they do not need to defend themselves? (vss. 17–18)

 - b. Think about a time when you have been on the spot and it felt natural to defend yourself. Where did the impulse to defend yourself come from? Did you in fact need to defend yourself? Why or why not?

Day 3: Read Daniel 3:16–23.

8. Despite their extensive Babylonian education, these Israelites adhere faithfully to the most fundamental commandments of their Jewish faith. What are the first two commandments? (Ex. 20:1–6) How does God identify himself as he issues these commandments? (Ex. 20:2) How might the memory of these commandments and the identity of the God who made them have strengthened Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? (Compare the imagery used in Deut. 4:20.)
9. List the details from verses 19–23 that show just how helpless Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are, and how dire their situation is.
10. It has been noted that God does not save Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego *from* the fire but *in* the fire. What is the difference?
11. Look at 1 Peter 1:6–7 and 4:12–14. What do we learn about trials from these passages?

Day 4: Read Daniel 3:24–30.

12. What extraordinary thing does Nebuchadnezzar see? How does he address the three Israelites now?
13. List the details from verse 27 that show how meticulous God’s care for his servants was.
14. What answer does Nebuchadnezzar now have to the brazen question he posed in verse 15?
15. King Nebuchadnezzar says some fine things about the true God, but future events will show that he has not in fact experienced a conversion. What is missing from his confession that suggests that his heart has not changed?

Day 5: Review Daniel 3.

16. As modern readers in the United States, many of us breathe a sigh of relief that we haven’t had to face death for our faith and perhaps wonder if we would exhibit the same steadfastness these ancient Israelites did. But what kinds of trials have you faced or do you now face? How have you responded? How does God equip us for the trials (present or possible future ones) we face? (Eph. 6:10–18; Heb. 4:16)

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree Daniel 4**

"...your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules." Daniel 4:26

Day 1: Read Daniel 4:1–3.

1. King Nebuchadnezzar is writing a letter broadcasting to the world all that God has done for him. Do you ever do that? Is it your "pleasure," (vs. 2) as it is Nebuchadnezzar's?
2. Though "the whole earth be filled with his glory" (Ps. 72:19), Nebuchadnezzar is not moved to praise until he sees God in a personal way in his life. Take a few minutes to reflect on God's personal involvement in your life and write your own praise.
3. Someday "every knee will bow" (Rom. 14:11). Someday knowledge of the glory of God will cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14). How is this letter of a pagan king an interesting foretaste and prophecy of that coming day?
4. What is the particular attribute of God that so impresses this earthly king? (vs. 3)

Day 2: Read Daniel 4:4–26.

5. Nebuchadnezzar is "contented and prosperous" (vs. 4) before God starts dealing with him. Talk about how God had to shake up your own "contented" life, or "trim your branches," (from vs. 14) before he could draw your attention to your desperate need of him.
6. The king of Babylon is not a quick study. Despite all he has seen—the power of Daniel's God and the failure of his pagan magicians in chapter 2; the fiery furnace episode in chapter 3—here he is again calling on his pagan magicians. Describe a time when you have all too soon forgotten God's work in your life. Does God ever have to repeat a lesson with you?
7. Describe the new dream and Daniel's interpretation.

Day 3: Read Daniel 4:19–32.

8. What is the difference between how God communicated to men in olden times and how he speaks to us now? (Heb.1:1–2) Which way do you think is better? Why?
9. What does it say about Daniel that he is reluctant to tell Nebuchadnezzar the dreadful meaning of the dream? (vs. 19) Is there any evidence that he has ever been afraid of the king? (Recall 1:8; 2:14) Then what is it that stirs him? (1 Cor.13:4–7; Luke 6:27)
10. Daniel is in captivity and yet earnestly desires the welfare of his captor. Why are the servants of God able to do good even to those who mistreat them? (Eph.6:5-9; 1 Peter 2:23)
11. What lesson does God so want to impress on the king and on us that he repeats it three times? (vss.17, 25, 32) Why is this so important for us to catch on to?

Day 4: Read Daniel 4:27–33.

12. God’s warning to Nebuchadnezzar also offers him mercy. What does God through Daniel counsel the king to do? (vs. 27)
13. Does it ever happen that a man’s repentance can cause God to relent of his decree of disaster? (Jeremiah 26:2–3)
14. Perhaps for a little while Daniel’s warning instills fear in the king. But over time, the king has become spiritually lethargic. (Does that ever happen to you?) What happens twelve months later? (vss. 28–33)
15. How is Nebuchadnezzar’s sin similar to the sins of the kings of Judah that landed the Israelites in this captivity? (Compare vs. 30 to 2 Chron. 32:25–31)
16. How is Proverbs 11:2 so strikingly displayed in this incident in Neb’s life? How have you seen pride displayed in your life? Why is pride so evil?

Day 5: Read Daniel 4:34–37.

17. We would like to think that even if we are living in rebellion against God, we can still retain possession of our own minds. But what can happen to a mind given over to ingratitude, pride, and rebellion against God? (vs. 16, Rom.1:28; 2 Pet.2:12; Jude 10, 19)
18. What mind does God give to those who come to him for salvation? (1 Cor.2:16; Rom.8:6; 12:2)

19. Nebuchadnezzar's case may remind you of the demoniac in Mark 5:15, whom Jesus restored to "his right mind"; or of the prodigal son in Luke 15:17, who "came to his senses." What has to happen to us too before we can leave the "insanity" (vs. 34) of our futile lives and become sane? (vs. 26) In what ways has God put you in your right mind?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Learning the Hard Way Who's Boss****Daniel 5**

"The most high God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men." Daniel 5:21b

Day 1: Read Daniel 5.

1. Read the whole chapter (in one sitting if possible). List the main characters and jot down a few adjectives to describe each one.

2. As the chapter opens, what act of Belshazzar's precipitates God's intervention? (vss. 2–3)

3. What makes the gold and silver goblets so special? (see Ex. 40:9)

4. In the Old Testament God's holiness was concentrated in the temple. Where is God's temple today? (1 Cor. 3:16)

5. Blasphemy, for which Belshazzar is judged here, is essentially a misuse of God's holy things. Give an example of how we might commit blasphemy today. (Gen. 1:27; Ps. 24:1)

Day 2: Read Daniel 5:1–4; 22–23.

6. For what else is Belshazzar condemned? (vss. 4, 22–23)

7. What is the essence of idolatry? (Rom. 1:18–25; Col. 3:5)

8. Name something that you have worshipped in the place of God this week. Have you confessed this to God and repented?

Day 3: Read Daniel 5:5–17.

9. Describe Belshazzar's reaction to the hand writing on the wall. Why do you think he reacts as he does?

10. How does the queen describe Daniel? (vss. 11–12)

11. What contrast between the behavior of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar towards Daniel does the queen hint at in verse 11?

Day 4: Read Daniel 5:17–31.

12. Compare and contrast God's final words to Belshazzar here in chapter 5 with his final words to Nebuchadnezzar in the previous chapter (Dan. 4:24–27). Does it seem like God treats them equally? Why or why not?

13. What is the essential difference between how God deals with Nebuchadnezzar and how he deals with Belshazzar? (Rom. 9:13–18)

14. In verse 21 Daniel proclaims that God is sovereign. What does God's sovereignty entail? What does it mean to humankind? To his people, the church? To you personally?

Day 5: Read Daniel 5:17–31.

15. Give examples of ways that God's mercy and judgment operate side by side in the lives of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar.

16. Think about how God has dealt with you. Recall a time that you have seen the demands of God's righteous character and the generosity of his grace play out in your own life.

17. Read Psalm 47, 93, or 97. Pray through it, and praise God for who he is.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**The Lion's Den Daniel 6**

"For He is the living God...He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." Daniel 6:26–27

Day 1: Read Daniel 6:1–28.

1. Daniel's shifting fortunes (with kings, not with God) lands him in a position of great authority in the new Medo-Persian kingdom. How has this come about? (Review chapter 5.)
2. Recall a similar rise from rags to responsibility in Genesis when Joseph was lifted up from prison to proprietor of Potiphar's household (Gen.39:3–6), and later to second in command of Pharaoh's Egypt (Gen. 41:38–45). What do these rulers see in Joseph and Daniel that inclines them to promote these servants? (Gen. 39:3–6; Dan. 6:3)
3. How is Darius wiser than his ill-fated predecessor Belshazzar in his treatment of Daniel? (See Dan. 5:10–12.)

Day 2: Read Daniel 6:1–5.

4. How is Daniel an illustration of the truth of Proverbs 22:11 and 14:35? (cf. Dan. 2:14)
5. Politicians use polls and focus groups to learn what people want to hear so that they may rise to power, but that power is always fleeting. How is Daniel a counter-example to those strategies? What is the only safe course in life? (See John 5:44; Ps. 2:11–12.)
6. What kind of "spirit," as opposed to Daniel's "excellent spirit" (vs. 3), is found in the other administrators and satraps? Why do you think they hate Daniel?
7. Where have we seen this same kind of drama playing itself out? (Compare with Matt. 22:15; Mk.12:13.)
8. Why are the schemers not able to find an indictable offense in Daniel at first (vs. 4)? How is such a life as Daniel's glorifying to God, and how can we be like that? (1 Peter 2:12, 3:16)

Day 3: Read Daniel 6:5–15.

9. Describe the scheme hatched by Daniel's enemies (vss. 5ff). In their unbridled envy and hatred, how does even the king become collateral damage?

10. How does Daniel respond when he learns of the plot? Does he alter his usual practice in order to save himself from danger? What do you think is his reasoning?
11. Describe Daniel's prayer life. Describe yours. If there were a decree passed in the United States forbidding prayer "during the next thirty days" (vs. 7), would it make any practical difference in your life?
12. Describe how Daniel's enemies covered their evil motives with a cloak of legalistic righteousness. (See vss. 12–13, 15.)

Day 4: Read Daniel 6:14–23.

13. The king is fond of Daniel but is trapped. What does he do? (vs. 14) When he finds himself at the end of his own resources, into whose hands does he commit the problem? (vs. 16)
14. What is the question that King Darius calls out to Daniel at the break of day? (vs. 20) How is it answered? (vs. 22) How would you answer that question if someone posed it about your own life's problems?
15. What explanation does verse 23 give for Daniel's rescue?

Day 5: Read Daniel 6:24–28.

16. How are the fortunes of Daniel and his enemies ironically reversed by the end of the chapter? (vss. 24, 28)
17. Though for now we do not always see the exaltation of the righteous and humiliation of the wicked, when will we finally see it? (2 Thes. 1:6–10) Considering all these things, how should we live?
18. As you consider the events of this chapter, who would you say is the only man in the cast of characters who is free? Where is freedom to be found?
19. What great praise does God put into the mouth of Darius? (vss. 26–27) How will you put your trust in "the living God" this week?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Visions of Power****Daniel 7**

“[T]here before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven....He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all....nations....worshiped him. His dominion is....everlasting...” Dan. 7:13-14

Day 1: Read Daniel 7:1–28.

1. The events of chapter 6 took place during the reign of Darius the Mede. In chapter 7, we step back in time. When does this vision take place? (vs. 1; cf. 5:30–31)
2. List the four beasts Daniel sees, along with some of their features. (vss. 4–7)
3. What do these beasts stand for? (vs. 17)
4. Look back at Daniel’s interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in 2:31–45. What similarities do you see between these dreams? How is this dream different?
5. How does Daniel react to this vision and its interpretation? (vss. 15, 28) Why do you think he responds this way?

Day 2: Read Daniel 7:2–28.

6. What clues in verses 4–6 tell us that there is a power that is greater than these three beasts?
7. In what ways are the fourth beast—and Daniel’s descriptions of it—“different from all the former beasts” (vs. 7)?
8. In the Ancient Near East, horns often indicated power or pride. What do the horns of the fourth beast tell us about it?
9. According to the famous saying, “Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Where does human corruption in fact come from? (Jer. 17:9; Mt. 15:19) Are we immune? (Rom. 3:10–18) What is the cure? (Col. 1:21–22)

Day 3: Read Daniel 7:7–28.

10. What does the little horn represent? (vs. 24) What does it do? (vss. 8, 11, 20–21, 25) What will be its fate? (vs. 26) What does all this teach us about evil?
11. In what role is God the Ancient of Days chiefly depicted here? (vss. 9–10, 22, 26; cf. Rev. 20:11–12)
12. Upon whom is judgment passed? (vss. 11–12, 21–22, 26)
13. Imagine you are a Christian living in China or North Korea or Sudan or Saudi Arabia. How might your experience affect your reading of Daniel 7? How does this chapter speak to you in your own situation?

Day 4: Read Daniel 7:13–14.

14. Describe this last figure Daniel sees. How is this figure different from the beasts?
15. Who is usually shown riding on the clouds in the Old Testament? (Ps. 68:4; Is. 19:1; cf. Lev. 16:2)
16. Who assumes the title “Son of Man” in the New Testament? (e.g., Mk. 14:62; cf. Rev. 1:7, 12–18)

Day 5: Read Daniel 7:1–28.

17. How is the kingdom of the Son of Man different from those of the beasts? (vs. 14b)
18. How are the values of this King different from those of arrogant, God-hating human tyrants? What route to power does he choose? (Mk. 10:45; Phil. 2:5–11; cf. Lk. 23:33, 36–38)
19. Daniel 7 shows us the majesty and cosmic sovereignty of God, the Ancient of Days, who “changes times and seasons” and “sets up kings and deposes them” (2:21). Look at Mt. 10:29–31. What does Jesus, the Son of Man and “the radiance of God’s glory” (Heb. 1:2), tell us about this same God?
20. Read about God’s final, righteous judgment of evil and the beginning of the new heaven and the new earth in Rev. 19:11–21; 21:1–7, 22–27. Praise God for his righteousness and glorious sovereignty.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Daniel's Vision of a Ram and a Goat Daniel 8**

"I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding." Daniel 8:27

Day 1: Read Daniel 8:1–27.

1. In the 6th century B.C. (and two years after the dreams of chapter 7), Daniel is given a vision of events to take place centuries into the future. Jot down a list of characters.
2. The vision contains a lot of bad news for the people of God (see hints in verses 9–14). Why do you think God is telling them of suffering ahead of time? (John 13:19) Do you like to be told when you are going to go through something hard? Explain.
3. Why do you suppose God uses symbols in books like Daniel and Revelation to communicate certain historical events? What advantage might this have over a straight newspaper account with dates and times? What does it demand of your imagination, your powers of observation, your daily vigilance?
4. Whenever Daniel receives a word from God, he spends time thinking about it (see vss. 5, 15; 9:2). What role does meditation play in your own reading of God's Word?

Day 2: Read Daniel 8:1–4.

5. Daniel is first shown a ram, which in verse 20 is identified as the Medo-Persian Empire (5th century B.C.) that conquered Babylon, Syria, Asia Minor, Armenia, and parts of Africa. What words in verse 4 indicate this vast spread?
6. The Persian part of the empire soon swallowed up the Median part. What imagery alludes to that? (vs. 3)
7. Chronologically, the receiving of this vision precedes the incident of the handwriting on the wall. How does this shed light on the boldness and insight of Daniel's words to Belshazzar in 5:17–28?

Day 3: Read Daniel 8:5–8.

8. The goat of verse 5 is later (vs. 21) identified as the king of Greece (Alexander the Great), who virtually conquered the world by the age of 26 (330 B.C.). What words in verse 5 indicate this quick expansion?
9. As you see in this encapsulated history how kingdoms rise and fall so quickly, what does it do for your perspective on life?

10. Alexander's kingdom was eventually carved up among four powerful generals, known as the Diadochi. What language alludes to this partitioning? (vs. 8)
11. The stories of the ram and goat are simply a prelude to the story that most interests the narrator—that of the “little horn” that grows out of one of the four. Why do you suppose this historically less powerful personage receives most of the attention in Daniel's vision? (Scan verses 9–14.) What piece of real estate do you think is meant by “the Beautiful Land” in verse 9? (Jer. 3:19) According to what standard of conduct does God judge the nations? (Ps. 79:10b; Gen. 15:13–14)

Day 4: Read Daniel 8:9–17.

12. The “little horn” of chapter 8 is evidently the ruler Antiochus Epiphanes, who arose in the Seleucid dynasty, one of the four parts of the fragmented house of Alexander. He chose his own blasphemous name, which means “The Illustrious God.” How is that alluded to in verse 11?
13. In his power lust, Antiochus sought to extend his reign to Palestine, replacing the high priest, sacking Jerusalem and massacring thousands of Jews, entering the Holy of Holies, setting up a statue of Zeus in the temple, sacrificing a pig on the altar and even performing human sacrifice (168 B.C.). How are these events alluded to in verses 10–14? (See also Psalm 79:1–4.)
14. The “2,300 evenings and mornings” (vs. 14) may refer to the period starting with the removal of the high priest in 171 and the reconsecration of the high priesthood in 164. In any case, why do you think the number is given? What is the encouragement in it?
15. Commentators suggest that this vision of “the end” (vs. 17) refers to the end of this particular 2nd century persecution and not the end of all history. Nevertheless, how does it foreshadow the end of all things?

Day 5: Read Daniel 8:18–27.

16. Think about the characteristics of these empires arrayed against God. What happens to truth when wicked men and systems are in control? (vs. 12)
17. What is the ultimate end of every evil and powerful “master of intrigue” (vs. 23)? (vs. 25) How does Daniel's knowing the end make this otherwise terrifying vision bearable?
18. An angel asks about the duration of God's people's suffering: “How long?” (vs. 13). Christian martyrs from all times ask: “How long?” (Rev.6:10). What are the martyrs told in reply? (Rev.6:11) What does this suffering call for on the part of the saints? (Rev. 1:9; 13:10; 14:12)
19. What sustains our faith when we see wickedness appear to prosper and have its own way with God's people? (2 Thes.1:6–7)
20. Evil rulers of every age will be destroyed, “but not by human hands” (vs. 25). The God who loves you is in control. How do you feel about that?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Daniel Prays Daniel 9**

"We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy." Daniel 9:18b

Day 1: Read Daniel 9:1–3 with Jeremiah 29:1–14.

1. What is the historical setting of Daniel 9? (vs. 1; see also 5:30, 31)
2. If the book of Daniel starts with the beginning of the Jewish exile in 605 B.C., and in Daniel 9 it is 539 B.C., how many years have passed?
3. Turn to Jeremiah 29:1-14. List a few things that strike Daniel as he reads the "word of the Lord given to Jeremiah."
4. Today, where do we go to hear God's voice? (See Heb. 1:1–4 and 2 Tim. 3:14–16.)

Day 2: Read Daniel 9:3–19.

5. In verse 3, what does Daniel do? What moves him to do this?
6. What does it mean to "turn to the Lord"? What attitude is implied by this action? (Look ahead at Dan. 10:12.) Ask God to show you what you would have to turn away from in order to turn to him.
7. Read Daniel's prayer (vss. 4–19). As you read, list the things that you learn about God and the things you learn about God's people, Israel.

God**God's people****Day 3: Read Daniel 9:4–19.**

8. Give each section of Daniel's prayer a short title:
 - a. vs. 4
 - b. vss. 5–10
 - c. vss. 11–14
 - d. vss. 15–19

9. What sins does Daniel confess to God?
10. Look back at Deuteronomy 4:25–28 and summarize the “Law of Moses” (vs. 11) to which Daniel refers.

Day 4: Read Daniel 9:4–19.

11. When God shows us our sin, the proper response is repentance. Read verse 13 and write your own definition of repentance.
12. On behalf of God’s people, what request does Daniel make of God (vss. 16ff)?
13. What gives Daniel the boldness to come to God in prayer? What is his hope (and the hope of Israel)? (vss. 16a, 18; see also Deut. 30:1–5)
14. What is our hope? (1 Pet. 1:3–9) How is our hope the same as Daniel’s? How is it different? (Read Matt. 26:26–30 with Jer. 31:31–34.)

Day 5: Read Daniel 9:20–27.

15. How long does it take for God to hear Daniel’s prayer and send an answer?
16. During the period of “seventy ‘sevens’” what actions will occur? (vs. 24)
17. In verses 25–27, into what three groups of “sevens” is this period divided?
18. In his prayer, Daniel is focused on the end of Israel’s 70-year exile. Generally speaking, how is Daniel’s focus different from God’s focus?
19. What New Testament events do the actions in verse 24 remind you of? (See Heb. 10:1–10.)
20. There is no single obvious interpretation of the seventy sevens passage. Commentator Sinclair Ferguson writes: “if the seventy [sevens] of the prophecy were fundamental to a biblical theology there would be a clearer exposition of the passage somewhere in the Bible.” One interpretation is that the seventy sevens refer to Christ’s coming, his death on the cross, and the destruction of Jerusalem that followed his rejection. If this is the case, what significance might there be in Gabriel’s appearance to Daniel “about the time of the evening sacrifice”? (vs. 21)

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**From Trembling to Trust****Daniel 10:1–11:1**

“Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” Dan. 10:19

Day 1: Read Daniel 10:1–12.

1. The significance of the date that opens this chapter becomes apparent when we reflect on an earlier edict of Cyrus to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1–4) What decision has Daniel made and how does the use of his Babylonian name (not used since chapter 5) highlight this choice?
2. What does verse 1 tell us about the message given to Daniel?
3. Describe Daniel’s behavior during the three weeks prior to this vision. Contrast this with the celebrations that would normally be taking place during this first month. (See Exodus 12:1–20.)
4. Verse 2 describes Daniel as mourning over the opposition to the kingdom of God. Read Matt. 5:4, 6, and see how God blesses those whose hearts are broken by the same things that break his heart.
5. Read Nehemiah 4:1–4, 7–9 and relate what events are going on concurrently in Jerusalem, which may have been part of the reason behind Daniel’s mourning, fasting and praying.
6. Describe a time in your life when God prompted you to remain in a situation, rather than to participate in a new venture. What were the ways in which you matured spiritually during that ‘waiting’ time?

Day 2: Read Daniel 10:1–9.

7. Even though the commentators can’t agree on whether the vision Daniel sees is an angel or a Theophany (a preincarnation appearance of Christ), they agree that the lasting impression speaks of God’s power and glory. How is this vision (vss. 7–9) similar to:
 - a. the appearance of Jesus to Paul? (Acts 9:3–9)
 - b. the appearance of the enthroned God? (Rev. 1:13–17; 4:2–3)
8. Describe Daniel’s condition after seeing the vision. (vs. 8)

Day 3: Read Daniel 10:10–11:1

9. What effect do the three touches of the celestial being have on Daniel?
 - a. First touch – (vs.10)
 - b. Second touch – (vs.16)
 - c. Third touch – (vs.18)

How is this curative touch echoed more completely in the Gospels? (Matthew 14:29–31; Mark 5:35, 41–42; Luke 5:12–13)

10. List the words of encouragement uttered by the heavenly messenger. (vss. 10–12, 19) What effect do the words have on Daniel?
11. Daniel is in his eighties; his companions have fled, and he's scared. What assurances lie behind the command "Do not be afraid" (vss. 12, 18) that are meant to strengthen Daniel and us? (Meditate on Gen. 15:1; Is. 43:1–3; Rev. 1:17–18.)
12. Ask God to bring to your mind someone who is in a fearful condition. Pray for that person right now and consider writing or calling to encourage him or her with the truth of God's presence, faithfulness and love.
13. When and why are Daniel's prayers heard? (vs. 12) What happens as a result of his praying? How might this encourage you in your prayer life? (Is. 65:24; James 5:16b)

Day 4: Read Daniel 10:10–11:1.

14. As the curtain is pulled back slightly in verses 13 and 20, we catch a glimpse of the interconnection between heavenly events and the course of human history. Who do you think the "prince" of Persia is? Jude 9, Eph. 6:12
15. Although a heavenly messenger was dispatched in answer to Daniel's prayers, what detained him for 21 days? (vs. 13) What is the purpose of the messenger's appearance? (vs. 14)
16. Who came to aid this figure as he fought in this 3-week struggle? (vs. 13; Jude 9) What is one of the main duties of angels? (Heb. 1:14)

Day 5: Read Daniel 10:10–11:1.

17. The heavenly power and the archangel are fighting on God's side. Who is fighting on the other side, and what clues us in to the fact that he is not only powerful but evil? (vs. 13) How can we be assured that the outcome of these battles is not in jeopardy? (Eph. 1:19–21; Col. 2:9–10)
18. How has Jesus effected the victory in this cosmic spiritual struggle? (Col. 2:15) Although the victory has been secured, the battle is not over. What truth strengthens us in the struggle? (1John 4:4)
19. What is the (war)robe God has graciously given, to enable us to face our daily spiritual battles? (Pull out some nuggets from Eph. 6:10–18.) As you examine this closet of Divine garments, ask God to reveal which accessories you may have relegated to the back, and why. Be willing to share this struggle.
20. Is the spiritual conflict momentary? In Daniel 10:20–11:1 what is Daniel told will happen next? When we grow weary of the struggle, how do we need to encourage one another? (Romans 8:18, 35–39)

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**The Rise and Fall of Earthly Kings****Daniel 11:2–45**

“The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.” Daniel 11:36

Day 1: Skim Daniel 11:2–45.

1. Glance back at 10:1, 4–6, 14. What is the setting for this revelation to Daniel, and who brings it to him?
2. More Persian kings will follow the present king, Cyrus, and then Greece will rise to prominence. But what will happen to the Greek empire and its “mighty king” (vs. 3) Alexander the Great? (vs. 4)
3. This prophetic narrative focuses on two of the four parts (vs. 4) into which Alexander’s empire split: the northern (Seleucid) kingdom, based in Syria, and the southern (Ptolemaic) kingdom, based in Egypt. Why do you think the focus is on these two? (Hint: What land lies between the two? cf. 10:14; 11:16b; Jer. 3:19)

Day 2: Read Daniel 11:2–32.

4. Some commentators note the recurrence of similar words throughout this passage. What pattern of history is suggested by the repetition of such words as rise/arise/appear, power/strength/might, invade/attack/fight, doing as he pleases/pride/insolence, and fall/be defeated/be destroyed? (cf. 2:21a; Prov. 16:18)
5. Jot down some more examples from history that fit this pattern. What does this pattern teach us about how we are to view the world in which we live?
6. How is it comforting for us to know that the events of this fairly detailed narrative were not recorded as history, but revealed by God’s messenger as prophecy?
7. Another commentator points out that the word “but” also appears frequently throughout this passage (e.g., vss. 6, 9, 11, 18, 19, 25b, 27, 29). Look at a few of these occurrences of the word. What does this little conjunction convey about human plans? (cf. Prov. 19:21)

Day 3: Read Daniel 11:21–35.

8. These verses describe the reign of the northern king Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes. Against whom does he fight with special venom? (vss. 28, 30–33) In what ways will he “vent his fury” (vs. 30)?
9. What kinds of character traits come to the fore during the reign of this “contemptible person” (vs. 21)? (vss. 21, 23–25, 27, 32)
10. In contrast, what characterizes the Jewish believers who remain faithful to God at this time? (vss. 32b–33; cf. Prov. 9:10)
11. Antiochus found allies among those who were supposed to be God’s people (vss. 30, 32). What warning might this convey for the church, the present-day people of God? How are we to be on our guard? (See, for example, Prov. 2:12–15; Eph. 4:25–27; 5:1–7, 15–17.)

Day 4: Read Daniel 11:28–35.

12. What will faithful believers experience under Antiochus? (vss. 33–35)
13. What is ultimately in store for these believers once “the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (Rev. 11:15) is ushered in? (Rev. 7:9–10, 13–17)
14. What will ultimately become of the “Beautiful Land” (vs. 16) that was a battleground for so long? (Rev. 21:1–5, 22–27)

Day 5: Read Daniel 11:36–45.

15. The evil figure described here shares some of the qualities of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and seems to anticipate the antichrist of the end times, who exceeds all others in his opposition to God and his kingdom. What is the fundamental trait of this king? (vs. 36; cf. 2 Thess. 2:3–4)
16. What fate awaits this evil king—and those who are like him (cf. 1 Jn. 2:18)? (vs. 45; cf. 2 Thess. 2:8)
17. Verses 40–45 are often taken as a description of the end times, the period leading up to the return of Christ and the beginning of his glorious reign. What will these end times be like? How are believers to view these events? (Lk. 21:25–28)
18. Read Psalm 73, and consider the way it reflects the experiences of believers of both Old Testament and modern times.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**The End Times Daniel 12**

“But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book— will be delivered.” Daniel 12:1

Day 1: Read Daniel 12: 1–2.

1. We find ourselves back on the bank of the river, the celestial beings from chapter 10 again hovering over the water. Which angel-warrior, who earlier fought for God against the demonic “prince of the kingdom of Persia” (10:13), is here identified as the great prince in charge of the people of Israel? (vs. 1)

2. We learn from Daniel 12:1 that there will be “a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then.” Who will echo these same words five centuries after Daniel? (Matt.24:21) What additional information is supplied in Revelation 16:18?

3. Who will be protected through those terrible times? (12:1; Rev.7:3; 9:4; 14:1; 20:15)

4. Daniel 12:2 is the first clear Old Testament reference to a resurrection. When all other trivial worldly distinctions become irrelevant, what are the only two categories of people that will remain in that terrible day? (vs. 2)

Day 2: Read Daniel 12: 3–4.

5. What beautiful image does verse 3 paint of the destiny of the sons and daughters of God?

6. What two characteristics of the righteous are commended in verse 3?

7. The description of God’s people as “wise” is paralleled by their description as “those who lead many to righteousness” (vs. 3). Why is it “wise” to “lead many to righteousness”?

Day 3: Read Daniel 12: 5–10.

8. It is natural for God’s followers, whether human or angelic (vs. 6; Rev.6:10), to want to know “how long” till the end of suffering. Even if the answer (“a time, times, and half a time”) seems enigmatic, what important thing does it tell you about the duration of suffering?
9. What two kinds of people will there be right up till the end? (vs. 10; Rev.22:11)
10. All people will suffer during the distress of the end times, but describe the different result that suffering will produce on different people. (vs. 10)

Day 4: Read Daniel 12: 9–13.

11. What does this distress of the end times call for on the part of God’s people? (vs. 12; Rev. 13:10)
12. What awaits this faithful old man who persevered till the end? (vs. 13)
13. After giving Daniel the answers God sees fit to give to his questions about the future, the angel tells Daniel—not once but twice—to “go your way” for now (vss. 9, 13). What do you think that means? How does God want Daniel, and us, to live as we await his timing?

Day 5: Read Daniel 12:1–13.

14. Even if you cannot puzzle out every last symbol and detail in the book of Daniel, what overarching messages or impressions are clear from a reading of the book?
15. It is said that “a picture tells a thousand words.” How have the images in Daniel helped you to better grasp the nature of unseen reality?
16. What attributes of God has the book of Daniel highlighted?
17. Spend a few moments imagining the celestial scene sketched for us in verse 3. Picture yourself among that starry host. Is there anyone else you would love to see there? Would you pray for him or her now?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Life and Light, or Lies 1 John 1**

*“This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you:
God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.” 1 John 1:5*

Day 1: Read 1 John 1:1-2.

1. John begins his letter in a similar fashion to the way he begins his gospel. What is the foundational truth about Jesus Christ that he emphasizes in both of his prologues? (Examine 1a; Jn. 1:1-2; and Gen. 1:1.)
2. One reason 1 John was written was to counteract false beliefs creeping into the church. According to one, Jesus only *seemed* to be human. List the eyewitness action verbs that John uses to dispel this erroneous thinking.
3. What is the fixed point in history when the eternal Being took on human form, or as John pens it, “appeared to us”? (Reflect on Jn. 1:14; Lk. 1:26-35.) How was that moment determined? Gal. 4:4
4. By using the surprising phrase “the Word of life” (vs.1), what is John conveying about Jesus? (See Jn. 11:25; 14:6 Heb. 1:1-2;)

Day 2: Read 1 John 1:3-4.

5. What difference did seeing and hearing “the Word of life” make in the lives of these eyewitnesses? What encouragement does Jesus give to those who believe by faith, not sight? (Jn. 20:29; 1 Peter 1:7-9)
6. John tells us that two wonderful gifts are available to all who believe in the incarnate Son of God. What are they? (vs. 3; cf. John 17:3, 11)
7. What benefit flows from maintaining a living fellowship with God? (vs. 4; John 15:9-11) What made this possible? (Hebrews 12:2-3)

Day 3: Read 1 John 1:5-7

8. Rather than begin by pointing out errors in doctrine and morals that are surfacing in the church, John starts by teaching on the essence of God. With what two-part statement about God does John begin? (vs.5)

9. How does John know that “God is light” (vs. 5)? What are some *light* truths that John had gleaned through firsthand knowledge?
 - a. John 3:19-21
 - b. John 8:12
 - c. John 12:35-36a
 - d. John 12:46
10. Verse 6 introduces the first of three claims that are being spread by false teachers. What is the first lie with which we can delude ourselves? Spend some moments prayerfully allowing God’s spotlight to illuminate sinful patterns in your life.

Day 4: Read 1 John 1:5-7.

11. What is the corrective to the particular trap of verse 6? (vss. 7a, 9) Investigate what this will look like in daily living. (Reflect on Eph. 5:8-21.)
12. How does living in fellowship with other believers counteract the lie in verse 6? (Heb. 3:12-13, 10:24-25; Eph. 4:14-16)
13. What are two positive consequences of living in the light? (vs. 7)
14. Meditate on the following passages, and relate what “purifies us from every sin” (vs.7b). (Heb. 9:11-14; Heb. 10:8-14)

Day 5: Read 1 John 1:8-10.

15. In verse 8 John attacks the second claim of these false teachers. What is this fabrication, and what basic truth does it ignore? (Rom. 3:22-24)
16. What is the remedy for this horrific lie? (vs. 9)
17. There are two parts of God’s nature that make it impossible for him not to forgive when we confess. What are they? (vs. 9)
18. The last claim being made by these false teachers basically says that we no longer sin. (vs.10) If one buys into this kind of thinking, what does John assert one is saying about God and about oneself? List some ways that our culture, as well as some in the Christian community, subtly embraces this kind of a lie.
19. There is so much to unpack in these ten short verses. What has challenged and/or encouraged you from this chapter?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Knowing God's Love and Loving Others****1 John 2:1–14**

If anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. 1 John 2:5a

Days 1 and 2: Read 1 John 2:1–2.

1. John opens this week's passage by addressing "my dear children." What does this expression tell us about the concern John has for them?

2. Living among people who claim to be Christians but who don't believe in the reality of sin, John's readers need to be reminded of who is central to their faith. What do the following tell us about the person Jesus:
 - a. the name "Jesus" (Mt. 1:21)
 - b. "Christ" (Jn. 4:25–26)
 - c. "Righteous One" (Heb. 4:14–16)

3. John's readers need to be reminded not only of who Jesus is, but of what he does.
 - a. Why do we need an advocate before God? What possible defense can Jesus make on our behalf? (Col. 1:21–22; 1 Pet. 3:18)

 - b. What is an "atoning sacrifice"? What image would this phrase have conjured up in the minds of John's readers who were familiar with the Old Testament? (Heb. 9:1–3, 6–7)

4. For you today, what difference does it make to remember who Jesus is and what he has done?

Day 3: Read 1 John 2:3–6.

5. How can you know you love Jesus?

6. Where else have we heard about this relationship between love and obedience? (Jn. 14:15; 15:10)

7. What is the result of obedience to God's word? (vs. 5)

8. We know we are in God if we “walk as Jesus did” (vs. 6). Read John 15:1–8 with Galatians 5:22–23. What fruit will be produced in someone who “remains” in Christ (Jn. 15:5)?

Day 4: Read 1 John 2:7–11.

9. In verse 7 when John talks about a commandment his readers had heard from the beginning, what is he thinking about? (Lev. 19:18; Mt. 22:39–40; Gal. 5:14)
10. The old commandment became new when Jesus lived it out for the world to see. Now, what else is new (vs. 8) about it? (Heb. 8:10)
11. Who is the source of true light? (Jn. 1:1–9)
12. What effect does darkness have on our ability to move about unhindered? (vss. 10–11)
13. What does our attitude towards our fellow believers tell us about our relationship with God? (vss. 9–11; see also Jn. 13:34–35 and 15:12–17)

Day 5: Read 1 John 2:12–14.

14. In these verses John addresses three groups of people. List the reasons he gives for writing to each group.
15. The truths listed in verses 12–14 describe all believers. Which truth from this list do you need to be reminded of today?
16. Read Romans 8:1–17 and review this week’s passage. How can you be sure that your sins have been forgiven, and that you are God’s own dear child?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Loving the world or loving Christ****1 John 2:15–27**

“See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.” 1 John 2:24

Days 1 and 2: Read 1 John 2:15–17.

1. By “the world” John does not mean creation itself, but more particularly the fallen world of sinful humanity in its state of rebellion against the Creator. What two reasons does John give for his command not to love the world?
vss. 15–16:

vs. 17:
2. List the three phrases John uses to characterize love of the world. (vs. 16) Give some examples of how these things look in our culture today.
3. How do you find yourself prone to loving the world?
4. Where do you see worldly influence in your church?
5. How do Jesus’ words, “...take heart! I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16:33) encourage you?
6. How does John describe the one who “lives forever”? (vs. 17) What does this look like? (Jn. 6:29; 1 Thess. 4:3–7; Rom. 12:1–3)

Day 3: Read 1 John 2:18–27.

7. This passage contains some harsh language. But by what tender form of address does John again show his concern for his readers? (vs. 18)
8. By his use of the phrase “the last hour” (vs. 18) John clearly does not mean the very end of the world. What do you think he does mean? You may want to consider the following passages: Acts 2:16ff; 1 Cor. 10:11; 1 Pet. 1:20; 2 Pet. 3:3–9.
9. Who are the “antichrists” against whom John is warning his readers? (vss. 18–19, 26)

10. What is the error that these antichrists are propagating? (vs. 22; cf. 2 Jn. 7) What fundamental truth does this error undermine? (Jn. 1:14, 18; 10:30; 1 Jn. 1:1–3) What is the ruinous effect of this error? (vss. 22–23; cf. Jn. 14:6)

Day 4: Read 1 John 2:15–27.

11. In this passage John warns of two dangers: the world and antichrists. But what words of encouragement and exhortation does he give his readers in verses 20, 24, 27?
12. In the Old Testament, priests and kings received a special anointing. Jesus himself came as the Christ, or Messiah, which means “the Anointed” (cf. Acts 10:38). What kind of anointing have we as Jesus’ followers received? (2 Cor. 1:21–22; Eph. 1:13)
13. How does this anointing teach us and enable us to know the truth, as John writes in verses 20 and 27? (Jn. 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10b–13)
14. John’s statement, “you do not need anyone to teach you” (vs. 27), is aimed at false teachers who thought they had special knowledge that other Christians lacked. What does the Bible say about the role of teaching among believers? (See, e.g., Mt. 28:19–20; Rom. 12:6–7; 2 Tim. 2:2, 24.)

Day 5: Read 1 John 2:18–27.

15. “What you have heard from the beginning” (vs. 24) refers to the message about Jesus that John’s readers have heard and believed. What does it mean to let what you have heard remain in you? How do we do this? How does this aid us in guarding against error and worldliness? (cf. Heb. 2:1; Ps. 1)
16. Studying and applying “what you have heard” are not lone wolf activities—the pronouns here are plural. How are members of the body to help each other? (Eph. 4:11–16; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16; 4:2–4)
17. The verb “remain” (or “abide” or “dwell”) appears several times in this passage. John exhorts believers to “remain in him”—in contrast to the heretical “antichrists,” who did not remain in the community of believers (vs. 19). Read John 15:1–11. What does Jesus teach us about remaining in him?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Children of God****1 John 2:28—3:10**

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!” 1 John 3:1

Day 1: Read 1 John 2:28.

1. Verse 28 contains the sixth occurrence of the Greek word translated “continue” (or “remain” or “abide”) in five verses. John is really hammering at this idea. What does this word mean to you?
2. What joyful truth about Christ are we reminded of in this same verse?
3. Jesus’ return is taken for granted by John and is part of the truth that his readers “heard from the beginning” and that he exhorts them not to let go of (2:24). How does guarding this truth in your heart help you to “abide” in Christ?

Day 2: Read 1 John 2:28–29.

4. At Jesus’ return, what will it be like for those who did not abide but who deserted him? (2:28; Mk. 8:38)
5. What can you be sure of regarding those who practice righteousness? (2:29) Why is this so? (2 Cor. 3:18)

Day 3: Read 1 John 3:1–3.

6. How far beyond a bare rescue operation is the love of God for us? (3:1)
7. Why does the world not recognize the children of God? (3:1b; 1 Cor. 2:8, 14)
8. What does John mean by saying that “what we will be has not yet been made known” (3:2)? (Consider 1 Cor. 15:35ff)
9. Why do you suppose the full glory of our sonship is postponed and not yet revealed (3:2; Rom. 8:19)? (2 Cor. 4:7)

10. How do you think an abiding hope in Jesus' return can purify you (3:3)?

Day 4: Read 1 John 3:4–8.

11. John makes plain that sin is not just a human taboo or personal judgment but a real breaking of a divine law (3:4). What had to be done to make it right? (3:5; Gal.3:13)

12. Since the whole loving purpose of Jesus' coming was "so that he might take away our sins" (3:5), what is your confidence when you wrestle in prayer over your sins? (1:9)

13. John again emphasizes (as in 2:29) that you can know the righteous by their practices, and the unrighteous by theirs (3:7–8). Why is he hitting this point so hard? What lifestyle do you think the heretical teachers are up to?

14. What is the heretics' deception? (Jude 4) Where in your own life are you tempted to corrupt freedom in Christ into license?

15. Why is it both illogical and treacherous to continue in sin as if it no longer matters because we are adopted and saved? (3:5; Rom.6:1–3, 15–23)

Day 5: Read 1 John 3:7–10.

16. What does John mean by saying that "no one who is born of God will continue to sin"(3:9)? How are we sure that he doesn't mean sinless perfection in this life? (1:8–9)

17. What do you think is the difference between the sin of the person in 1:9 and that of the person in 3:8a?

18. Verse 8b says as clearly as any place in the Bible why Jesus became incarnate. Cite some examples of the "devil's work" that Jesus came to destroy—in your own life and in the world?

19. In the last verse of this passage, John drops the "L" word—which he will proceed to elaborate on in the next part of his discourse. Why do you think the practice of "love" is the clinching evidence of a relationship with God?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Love One Another****1 John 3:11–24**

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.
And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 1 John 3:16*

Day 1: Read 1 John 3:11–18.

1. Review 1 John 3:10 from last week. Jot down the two groups into which everyone is divided along with the characteristics of each. Let this verse serve as a backdrop for this week's study.
2. What is the message John's readers had heard "from the beginning"(vs. 11)? What is the significance of this message? (Jn. 13:34, 35)
3. Scan today's passage. What two people does John choose to represent the two groups mentioned in verse 10?
4. Read about Cain in verses 12ff and in Genesis 4:1–12 (see also Heb. 11:4 and 1 Jn. 2:9–11). Describe Cain's actions and attitudes.

Day 2: Read 1 John 3:11–18.

5. Why do you think John picks Cain to represent the "children of the devil" (vs. 10)?
6. What common traits are shared by the murderer and the hater? Explain why those who are unrighteous hate those who are righteous.
7. Examine your own heart. What emotions do you have to suppress when God gives blessings to others that he has denied you? Ask God to show you where sin is "crouching at your door" (Gen. 4:7).
8. Heartwise, what's the difference between you and Cain?
9. What hope is there for us who have hearts that often lean towards hatred rather than love? (Recall 1 Jn. 1:9; 2:28.)

Day 3: Read 1 John 3:11–18.

10. What has to happen before we can love others? (vs. 14)

11. How does someone pass from death to life (vs. 14)? (see Jn. 5:24)

12. Compare the end results of hatred (Cain—vs. 12) and love (Christ—vs. 16).

Day 4: Read 1 John 3:16–18.

13. What does it mean to love one another? (vs. 16; see also Jn. 15:12–13)

14. John uses the phrase “lay down our lives.” Describe what this phrase means.

15. Where do you struggle with laying down your life? Think of some ways you can love not only with words, but with actions.

16. Where does this self-sacrificing love come from and how can you experience it? (Review 1 Jn. 2:24.)

Day 5: Read 1 John 3:16–24.

17. What is the phrase, repeated in verses 19 and 24, that shows John’s concern for our assurance of God’s love for us?

18. What counsel does John give to those who experience self-condemnation and doubt? As God’s children, where is our assurance anchored?

19. Who is the ultimate source of our knowledge and assurance? (vs. 24; Jn. 14:23–27; Rom. 8:16)

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Testing the Spirits and the Tests of Love****1 John 4:1–12**

“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.” 1 John 4:8

Day 1: Read 1 John 4:1–6.

1. What compelling reasons does John give to prompt us to “test the spirits” (vs. 1)?
2. What is the test in verses 2–3 that reveals to believers whether someone is truly speaking for God? Why do you think John says that this is the pivotal test? (2:22; 1 Cor. 12:3)
3. There is a spirit that indwells those who flunk the exam in question two. What is it? In what way is this spirit that is “in the world” (vs. 3) reflected in the “the viewpoint of the world” (vs. 5)? (2:15–16)
4. Jot down and reflect on some of the warnings Jesus gave his disciples about false prophets. (Mt. 24:23–26) And what warnings in turn do the apostles give to other believers? (2 Thess. 2:3–12; 2 Pet. 3:3–7)

Day 2: Read 1 John 4:1–6.

5. Even though the believers to whom John is writing may be feeling weak and vulnerable, of what does John assure them? (vs. 4; see also Jn. 10:3–5; 16:33)
6. John’s encouragement has traces of Jesus’ last prayer for his disciples. What promise and comfort does this prayer give to you? (Jn. 17:9–19)
7. Why is it that false prophets are so popular with the world? (vs. 5; 2 Tim. 4:3–4)
8. In verse 6, John tells his little flock that the message they bring will have a limited audience. Why is this, and of what are we confident that allows us to share the gospel freely? (2 Cor. 4:4–6)

Day 3: Read 1 John 4:7–12.

9. What does one have to experience in order to love others? (vs. 7; compare Jn. 3:3–8)

10. What is the reason why knowing God must result in loving others? Meditate on the truth of this as seen in the relationship between the Father and Son from all eternity. (Jn. 17:24)

11. If knowing God causes us to love others, why do you think the repeated commands to “love one another” are given?

12. Spend a few moments asking the Holy Spirit to reveal unloving attitudes that you may be harboring against another believer. Ask God to give you the grace and strength to specifically show love to that person during the next month.

Day 4: Read 1 John 4:7–12.

13. In verses 9–10 how do we see *God’s love in action*? (Jn. 3:16) Look at this with fresh eyes. List from these verses and from Romans 5:6–10 the many ways that God manifests his love.

14. What benefits does Jesus’ “atoning sacrifice” bring about for us? (Rom. 5:1–2, 18; Eph. 2:18; 1 Pet. 2:24–25)

Day 5: Read 1 John 4:7–12.

15. What is it that enables us to live a life of love? (vs. 11; Rom. 5:5)

16. There is an implication in verse 12 that our loving has cosmic proportions. “No one has ever seen God” (cf. Ex. 33:20; Jn. 6:46) But what does John say our role is in making God seen to the world? (Jn. 13:35)

17. How is the world going to see God’s love in you today?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Living in Love, Living in God****1 John 4:13–21**

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16b

Day 1: Read 1 John 4:13–21.

1. In verses 13–16 John gives three marks of a person who lives in God and in whom God lives. List them below:
 - vs. 13:

 - vs. 15:

 - vs. 16:

2. Verses 13 and 14 mention all three members of the Trinity. In what roles do we see the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in these verses?

3. The topic of the previous paragraph (vss. 7–12) is love, and in verse 16 John explicitly returns to the subject of love. How does his mention of the Spirit (vs. 13) fit into his discussion of love? (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22)

4. What is the connection between the Spirit and the kind of testimony and acknowledgment mentioned in verses 14 and 15? (1 Cor. 12:3; cf. vs. 2)

5. How important is it not only to believe in Christ but to confess him publicly? (vss. 14–15; Rom. 10:9; Mark 8:38)

Day 2: Read 1 John 4:13–16.

6. Verse 16 tells us about the nature of our triune God: “God is love.” How has this loving nature been demonstrated concretely, “with actions and in truth” (3:18)? (vss. 9–10; Jn. 3:16)

7. How is this statement of God’s nature fundamentally different from the reverse, “Love is God”? Why does it matter?

8. What does it look like to rely on God’s love (vs. 16a)? In what ways could you rely more on his love?

Day 3: Read 1 John 4:16–18.

9. John now discusses “confidence on the day of judgment” (vs. 17). The transitional phrase, “In this way . . .” (vs. 17) may point back to the idea of living in love and so living in God (vs. 16), or ahead to the statement that “in this world we are like him” (vs. 17)—or perhaps it points in both directions. In what way are the ideas of living in love and being like Jesus parallel? (3:16–18; cf. Jn. 13:12–17)

10. We know that we are saved “by grace . . . through faith,” and “not by works” (Eph. 2:8–9)—yet John is saying here that our manner of living leads to spiritual assurance. How can this be so? (Consider Jas. 2:14, 17; Jn. 15:1–5, 9–10, 16–17; Phil. 1:6.)

11. Being like Jesus can also mean being like him in his relationship to the Father. What is this relationship, and what characterizes it? (3:1; Jn. 15:10; 17:20–23; Rom. 8:15; Heb.10:19–22)
How does this encourage you?

12. How does a clear apprehension of God’s love for us drive out fear (vs. 18)?

Day 4: Read 1 John 4:19–21.

13. According to John, what are the two attitudes a person can have toward others? Is there any middle ground?

14. What blunt term does John use for anyone who claims to love God while not loving his brother? Which of these loves does he seem to be saying is more difficult?

15. What precedes the love we demonstrate toward others, and in fact makes any such love possible? (Look again at 3:16; 4:7a, 9–10; Jn. 15:5; Gal. 5:22)

Day 5: Read 1 John 4:13–21.

16. Think about the people in your life. Whom do you find it especially difficult to love? Toward whom do you have an attitude of indifference, which John calls “hatred”? Confess your sin to God, and ask him to fill your heart with love by his Spirit.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Faith in the Son of God****1 John 5:1–12**

“Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.” 1 John 5:5

Day 1: Read 1 John 5:1–5.

1. In these verses see how John seamlessly weaves love of God with obedience to God and love of the children of God. Why do you suppose John wants to make it impossible to disentangle these ideas?
2. In verse 1, how does John describe our fellow Christians in a way that makes it inescapable for us to love them if we claim to love our heavenly Father?
3. How can we know our love for God and for our Christian brothers and sisters is genuine and not self-deceived? (vs. 2)
4. According to verse 3, what does the love of God consist of?
5. What makes God’s commandments a delight and “not burdensome” (vs. 3) for Christians? (vs. 4; consider Ps. 119:32; 1 Cor. 2:16b)

Day 2: Read 1 John 5:1–5.

6. The exhortations toward love and obedience in verses 1 through 5 are bracketed before and behind by the idea of faith. How do you think faith enables us to “overcome the world”?
7. What does John mean by “the world” in verses 4 and 5? (See 2:15–17.)
8. John will later write the book of Revelation, where he will pick up the idea of “overcoming” and employ the concept to cover the whole of Christian life. Find the seven times he uses the word in Revelation 2 and 3.
9. Who has preceded us in overcoming the world and its temptations, and thereby given us the model—and the power—to do the same? (Jn. 16:33)

Day 3: Read 1 John 5:6–12.

10. John makes the curious statement that Jesus came by the “water and the blood”. How do Old Testament references to water and blood testify to who Christ is?
11. How did Jesus come “by water”? (Lk. 3:21; Matt. 3:13–15) Why did Jesus need to come “by water” and wash us? (Jn. 13:8b)
12. How and why did Jesus come “by blood”? (1:7b; Matt. 26:28; Jn. 6:56)
13. By the “blood” God’s law is satisfied; by the “water” we are washed clean. How does John find poignant significance of this in the details of Christ’s death? (Jn. 19:34)

Day 4: Read 1 John 5:6–12.

14. How did the Spirit testify to Jesus at the start of his ministry? (Jn. 1:32–34)
15. How does the Spirit still testify? (Jn. 16:13–15) Where does the Spirit of Christ live today? (5:10; Jn. 14:15–17)
16. Since he has taken up dwelling in you, what things has the Spirit of truth shown you about yourself? About God’s excellencies and wisdom and power? About what he has done for you?

Day 5: Read 1 John 5:9–12.

17. John’s human testimony of having lived with Jesus on earth (1:1) is compelling. But what testimony is even weightier? (vs. 9)
18. What is it that all people desire and that God has given us freely? (vs. 11)
19. Verse 12 puts it as starkly as it can be put: What is the only way to lay hold of this eternal life?

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**What We Know for Certain 1 John 5:13–21**

*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God
so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 John 5:13*

Day 1: Read 1 John 5:13–21.

1. Read and compare the purpose statements for John's Gospel (see Jn. 20:31) and John's first letter (1 Jn. 5:13). What difference is there between the two groups of people that John addresses? How do these purpose statements meet the readers where they are?
2. According to this week's passage, what things can we know for sure? (Hint: start by noting all occurrences of the word "know.")

Day 2: Read 1 John 5:13–15.

3. What is eternal life (vs. 13) and what does it mean to have it? (1 Jn. 5:11–12, 20; Jn. 17:3) As a believer, when does your experience of eternal life begin—now or later? Explain.
4. What is one result of our knowing that we have eternal life? (vs. 14)
5. What does it mean to ask "according to his will" (vs. 14)? (see 1 Jn. 3:21–22; Jn. 15:7)
6. How do we know what God's will is? (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Thess. 4:3–6a; 5:16–18)

Day 3: Read 1 John 5:14–16.

7. Review 1 John 4:9–18. To what degree is the Trinity—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—involved in our lives? (See also Rom. 8:27, 31–34; Heb. 7:24–25.)
8. In view of God's care for us, how should we care for our brothers? (Recall 1 Jn. 4:19–21.)
9. What aspect of loving others does John mention in verse 16?

10. Honestly, when you observe the sins of fellow believers, is your tendency to criticize them or to pray for them? What does intercessory prayer show about the person who prays?

Day 4: Read 1 John 5:14–17.

11. When we pray for others, in whose work are we participating? (Reread Rom. 8:27, 34.) How does God answer the prayer mentioned in verse 16a?
12. Whether praying for yourself or others, what prayers does God always answer with a resounding “yes”? How does he answer your prayers for forgiveness? For holiness? For wisdom? For a transformed life?
13. Regarding sin that “leads to death,” commentator Jackman states: “If John’s major emphasis as the letter ends is that only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God have eternal life, then the sin that leads to death, the sin that excludes the sinner from the life of God, must be the denial of that saving truth...The sin that leads to death does so because, by its very nature, it rejects the only means by which sin may be forgiven—the atoning death of the incarnate Son of God. This underlines the important truth that it is not that this sin is unpardonable, but that it remains unpardoned.”

That being said, can a true believer commit a sin that “leads to death”?

Day 5: Read 1 John 5:18–21.

14. What is John saying in verse 18? Why does this not contradict what he says earlier in 1:8–10?
15. What connection is there between verses 19 and 20 and verse 21? Hint: what word does John use three times to describe God in verse 20? (See also Jer. 3:23.)
16. Define the word “idol.” Ask God to reveal the idols that you worship. How you complete the following sentences may reveal areas where you have idols:

Life only has meaning if _____

I have worth only if _____

17. Ask God to help you forsake your idols—your false gods—and trust in him alone.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**Truth or Consequences****2 John**

“Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, will be with us in truth and love.” 2 John 3

Day 1: Read 2 John 1–4.

1. List all the phrases in which the word “truth” appears in these four verses. How do these phrases contrast with the ways our culture talks about truth?
2. What does John say is the basis of love of believers one for another? (vs. 1)
3. Who is the full expression and embodiment of truth? (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 4:21)
4. How does John assure his hearers as well as believers through the centuries that truth dwells in them? (vs. 2; Jn. 14:15–17; 16:13)

Day 2: Read 2 John 1–4.

5. What does John mean when he commends believers for “walking in the truth”? (vs. 4) What are they clinging to on a daily basis? Pull some nuggets out of the following verses.

Jn. 8:32–34

Jn. 14:6–7a

Jn. 15:26; 16:13

Jn. 17:17; Jn. 8:31

1 Jn. 1:6–7

6. In verse 3 John employs a three-part greeting that could almost be taken as a benediction coming from the heart of God. Next to each word, detail some of the divine blessings under girding each.
 - a. Grace (Jn. 1:14; Eph. 2:4–9)
 - b. Mercy (Titus 3:4–6; Heb.4:16)
 - c. Peace (Jn.14:27; Jn. 16:33; Eph. 2:14–18)
7. Why do you think that John links both truth and love together as being at the core of Christian fellowship? What might Christian relationships look like if one of these is missing?

Day 3: Read 2 John 1–6.

8. In verse 5, John restates a familiar message of his. What is it? How has this been a challenge for you?

9. In verse 6 John distances the concept of love from mere subjective feelings. What does it entail to “love”? How does this emphasis fit with John’s concerns for truth? (vss. 1, 2, 4)
10. If you have become discouraged because your ‘truthful’ love for others is weak and faint, what do you need to remind yourself of? (Jer. 31:3; Gal. 2:20; 1 Jn. 4:19)

Day 4: Read 2 John 7–13.

11. Verse 7 springs the main concern of John’s letter: what unwelcome element has entered the church? What specifically is the false teaching of the “deceiver”?
12. How can we know if someone is a false teacher? (vs. 7; 1 Jn. 4:2–3)
13. What’s the big deal about errors in the doctrines about Christ-come-in-the flesh? (vss. 8–9)
14. Why must false teaching be nipped in the bud? Do we have any similar false teachings floating about in our day?
15. What is the fascination that lies behind the impulse of one “who runs ahead” (vs. 9)? (See also Acts 17:21; Gn. 3:1–6.) Conversely what is the promise to those who remain steadfast in the truth? (1 Jn. 1:3; Heb. 7:25)

Day 5: Read 2 John 1–13.

16. There is an expression that says, “If you invite Satan to dinner, do not be surprised when you find out that he has brought his pajamas with him.” How does this fit with John’s warning about embracing deceiving teachers? What might the unsuspecting Christian end up doing? (vs. 11) (Hint: In the days of John, to take a teacher into one’s home was to show implied appreciation for his teaching.)
17. Is John being inconsistent to exhort the lady to “love” (vss. 5–6) and then to exhort her not to let into her house false teachers (vss. 7–11)? Where is the clue in verse 6 that loving is not inharmonious with being uncompromising when it comes to truth?
18. How does John’s insight help you to sort out some “truth versus love” issues in your own relationships? In what areas must your love become more aligned with truth? In what areas must your insistence on truth become more aligned with love?
19. Take a moment to pray for your church and the church at large—that God would protect them from false teachings, encourage them with the richness of his love, and that they would remain faithful to the truth.

GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION**To My Dear Friend****3 John***"Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good."* 3 John 11a**Day 1: Read 3 John 1–14.**

1. John greets Gaius as someone whom he "love[s] in truth." What do you think it means to not only love someone but to love in truth? How would many of our relationships be healthier and holier if we set these guardrails around them?
2. How many times does John use the words "truth" or "true" in this short letter? Why do you think he is emphasizing that?
3. In verse 2 how does John show that we ought to be concerned not only for people's souls, but for the whole person?
4. Find an example of "godly gossip" in verse 3. How can we practice godly gossip in our own lives? "Gossip" about someone's good deeds or qualities today.
5. John twice uses the phrase "walking in the truth" (vss. 3–4). In what way is that a more graphic and helpful phrase than merely saying that we must "obey" or "do right"?

Day 2: Read 3 John 1–8.

6. For what does John commend Gaius? (vs. 5)
7. Why is it even more commendable to show hospitality to strangers than to friends? (After thinking about it, consider also Lk. 6:34; 14:12–14.)
8. What amazing statement does Hebrews 13:2 make about people who "show hospitality to strangers"?

Day 3: Read 3 John 5–8.

9. John tells Gaius that when we show hospitality to strangers who are doing God’s business, we ourselves are doing God’s business and are “fellow workers for the truth” (vs. 8).
 - a. What kind of reward does Jesus say you can expect for doing such kindnesses to God’s laborers? (Matt. 10:40–42)

 - b. How can you be a “fellow worker” in missions, even without leaving your town? (vss. 5–8)

10. As you meditate on these teachings about welcoming and showing hospitality to strangers, make a plan for how you will greet visitors to your church on Sunday mornings.

Day 4: Read 3 John 9–14.

11. How is Diotrephes different from Gaius? Cite two ways. (vs. 9)

12. With what words does John characterize Diotrephes’ speech? (vs. 10) Think about your own manner of speech and whether it is more like Diotrephes’ “gossiping maliciously” (vs. 10) or Gaius’ “godly gossip.”

13. What are the only two manners of life you can imitate? (vs. 11)

14. How do you know when someone’s manner of life is from God? (vs. 11) From the devil? (vs. 11)

15. How do verses 13–14 show that Christian relationships are not just a matter of passing on doctrine but of warm and personal fellowship?

16. In an unusual ending for an epistle, John calls the believers “friends” (vs. 14). What do friends do for each other? Who was and is your best friend? (Jn. 15:13)

Day 5: Read 1, 2, and 3 John.

17. Write out a verse (or verses) that has *convicted* you as you have studied John’s letters.

18. Write out a verse (or verses) that has *encouraged* you as you have studied John’s letters.

19. Reflect back on your year of studying Daniel and John’s letters. What has God taught you this year about Himself? What has He taught you about yourself? Would you be willing to share some of these thoughts next week?