

St. John L49 – Lessons 43-48 Study Summary

Lesson 43 – John 15:1-17

Life in God's Vineyard: Vines & Branches

- Q1-2 – God the Father prunes all branches that “abide” in Jesus, His True Vine. Pruning is a lifetime process as God works with us to become more Christ-like. Productive branches are pruned to become more productive. Unproductive branches are pruned off, where they wither and die and are destroyed by fire.
- Q3 – “Producing fruit” often equates to growth in believer numbers, but there is also a personal, inward growth of believer (character growth, Christlikeness).
- Q4 – Believers producing fruit for God is both possible...and expected! It is the Father who prunes...!
- Q7-8 – Believers go from being God's servants to being Jesus' friends when they live by and obey His commands. Many people are invited into faith, but few respond. The ‘chosen’ are those who respond to God's grace with humility and compassion.

Lesson 44 – John 15:18-16:4a

Disciples Will Be Tested

- Q1 – The ‘world’ hated Jesus, and Jesus said it will hate us --- His followers --- too! As God begins to reshape our lives and habits, family and friends we've known for a while may not understand or appreciate the changes. Converting to faith, thus, can lead to changes in personal relationships.
- Q4 – People become accountable to God once they've heard the Words of Christ. Romans adds that even Gentiles have a reasonable grasp of right and wrong within their consciences, and God will judge them by their consciences. Those rejecting God's Word will be judged by God's Word.
- Q6 – Christian testimonies are NOT to be about themselves. Rather, like the Holy Spirit's role on earth, we are obligated to discuss Christ's work within our lives so as to bring glory to God the Father and the Son. John the Baptist was quoted: “He (Jesus) must increase, and I must decrease.” Jesus living within us is our real hope. Peter said we must always be prepared to share our reason of hope to anyone who asks.
- Q8 – Fundamental Christian beliefs are under attack in modern America. In many social and cultural issues, Christians are often viewed as narrow-minded, exclusive, hypocritical and unsupportive.

Lesson 45 – John 16:4b-15

The Helper's Work

- Q1 – Jesus declared that it is to our ‘advantage’ that He leaves this world (physically), paving the way for the Holy Spirit of Truth, the Helper, to come and minister to us.
- Q2 – It is the Holy Spirit's purpose and mission to convict the world of sin. Believers have a role in this by sharing the Gospel with others, but it is the Holy Spirit who will bring new believers to faith. The New Testament says God makes believers competent to do this (share the Gospel), and, in fact, calls us God's ambassadors in this world we live in.
- Q3 – The Holy Spirit of Truth teaches us about God's righteous standards. Human ideas of right and wrong generally differ, with each one ‘doing what is right in his/her own eyes.’
- Q4 – The Holy Spirit also convicts the world of judgment to come, beginning with judging the ‘ruler of this world.’ Satan, known as the accuser of the (Christian) brethren, god of this world, and prince of the air, is the believer's adversary, too. He schemes against believers, prowling around looking for people to devour, and attacking them. It is right that God should judge him!
- Q5-6 – The Holy Spirit helps believers to recall Jesus' teachings and gives insight and understanding. As Jesus is to understanding God the Father, the Holy Spirit is to understanding God the Son.

Lesson 46 – John 16:16-33

Overcoming the World

- Q2 – Like a woman giving birth doesn't focus on the pains of childbirth, but the newborn child, Jesus told His disciples that the pain and sorrow they were about to go through were as nothing compared to the joy they would experience when He returned (being resurrected from the dead).

- Q3 – Jesus longed for His disciples to abide in Him so that they might experience His joy. Nehemiah taught us that the ‘joy’ of the Lord is a believer’s strength in life, even through mundane living in this world (Solomon). Experiencing God’s presence brings this joy (Psalms), and God’s Kingdom is about righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans).
- Q4 – Jesus noted that there are times when believers don’t need His advocacy with the Father for their prayers. This is because God the Father loves each believer, too, and stands ready to answer our prayers. The Father knows 1) that we love Jesus, and 2) that we know He sent Jesus.
- Q5 – Understanding the Bible can be hard at times. Corinthians teaches us that spiritual learning cannot happen without the Holy Spirit’s help. Timothy says we should study the Bible carefully, and that in practicing what is in it we move forward into maturity. Hebrews warns against believers learning only basic ‘baby’ teachings; with time, we need to move onto hard topics!

Lesson 47 – John 17:1-26 Jesus Prays for Us

- Q1, 3 – As Jesus began praying, He stated that the hour had come for the Father to glorify the Son, and the Son to glorify the Father. He later asked the Father to restore His glory that existed before the creation of the world.
- Q2 – Jesus indicates two important things about eternal life. First, the Father has given Him (Jesus) authority to grant eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him. Second, eternal life is not a future matter of gold and mansions, etc.... Rather, eternal life begins the day we come to belief and is described by Jesus as ‘knowing the only true God and Jesus whom He sent into the world.’ Eternal life, then, is about a *forever* personal relationship with God, not stuff...!
- Q4-5 – Praying for the disciples, Jesus asks the Father to unite them, keep them safe from the evil one, and to understand that though they live in this world, they were no longer “of” this world. Lack of Christian church unity undermines Christ’s witness to the world today.
- NOTE – Sanctification and Consecration are church terms that refer to “being set apart for God’s work.” Sanctification is God’s choosing and empowering of the individual. Consecration is individual commitment and his/her dedicated preparation to serve God.

Lesson 48 – John 18:1-27 Jesus Arrested → Peter’s Failure

- Q1 – Judas led the Temple guards and officers into the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Jesus, a place He frequented often with His disciples. Jesus had gone there to pray this night before His arrest.
- Q2-3 – Though several disciples may have been present with swords this night (Luke 22), only Peter responded by swinging his sword at the guards. He severed the ear of the high priest’s servant, Malchus, but Jesus immediately healed him and told Peter to put the sword away. Jesus was keenly aware that His obligation for this hour was to follow through with the Father’s plan.
- Q4-5 – Caiaphas was the High Priest at the time of Jesus’ arrest. His father-in-law, Annas, had been the previous High Priest, and, like former US Presidents, retained the title of High Priest while in retirement. When Jesus was arrested, he was first brought to Annas’ house for questioning before being remanded to Caiaphas’ house and a trial by the Sanhedrin (Jewish Council).
- Q8 – As Jesus foretold, Peter denied Jesus 3x this night when questioned about being one of Jesus’ disciples (followers). This is recorded in all 4 Gospels. From Luke, we know that as soon as he recognized his failure, he ran away, weeping bitterly. Jesus later ‘restored’ Peter by asking him 3x if he loved Him, and Peter said yes. This is the forgiveness of God at its best; though we may fail and disappoint Him at times, there is restoration for the truly repentant (1 John 1).