

IN THE
BEGINNING
WAS THE...

WORD

A STUDY THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

LESSON 15 – Believers Must...CONTINUE JESUS' WORK & MISSION

FACILITATOR'S Note

MAIN POINTS THIS WEEK: Believers are called upon to continue the work of the Savior in order that all men may know and be saved (4:38; 15:16; 17:18; 20:21–22)

The following lesson is designed to help class participants understand that all believers are called upon to share the message of Jesus with others so that all people have the opportunity to come to know Him and be saved. Jesus gave His apostles the solemn charge of going into the world to preach the gospel message to all people, but He also charged them to teach people everything He had taught them, which means the apostles were to teach people the message and teach them how to in turn teach it to others. In this way, the message of Jesus spreads throughout the world, as it is preached from one generation to the next. Spend time today helping your class participants understand this truth.

Remember, this semester we hope to provide material that will provide knowledge (HEAD); then ask questions that will bring us understanding (HEART); and then motivate participants to go and live the Word in the world and demonstrate Godly wisdom (HANDS). Help them with that today.

HEAD → HEART → HANDS

As always, we would encourage you to begin preparing for each lesson by digging into the Word and specifically the text for each of the weeks. **This week the texts are: 4:38; 15:16; 17:18; 20:21–22.** As you move through the Word, jot down any thoughts that come to you and particular passages that stand out and speak to you. We assure you that these will come into play as you facilitate this discussion. It is then that you should approach this lesson plan and use it (and others) only as a guide for the weeks to come. Your group is different than all the rest and so your lessons should be adapted accordingly.

PRAYER

Begin your time with a prayer asking God for the guidance of His Holy Spirit as you and your class seek to encounter Him through His Holy Word.

FOCUS

- Understand that Jesus gave the solemn charge to His disciples to share with people everywhere the gospel message of salvation through faith in Him.
- Understand that Jesus' charge to His disciples is also given to all believers in every generation.

DISCUSSION STARTERS (OPTIONAL)

- What are marching orders?
march·ing or·ders
noun
plural noun: **marching orders**
 1. instructions from a superior officer for troops to depart.
 - *informal*
a dismissal or sending off.
- Have you ever received marching orders or know someone who has? Are these optional orders?
- How is Jesus commission (or charge) to go and share the gospel like marching orders? Is His commission optional?
- Why do we live as if it was?

From the Gospel of John

- 4:38

- Key Points

- This verse appears within the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar. He made such a big impression on her that she returned to the town and spread the news of her encounter with the townspeople. In speaking to His disciples about their need to reach out to the Samaritans, Jesus said: ³⁸*I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.*
 - It is clear from the prior verses, vv35-37, that Jesus is comparing the Samaritans to crops that are now ready to be harvested because people other than His disciples (e.g. John the Baptist and his followers) had done the work to plant and water the crops so that they would grow.
 - Jesus directly states that He sent His disciples to reap what others had sown; others did the work which prepared the Samaritans to receive the gospel, but the disciples also had work to do, namely, deliver the gospel message so that the Samaritans could become children of God through faith in Jesus.
 - We can generalize Jesus' statements to us, i.e., we are to be busy working also:
 - Sharing our lives and the gospel (sowing seed) to prepare people's hearts to receive the gospel at some point.
 - Helping them put on Christ and walk in faith (harvesting the crop).
 - Jesus' statements apply to all believers per His command to the apostles that they teach all disciples to obey everything He commanded of them (the apostles). See Matt 28:19-20.

- Contemporary Application

- Have there been times in your work when you have reaped the benefits of what others have sown? Discuss.
 - You may have shared your faith with someone who eventually committed their lives to Jesus, though you didn't see it come to pass. You sowed, but you didn't reap. Did your work mean/count any less?
 - Are you willing to serve in a ministry where you will only sow and not reap, or are you a person who must see the benefit of your labor?

- 15:16

- Key Points

- This passage occurs within the allegory of the Vine and the Branches in which Jesus compares Himself to the source vine from which every disciple grows as a branch, and apart from which the disciple cannot live or grow: ¹⁶*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

- Jesus chose the disciples, they did not choose Him, and He appointed them to go and bear fruit --- fruit that will last.
- This task – to go and bear fruit that will last – also applies to all believers, i.e., all believers have been given this same task/charge from Jesus, based on the following:
 - The “to go” clearly implies that “bear fruit” refers not just to personal/internal growth but service/outreach that leads to the conversion of others to Christ.
 - The great commission, Matt 28:19-20 (as mentioned above) makes it clear that the apostles were to teach all disciples to do the same thing Jesus taught them, which means they were to teach others the gospel and teach them to in turn teach others. This is how the “fruit that will last” is fulfilled. The cycle is perpetual as all believers have the charge to preach the gospel and teach other believers to do the same.
- Contemporary Application
 - Most of us are not missionaries or ministers by profession, i.e., not people who make their living from preaching the gospel. How do we as laymen best go about executing the charge to bear fruit?
 - Are there opportunities at FXCC (e.g. 15 in 15 campaign) which could help you carry out the charge?
- 17:18
 - Key Points
 - This verse occurs within Jesus’ prayer that He offers when He is with His disciples, after Judas Iscariot had left to effect the betrayal following Jesus’ final Passover meal. When asking the Father to protect His disciples from the evil one (Satan), Jesus said: ¹⁸*As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.*
 - Jesus’ mission is the pattern for the mission of His apostles.
 - The Father sanctified Jesus and sent Him into the world for a purpose (see 10:36a, 5:36-37, 17:3-4).
 - Jesus does the same with His apostles.
 - He prays to the Father for their sanctification in the prior verse: ¹⁷*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*
 - He then sends them into the world in v18.
 - The apostles are not to live aimlessly. They’ve been given a definite commission by Jesus and their task is to discharge it, just as He discharged His mission from the Father.
 - By extension from the great commission (Matt 28:19-20) as discussed already above, all disciples have the same mission: we are not to live aimlessly but serve God – executing Jesus’ commission to share with others the gospel message of salvation through faith in Him and bringing Him glory in all that we do.
- 20:21-22
 - Key Points
 - These verses occur within John’s account of Jesus’ first post-resurrection appearance to His disciples, who were hiding in a house behind locked doors for fear of the

Jewish leaders: ²¹Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²²And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

- Jesus had just appeared to His disciples, showing them the wounds on His hands and side (vv19-20), indicators that He had just brought to its consummation the solemn task that the Father had sent Him into the world to complete.
 - In that moment, He commissions His disciples with the solemn task of going into the world to share with everyone the message of salvation by faith in Him.
 - Their task proceeds from His own – just as the Father sent Him, so now He sends them. There is work to be done.
 - V22 is significant as it shows that He does not leave them alone but equips them Himself with what they need to succeed in the charge He has given them, namely, the Holy Spirit.
 - Again, by extension from His great commission (Matt 28:19-20), all believers have the same solemn charge: continue the work of the Jesus in order that all men may come to know Him and be saved.
- Contemporary Application
 - How does a person's life demonstrate that they are living as one who has been sent on a mission by Jesus?

UNDERSTANDING HEART

- Why is it important that we understand that Jesus has charged us with the task of sharing the gospel message of salvation with others?
- How can you best go about sharing the message of Jesus with others?

WISDOM HANDS

- Think of someone in your circle of friends/family that needs a personal relationship with Jesus. How can you help them learn that Jesus died for them personally and that by putting their faith/trust in Him, they will receive God's forgiveness and eternal life?
- Start praying for them each day that God will use you and others to help them come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

PRAYER

End your time together with a prayer. Ask Him for the strength, courage, and power to go and share His Gospel message with boldness to the world!

CLASS OUTLINE

"...but these are written so 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) The Gospel of John was written so that those who read its message may believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God, THE CHRIST. The following outline holds the major themes expounded on in the Gospel of John in order that its readers may believe in Jesus and have eternal life. (Adapted from the "Key Themes" outline in the ESV Study Bible):

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (January 4)
2. THE WORD IS...
GOD (January 11)
 - a. Jesus is GOD
 - b. 1:1–2, 18; 5:17–18; 8:58–59; 10:30–33; 20:28
3. THE WORD IS...
BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD (January 18)
 - a. Jesus existed before the creation of all there is.
 - b. 1:1–2; 8:58; 17:5, 24
4. THE WORD IS...
OMNISCIENT (ALL KNOWING) (January 25)
 - a. Jesus has supernatural knowledge that only God can possess.
 - b. 1:48; 2:4, 19, 23–25; 3:14; 4:17–18; 6:51, 70; 8:28; 9:3; 10:15, 17–18; 11:4, 14; 12:24, 32; 13:10–11, 38; 21:18–19
5. THE WORD IS...
THE MESSIAH AND SON OF GOD (February 1)
 - a. Jesus is the promised Messiah and Son of God prophesied in Old Testament.
 - b. 1:36, 41, 49; 3:18; 4:25, 29; 5:25; 7:26, 27, 31, 41, 42; 9:22; 10:24, 36; 11:4, 27; 12:34; 19:7; 20:30–31
6. THE WORD IS...
THE "I AM" (February 8)
 - a. Jesus is the "I AM" from the Old Testament. He is Yahweh/Jehovah.
 - b. 4:26; 6:20, 35, 48, 51; 8:12, 18, 24, 28, 58; 9:5; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1; 18:5–6 (cf. Ex. 3:14–15; Isa. 41:4; 43:10–13, 25; 45:18; 51:12; 52:6)
7. THE WORD IS...
THE SON WHO WAS SENT BY AND REFLECTS THE FATHER (February 15)
 - a. Jesus was sent by God and reflects the very essence of the Father.
 - b. 3:17, 35–36; 5:19–26; 6:40; 8:35–36; 14:13; 17:1
8. THE WORD IS...
THE FULFILLMENT OF JEWISH FESTIVALS/INSTITUTIONS (February 22)
 - a. Jesus fulfills the Jewish festivals and institutions found in the Law (even the temple itself).
 - b. 1:29, 36; 2:14–22, esp. v. 21; 4:23–24; 8:12; 9:5; 19:14
9. THE WORD IS...
THE GIVER OF ETERNAL LIFE (March 1)
 - a. Jesus gives eternal life to those who believe in Him.
 - b. 1:4; 3:15–16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 26, 39–40; 6:27, 33, 35, 40, 47–48, 51, 53–54, 68; 8:12; 10:10, 25, 28; 11:25; 12:25, 50; 14:6; 17:2–3; 20:31

10. THE WORD IS...

A MIRACLE WORKER (March 8)

- a. Jesus performs signs and wonders that demonstrate that He is the promised Messiah.
- b. 2:1–11, 13–22; 4:46–54; 5:1–15; 6:1–15; 9:1–41; 11:1–44

11. THE WORD IS...

TESTIFIED BY OTHERS TO BE THE MESSIAH (March 15)

- a. Witnesses testify that Jesus is the Messiah.
- b. 1:7–8, 15, 19, 32, 34; 3:11, 32–33; 4:39; 5:31–39; 8:14, 18; 10:25; 15:26–27; 18:37; 19:35; 21:24

12. THE WORD IS...

UNIFIED WITH FATHER AND SPIRIT IN THEIR WORK OF REVELATION AND REDEMPTION (March 22)

- a. Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their work.
- b. 14:17–18, 23, 26; 15:26; 20:21–22

13. THE WORD IS...

THE BASIS OF SALVATION (March 29)

- a. It is by Jesus' death that God brings His people salvation.
 - i. 1:29; 3:14–15; 6:51–58; 10:15; 11:50–52; 12:24; 15:13
- b. God is sovereign in salvation.
 - i. 3:21; 5:21; 6:37–45, 64–65; 10:16, 26–30; 15:16; 17:2, 6, 9

14. BELIEVERS MUST...

CONFESS AND BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH (April 12)

- a. Salvation is obtained by believing in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God.
 - i. 1:12; 3:15, 16; 5:24; 6:29, 35; 8:24; 11:25–27, 42; 12:44; 17:8, 21; 20:31
- b. The benefits of salvation can be experienced here and now (in this evil age), but will be fully known when He returns.
 - i. 3:18, 36; 4:23; 5:24; 6:39–40; 10:10, 26–29; 11:25–26

15. BELIEVERS MUST...

CONTINUE JESUS' WORK AND MISSION (April 19)

- a. Believers are called upon to continue the work of the Savior in order that all men may know and be saved.
- b. 4:38; 15:16; 17:18; 20:21–22

16. CONCLUSION TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (April 26)