



## ***That you may believe...*** **Leaders Guide for Week 12**

(Times are approximate) – start time: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Welcome**

- Ask people to be thinking of one change/application they are making in their lives as a result of studying John.

(+7 min)

### **Opening prayer**

- Ask for the Holy Spirit's teaching, guidance, and inspiration to apply what we learn to our daily lives so others will see the gospel message in the way we live.

(+2 min)

### **Opening Comments**

- These are exciting verses to open this week's study – **14:15-31**.
- In them we will see Jesus' promise, His purpose, and His peace.
- **His promise:** – **14:15-18** – He is promising the Holy Spirit who is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Trinity.
- Humans can't fully understand the Trinity because it deals with the inner-most nature of God.
- **(16)** – So Jesus promises to ask, on their behalf, for "*another*."
- The significance of "*another*" is that the Greek word means *exactly like*; no differences, having the same essence of deity, as perfectly one with Him as He is with the Father.
- In essence, the Holy Spirit will be Jesus living within them (us).
- His name varies according to the Bible translation: Counselor (NIV), Helper (NAS), and Comforter (KJV).
- All meanings are the same, "*One who imparts strength, One called alongside to help, One who will comfort as if Jesus were not gone.*"
- **(17)** – Jesus then refers to Him, the Holy Spirit (do not call Him "it"), as the *Spirit of Truth*.
- The *Spirit of Truth* reveals Himself through the *objective truth of the Scriptures*.
- At this time, He lives *with* the disciples, but *will be in* them when Jesus is gone.
- The disciples were being affected by the Holy Spirit as they followed Jesus, but soon He would indwell (live within) them.
- If you are a believer, did you know the Holy Spirit lives within you right now? He lives in every believer.
- **(18)** Jesus says, "*I will come to you*" through the Holy Spirit – the Holy Spirit is the essence of Jesus and lives within us!
- In these verses we have seen that the *Counselor/Spirit of Truth* provides believers strength, comfort and truth.
- A question for all believers is this, "Are you open to the Holy Spirit to give you strength, comfort, and understanding as you strive to live the Christian life, or do you *quench* the Holy Spirit (**1 Thess. 5:19**)?"
- One of the most dangerous attitudes is to say, "I know what those verses say, I don't need to study them."
- A person doing that is closing their minds to any further understanding - that is called "*quenching the Holy Spirit*".

(+5 min) • Jesus promises that He will!

- Next we see Jesus' purpose in **14:19-26**
- (19)- Jesus would not be seen much longer but the disciples would see Him – How?
- Through Jesus' Father sending them the Holy Spirit.
- (20)- "On that day" – there are 3 interpretations for this phrase:
  - 1) The day of His return – when Jesus comes again from heaven for His own (those He has saved);
  - 2) The day of Pentecost – this understanding is for all believers as well as the disciples, Jesus truly returned to indwell believers through the person of the Holy Spirit;
  - 3) The day of His resurrection – only the disciples saw Him after His resurrection, then they knew without a doubt that He was in the Father (this is the most likely meaning).
- (21-24)- Six times "love" is used in these verses; we should sense Jesus' sincerity in desiring our love.
- How do we demonstrate our love for Him?
- **Through our obedience to His words!** What does that mean?
- It means we must study His Words in the Bible to know His love for us and how we are to be obedient!
- There are three promises resulting from loving via obedience: (21) you will be loved by Father and Jesus; (23) Father and Jesus will come to you; and, (23) will make their home with you.
- (26) - Jesus says, the Holy Spirit is to teach and remind the disciples of everything He has told them.
- He was first a Teacher for the disciples and illuminates Scripture for us today (**Isa. 40:13-14, 1 Cor. 2:10-13, Eph. 1:16-17**).
- The Holy Spirit indwells us for illuminating the words of Christ for our understanding.
- Lastly, Jesus speaks of peace – (**14:27-31**)
- Jesus' peace is not a worldly peace but a Holy peace.
- A pure, honest, peace without conditions, the world doesn't understand peace like this especially during crisis.
- Jesus tells us to not let our hearts be troubled, fearful.
- We are to have faith, trust, read His Word, pray, and listen to the Holy Spirit's leading.
- The prince of this world is Satan and he is a real live being with all characteristics of personality.
- The world thinks this is foolish but Jesus says "he is coming!"
- If Satan wasn't foolishness to Jesus is it wise to take him lightly?
- Jesus' peace is available to all believers but they must choose it over troubles/fears.
- With all this in mind, let's go through the study lesson.

(+6 min)

**Discussion of the Study Lesson** – (~31 min)

**This week's title:** Passion Week II - The Truth and the Life - **John 14:15–15:17**

**Highlighted verses:** "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth." **John 14:16-17a** and "I am the true vine" **John 15:1a**

**Day 1: Read John 14:15–15:17**

1. **Read John 14:15–15:17** at least once, jotting down initial observations.

- You might mention that when they see "Spirit" with a capital 'S' in Scripture, it is always referring to the Holy Spirit.
- A lower case "s" refers to human spirit.

(+4 min)

### Day 2: Read John 14:15 – 14:31

1. The disciples are feeling troubled as Jesus is revealing he will soon leave them. How will the promise of the Holy Spirit bring comfort to the disciples?

- Jesus' promise: "...will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you."
- While they are feeling troubled by Jesus' leaving, He assures them He will still be with them.

(+2 min)

2. In these verses Jesus gives titles and descriptions of the Holy Spirit.

a) How is the Holy Spirit revealed as a Teacher?

- As the Spirit of truth.
- The Holy Spirit reveals truth to us.
- One of the Holy Spirit' responsibilities for the disciples was to "...remind you(them) of everything I (Jesus) said."
- The Holy Spirit illuminates us to the teachings of Jesus.

(+3 min)

b) How is the Holy Spirit revealed as a Counselor?

- See **14:26**
- D. A. Carson ("The Gospel of John," page 499): Counselor: "literally to call alongside. It has a legal meaning. Someone who helps another in court. An advocate or a witness in court."

(+3 min)

3. What did Jesus mean when He said, "you are in Me and I am in you" (**14:20**)? (See also **14:23**, **Colossians 1:27** and **Matthew 28:20**.)

- There is some debate on what "On that day" refers to. Some think this is referring to Pentecost. More likely this is referring to the resurrection of Jesus. Either way, believers experience this now.
- This is not something we can fully comprehend. We have a union with Jesus that is compared to the union between the Father and the Son. For every believer this is something very special.

(+3 min)

### Day 3: Read John 15:1-17

1. Jesus does not command us to bear fruit. Why is Jesus' only command, "Remain in Me" (**15:4**)? What does it mean to remain in Jesus?

- Part 1: Remaining in Jesus always leads to producing fruit.
- We cannot produce fruit through our own efforts apart from Jesus.
- Part 2: Continued production depends on constant union with the source of fruitfulness.

- Branches that are separated from the parent stock may produce leaves temporarily, but inevitably they will wither because there is no source of life to sustain them; and they will never bear fruit.
  - The effectiveness of the believer depends on his receiving the constant flow of life from Christ.
- (+3 min)

2. What are the implications of Jesus' claim that He is the true vine (**15:1**)?

- He is the only vine that produces true life
- (+3 min)

### Day 4: Read John 20:31

Consider how **John 14:15–15:17** relates to John's purpose in writing this Gospel. *"...that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).*

1. How does the imagery of the vines and the branches help us better understand the life Jesus gives to all who believe?

- True life only comes from being connected to the true vine.
  - This life produces fruit because this life is connected to the true vine.
- (+4 min)

### Day 5: Read John 14:15–15:17

1. What specific ways is the Spirit being your Teacher and Counselor?

- Personal question but a good one to have everyone share if possible.
- (+3 min)

2. Picture yourself as a branch bearing much fruit. How do you become this person?

- A key is to remain in Christ.
- This comes about through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- If we are united with Christ, fruit will be inevitable in our life.
- Seeking to bear fruit apart from Christ is hopeless.
- We should seek to remain in Christ through prayer, reading the Bible, through the sacraments, and fellowship with other believers.

(+3 min)

### Closing Comments

- Verse **2** presents a problem for almost everyone.
- The consensus is that no one can adequately explain the term *"cut off."*
- So here are six variations on thought:
- 1) A few scholars think believers who grievously sin will lose eternal life – this seems out of sync with what Jesus has said.
- 2) Some say John is describing people who appear to be Christian but aren't – Judas for example.
- 3) Another opinion is God takes away, puts out of ministry, puts on the shelf, branches not bearing fruit.
- 4) Some say God removes His power from non fruit bearing branches.

- 5) A few say Jesus is referring to the church and churches not bearing fruit will be removed.
  - 6) Some disagree with the Greek *airo* word interpretation – in the Greek it has four meanings: three relate to *lifting up*, only one relates to *removing*.
    - Using one of that relates to *lifting up*, the verse would read, “*every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He lifts up*”
  - Bottom line – don’t quibble over these verses, its sometimes best to leave verses like this till the Lord comes, whichever you believe is your choice, this is an example of disputable verses which are not foundational.
  - Our focus on **15:1-5** should be on two things, fruit bearing and remaining in Christ.
  - Fruitful branches are trimmed.
  - A prerequisite to being trimmed is living for Jesus, e.g., keeping His commands, otherwise there will be no fruit.
  - Every believer has some fruit, however little, you must at least believe to be a branch and that’s fruit.
  - Everyone who produces even a little fruit will be pruned by God.
  - Are you learning new things in this study of John that you didn’t know before?
  - Are you a bit miserable because some new light is shining on your life and you aren’t as good as you thought you were – here’s the good news – that’s part of God’s pruning!
  - How might God be pruning your life?
  - Remember, it’s a good thing that He is pruning you!
  - **15:4-5** – Jesus gives a command – “*remain in Me*” followed by a promise “*I will remain in you*” and that is followed by a fact, “*bear much fruit*” – How? By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit!
  - Remaining in Jesus involves pruning, experiencing Jesus within us, and bearing fruit!
  - **15:7-8** – “*my words*” – God’s words show us what God is like – Jesus repeatedly said He speaks what God gives Him to say.
  - Our words, though invisible, give others a picture of what we are really like: it doesn’t matter whether or not we intend them to!
  - That off-colored joke, sexist remark, gossip, cutting comments about a peer in order to get a laugh...
  - Our words are mental pictures of our heart condition!
  - We are to bear fruit and to know that Jesus’ words remain in us! A command followed by a promise!
  - A couple kinds of fruit – one, is that of sharing the gospel with others; two, that of building our own character – **Gal. 5:22-23** “*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*”
  - Remaining in Christ brings us in tune with God and our lives become more effective for Him.
  - You have been chosen and qualified to produce much fruit by remaining in Him.
- (+8 min)

### Closing Prayer

- Try to identify how the Holy Spirit has worked in your group discussion, then express how you see that, and finally, thank the Lord for what He has done within your group.
- (+1 min)