

## December 30 – Too Legit to Quit

### READ

Revelation 11:1-14:20

Revelation 14:12, *“This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.”*

### THINK

Do you ever just want to throw in the towel, call it a day, or say, "Uncle" to all the things you're tired of fighting? We all do! Maybe you're tired of fighting an illness, fighting for your marriage, or fighting for a better life. No matter the struggle, wanting to quit is absolutely natural — okay, even — if you know you won't. Therefore, when feelings of flight outweigh your determination to fight, it's important to remember exactly WHY you're fighting.

In today's reading, the writer, John, watches as three angels give proclamations. The first reminds people of salvation through Christ and warns sinners to repent. The second pronounces judgment on all the ungodly people corrupted by the day's culture. The third announces the doom that will befall all who followed the antichrist. John sought to encourage us by describing this vision. He's saying, "DON'T QUIT on Christ! The suffering is temporary if you hold on — but for those who quit, it's eternal."

So, why are we fighting? Because life is hard and difficulties are inevitable. And with the enemy vying to take us down, we have to fight even harder to commit and not quit. But if we focus on glorifying God and the future hope of heaven, we can push through any unfortunate circumstances that happen in this life.

How do we have patient endurance when every muscle in our body is screaming, "Just QUIT already"? We remember that Christ is with us, that He endured the cross and will strengthen us through it all. So, go retro, pull out those genie pants, and get ready for some "Hammer Time" as you crash through the quitting points and tell Satan, "I'm too legit to quit!"

### PRAY

Heavenly Father, I get so tired of battling\_\_\_\_\_, but I commit not to quit. I will not give up knowing that You are with me and will strengthen me along the way. May You be glorified in all I do and say, Amen.

## **December 28 – Ready to Celebrate!**

### **READ**

Revelation 7:1-10:11

Revelation 7:9, *“After this, I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”*

### **THINK**

The Olympic Games Opening Ceremonies are always so impressive – a celebration of diversity, global community, peace, and athleticism. Athletes of every color and creed all converge with a spirit of unity and love. Perhaps this event is a microcosmic glimpse of what we'll someday experience in Heaven!

With that in mind, take a moment and picture yourself in a place of total perfection, basking in the brilliant blaze of God's glory — no red lights, difficult co-workers, headaches, neighborly disputes, over-inflated egos, or past-due bills. As you stand before God's throne, you're joined by throngs of people of all races from every nook and cranny around the globe. Within that great diversity, everyone unites in worship before the Almighty Creator and King of kings. What an insanely amazing time that will be!

Now, STOP and THINK about the people you know who won't be there because they never surrendered their lives to Christ. Hopefully, you're feeling that tug of conviction because who's responsible for telling others about Jesus to secure eternities? WE ARE!

Right now, make a mental or physical list of the people in your family, neighborhood, workplace, school, or daily interactions who have yet to experience Christ's love. Pray over this list each day, asking God for opportunities to share what He's done in your life because YOU may be the only embodiment of Jesus they'll ever meet.

Paradise awaits you, and you can be a part of securing the same destiny for the people on your prayer list! Just think how much fun the "Welcome Home" parties will be when you reunite one day in Heaven and introduce them to your "multitudes" of new friends from every nation.

### **PRAY**

Dear God, Thank You for the hope of Heaven. Help me to boldly share my story and point others toward salvation so they can celebrate Your presence alongside me in eternity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **December 27 – Stay Off the Fence!**

### **READ**

Revelation 3:1-6:17

Revelation 3:16, *“But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth!”*

### **THINK**

Our verse for today is very graphic! It reveals how God feels when we sit on the fence instead of fully living life for Him. Some translations of Revelation 3:16 say God “vomits” when He sees His people straddling the fence, void of commitment to either side. Bottom line: lukewarm living makes God want to spew us from His mouth!

Obviously, God wants us to have a burning passion for Him, but isn't it interesting that God would rather us be cold than lukewarm? God doesn't want to see us waffle and waver between following Him closely and rebelling against Him. He wants us to make a choice and stand by it.

With that in mind, let's get personal and practical for a moment. Do you act differently on weekdays than you do at church on Sundays? Are you all-in with Jesus when things are going well and angry and bitter towards Him when they aren't? That's being lukewarm! Consistency is something God models throughout Scripture. Therefore, He wants us to have the courage to consistently follow His biblical principles, even when it's not the easiest or most popular thing to do.

Do you live a lukewarm life? If so, it's time to hit the thermostat and crank up the heat daily with God. Crawl down from the fence and take a stand for God with confidence, consistency, commitment, and conviction. Be hot for God and make Him smile — it's a far better image to swallow than the thought of God spitting us from His mouth!

### **PRAY**

Heavenly Father, Give me the courage to be bold and always take a stand for what's right in Your eyes. Whenever I'm tempted to straddle the fence, remind me that it's the worst place I can be. Help me to "crank up the dial" on the thermostat in my heart and live in a manner pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## December 26 – The Big Reveal

### READ

Jude 1:1-25

Revelation 1:1-2:29

Revelation 1:3, *“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it because the time is near.”*

### THINK

Media today has catapulted our culture into a fascination with seeing behind-the-scenes and celebrating big reveals. Home improvement shows dominate the airwaves, taking spaces from simple to spectacular. Our various platforms of social feed are full of proud expectant parents posting about their baby's gender reveal celebration. And we can all agree, YouTube is full of how-to instructional videos that detail how everything works from hairstyles to smart devices to gourmet cuisine and everything else imaginable in-between — sometimes what we learn is surprising and other times it leaves us thinking, "That's it?!" Nonetheless, we are captivated by potential and mesmerized by what could be. But did you know that way before TikTok, Instagram, or Facebook, God posted the most impactful and important reveal of all time — the book of Revelation!

In this final book of the Bible, Jesus clues us in to how the story ends and prophesies about what is still to come. No wonder this book has been the subject of such intense study! It uncovers behind-the-scenes information about the world's re-creation — the new heaven and new earth — in descriptive detail. (Spoiler alert: Jesus remains the victor and His followers share in His triumph today, tomorrow, and for all eternity!)

Today's verse informs us that by simply reading Revelation and taking it to heart, we will be blessed. And, as we'll learn in more detail over the next five days, this book is the culmination of the ultimate victory achieved by Christ. But it all boils down to this: no matter what we've faced in this life, in the end if we have surrendered our lives to Jesus, we win!

### PRAY

Lord, Thank You for letting me in on the big reveal! Help me remember that victory comes from You alone. Knowing this, I can look forward to what is to come. Amen

Father, Thank You for the ultimate gift — Your Son — and the life You have made available through Him. Today I come before You with open hands, lay all of my fears and frustrations before You and lean into Your mighty love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **December 25 – A View From the Top**

### **READ**

1 John 4:7-5:21

2 John 1:1-13

3 John 1:1-15

1 John 4:9-10, 18, *“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. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ... There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”*

### **THINK**

If life seems like a seesaw to you right now, you're not alone. We're up one day and down the next. One authority says one thing, a different expert says something else. In our confusion, we're like kids on a seesaw with love and fear. As we lean into God's love, we rise. And, with a view from the top, we have a godly perspective. Even amid problems, mayhem, and our nation's current problems, we can still see. But the moment we take our eyes off of God, feelings and emotions begin to run the show. Love slopes downward, and fear rises.

In 1 John 4, we see that love starts with God, and there's no better time to celebrate His love than Christmas Day! Today, we should stop to truly recognize the ultimate gift He's given us through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of His Son — whose love for us is so powerful, sacrificial, sufficient, and, well, perfect that we don't have to fear. Because if Christ is for us, what can stand against us? There's nothing we could possibly face that He has not already overcome!

With that in mind, picture a small child on the top of a seesaw with an adult sitting on the other end. As long as the adult stays in place, the child is stationary at the top. When Jesus is in His rightful place in our lives, we are anchored by His love; fear will not budge us! And when we've conquered that which makes us cower, bolstered above it through Christ, we gain great perspective that infiltrates every area of our lives.

Reflect on the past week. Has God been your anchor, or have you been on an emotional seesaw? Put those draining ups and downs to a halt and be emboldened by the fact that His perfect love drives out every shadow cast by fear. Rejoice in this because the new year ahead is looking brighter already!

### **PRAY**

## **December 24 – Hello, My Name Is...**

### **READ**

1 John 1:1-4:6

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

### **THINK**

Have you ever been to a function where you were given a "Hello, My Name Is..." sticker to wear? With that in mind, if you were to fill in the blank with a word other than your actual name, what would it be? Maybe you'd select a positive quality such as "intelligent," "funny," or "kind." Or maybe, like so many of us, you'd label yourself negatively with a word like "failure," "unattractive," or "average." But here's the thing: if we know Jesus personally, He has filled in our label! We are who He says we are — and nothing less. So, saying or believing otherwise is an insult to God's divine design! Why? Because God doesn't create junk!

You are not average; you're extraordinary! God created you with a very specific purpose in mind. So, the more we look to God's Word and gain confidence in our true identity, the more others will see Christ in us — our ultimate goal as His followers!

Think about that "Hello, My Name Is..." sticker again. Which of these words will you choose: loved, forgiven, blessed, chosen, complete, new creation, or child of God? Because that is who you are!

### **PRAY**

Heavenly Father, Thank You for calling me by name and giving me a new identity in Christ. Today, I choose to believe that I am who You say I am – Your dearly loved child, empowered by Your Spirit through Christ to bring glory to Your name. Amen.