

The Gospel of John: That You May Believe
The Vital Importance of Mission - Part 1
John 15:1-16:4 (page 752)

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Frank Mascaro

Jesus instructs the disciples about the basic principles of pursuing the mission of Christ (15:1-16:4)

The image of the "vine"

- In the OT = Israel (Isa 5:1-7; Eze 15:1-5; Hos 10:1)
- Ultimately = Jesus (Psm 80:7-19)

Jesus gives the "secrets" to effective mission (15:1-17):

- God the Father prunes the branches for fruitfulness (vs 1-2; Heb 12:4-11)
- Fruit bearing is humanly impossible apart from Christ (vs 3-6)
- Prayer is crucial to fruitfulness (v 7-8; 1 Jn 5:14-15)
- Love is to be the motive for fruitfulness (vs 9-13; Gal 5:13-15; 1 John 4:7-12)
- He has chosen us to go and bear fruit (14-17; Gal 5:22)

Point: As followers of Jesus, we are to remain connected to Christ in order to reproduce the fruitful life of Christ so that God is glorified.

Jesus gives the context of the mission - the "world" (15:18-16:4)

Opposition from the world

- is inevitable (15:18-25)
- may be fierce (16:2; Matt 24:9-10)
- may be acceptable (16:2; Matt 10:17-20)
- is endurable (v 19; 25; 26; Phil 3:10; Matt 5:11-12)

Point: Jesus wants His followers to be clear about the cost of the mission and bearing His name before the world.

Growth Group
Sermon Study Helps
John 15:1-16:4 (Week Twenty-six)

(Note: This guide is to help *facilitate* discussion with your Growth Group. Use it as a *RESOURCE* for the group in discovering and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you *do not want to use* and there may be instances where the group *chooses to focus on a particular point, verse or truth*. This guide is to assist the group in growing in their relationship with Christ and the Scriptures, thus, it is not necessary to complete all of the points in the discussion guide...use this with flexibility and not as a rigid task list to get through. God's richest blessing upon you all.)

Intro:

In John chapter 15 we find Jesus continuing His instructions to His disciples. He has given them comforting words in chapter 14 for their troubled hearts and now He opens up to them the keys to carrying on God's mission to the world concerning His salvation. He will be teaching them about the vital nature of their mission and that they need to PURSUE it by their understanding and practice of abiding in Him; that they must be aware of the COST of their mission and next week we will see the RESOURCES that will be available to them to successfully engage the world. These things are critical for the disciples to hear and grasp as they will soon be learning to live and minister without the physical presence of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

Was there anything said on Sunday that got your attention, a particular point, or that you have a question about?

What is the difference between a "disciple" and a "believer"?

What is Jesus teaching by referring to Himself as the "True" vine?

What does it mean to "bear fruit"? Give examples.

Why does Jesus speak of us now as friends and not as "slaves"? Discuss.

How can we know in which areas it is okay to be like the "world" (styles, fads, etc) and where do we need to be distinct from the world? Discuss.

Read vs 22-24...Why does Jesus' coming remove all excuses for sin? Discuss.

What does Jesus mean when He speaks of bearing "fruit that lasts". (v 16)

Is fruitfulness an infallible mark of Christianity? (v 5, 8, 16; Matt 7:16-20) Why or why not?

According to 15:19, we are now in Christ and not of this world. What does that mean in spiritual terms? How is it lived out in practical terms?

Practically, how can you love someone you don't like? What does that look like in everyday life? Does the example of Jesus' life help us with this question?

Taking it to the streets....

1. Discuss what is currently happening to Christians in countries where they are persecuted. What are some practical ways that you and this group can respond to the needs of our persecuted fellow believers?
2. What ungodly activities, relationships, or priorities do you need to prune out of your life so that the Father doesn't have to? Prioritize them and work out a plan to get started.
3. How do you see the Holy Spirit active in your life today? When do you rely most on the Holy Spirit?