

Simply Jesus

The Life and Ministry of God's Son

Inductive: Lesson 24

Introduction

In John 14, Jesus told the disciples in detail what He was going to do for them by providing the way to the Father, the greater work of answered prayer, and the addition of another Helper who would remain with them. Now in John 15, Jesus tells them that God wants to use their lives and what their response needs to be. As Jesus walks out into the dark night followed by the disciples, He moves along the pathway toward the Garden, using the surroundings in the vineyard to illustrate a critical lesson about *abiding* and *fruit bearing*.

The disciples would have been very familiar with the illustration Jesus used regarding the vine. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel is often depicted by the use of a vine or a vineyard. The psalmist said in Psalm 80:8–10, *You have brought a vine out of Egypt . . . and planted it. You prepared room for it, and caused it to take deep root and it filled the land.* Then at a low point in the nation's history, Jeremiah described God's people this way: *Yet I had planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant of an alien vine? (Jeremiah 2:21).* In Isaiah 5, we see a similar picture: *For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry for help" (v. 7).*

The nation as a whole had turned away from God; but a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is what it would take for God's people to turn to Him. This is the true life Jesus came to offer.

Did you know ~

The name Jesus used for Himself here in John 15:1 is "I Am." It is the same name God used in Exodus 3, when He called Moses by the burning bush to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let His people go. It's interesting to note that John wove much of his teaching about Jesus around the seven "I AM" declarative statements: *I am the bread of life, I am the light of the world, I am the door, I am the good shepherd, I am the resurrection and the life, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and I am the vine.*

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

Up Close ~

The chart below represents a reader's guide to the contents of this week's lesson. The topical teachings and/or events covered are followed by the primary scriptural text as well as the supportive parallel passages. You will be able to receive and grasp a well-rounded picture of the story narrative in the Gospel harmony by reading every passage. However, using the bolded text as your point of reference (your anchor text) will allow you to determine the facts, lessons, and personal applications necessary to formulate your own conclusions.

| <u>Teaching / Event</u> | <u>Scripture Text</u> | <u>Parallel Passages</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| The True Vine | John 15:1-8 | |
| Love and Joy Perfected | John 15:9-17 | |
| The World's Hatred | John 15:18-25 | |

First Impressions: Group Discussion

Reflect for a moment on the passages you have just read.

Respond by recording your first impressions from your initial reading of the text. Be prepared to share one of your impressions with your discussion group.

Heartbeat: John 15:1-2 NKJV (Memory verse)

(Write it out once in the space below. **Practice it each time** you open your lesson.)

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:1–8

The True Vine

1 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit
He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine,
neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;
for without Me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather
them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire,
and it shall be done for you.

8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

John 15:9–17

Love and Joy Perfected

9 As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept
My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

11 These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and
that your joy may be full.

12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I
have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit,
and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in
My name He may give you.

17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

John 15:18–25

The World's Hatred

18 If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world,
but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.'
If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word,
they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because
they do not know Him who sent Me.

22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now
they have no excuse for their sin.

23 He who hates Me hates My Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin;
but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law.
'They hated Me without a cause.'

(Scripture from the New King James Bible, © 1980 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.)

Observation: Look!

Pray. Read the Bible passage several times, trying to get a big picture of what is going on.

Left Column (Facts): Following the writer in the order he tells the story, briefly describe who is involved, what is happening, when and where the events are taking place.

Right Column (Observations): Look closely to observe details. Some questions you may ask:

- What do you know about the people involved in the story? What questions does the story raise? What sources of conflict do you see? What does Jesus identify as true and important to life?
- Put yourself in the Biblical character's shoes. What were his ambitions? How did the character relate to others or to God? What problem did he think he faced? Did Jesus identify a different problem in his life? What did he discover about God? How did he respond?
- Are there any words that you are not familiar with? Look up the definition.
- Are there words or phrases that are repeated or emphasized? Why are they key?
- Identify comparisons, such as "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven..." What do you know about leaven (yeast)? Identify contrasts, such as "You have heard it said...but I say to you..."
- Extra: Record information you may find in Bible dictionaries, maps, handbooks, or encyclopedias. Understanding the culture/time in which Jesus lived will help you discover the meaning of the text.

John 15:1-8

The True Vine

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

John 15:9–17

Love and Joy Perfected

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

John 15:18–25

The World's Hatred

What does it say? (Facts from passage)

What do I see? (Personal research/observations)

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Pray. The more time you take to observe the passage, the more you will have a basis for understanding what God's Word means. Interpretation **always** seeks to answer the questions, "What was God saying to the original audience?" and then, "How does that same truth relate to life today?" Asking yourself questions will help you see the spiritual lesson in the text: What does this teach me is true about God? What does it teach me is true about mankind? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to the promise? Is there an example I should follow or avoid? A spiritual lesson is a timeless truth that points to God and speaks to the heart of man. Stating the lesson in a sentence of 10 words or less will help you keep it simple and memorable.

Application: How does it apply to me? Pray. Practicing Biblical truth day-to-day is the only way to grow in Christ and reflect the glory of God. To apply the spiritual lesson you have learned from the text, you have to take deliberate action. Take the time to examine yourself, and ask: Does this spiritual lesson point out error in my thoughts about God? Does it point to error in my attitude or actions? How does this lesson relate to my home life, my work, my relationships, how I spend my time, etc.? What change is required? What practical steps will I take to make that change? Write your application in the form of a question to help make it personal.

John 15:1–8

Lesson:

Application: _____

John 15:9–17

Lesson:

Application: _____

John 15:18–25

Lesson:

Application: _____

Behold & Be Transformed

What did you see as you beheld God's Son?

How does beholding (looking upon) Him, motivate you to change your thoughts, habit, attitude, speech or actions?

Pause . . . What is the most significant lesson you have learned this week?

Ponder . . . How will you put it into practice?

Pray . . . Write out your prayer and be specific.
