

The Full Extent of HIS Love

A study of John 13 – 21 – Jesus final instructions to His disciples

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These study guides have been designed to assist you in the “Three R’s” of your own Bible study – reading, receiving, and responding. You are welcome to print out the whole series. If you wish to print out only one lesson at a time, choose that option from your printer.

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Lesson 1

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“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. . .” John 13:33

For three years Jesus and His disciples had traveled together. Their friendship was deep; their experiences were amazing; and their understanding of Jesus was increasing. But they were not prepared for the events that would be occurring in Jerusalem during this celebration of the Passover Feast. Jesus knew, however, that “His time had come” and so in the privacy of the upper room, He talks with His disciples. He had demonstrated His love for them and for people, but now He wanted to show them “the full extent of His love”. So, He begins this final evening together by washing their feet - all 12 of them. He took on the role of a humble servant and made them comfortable and clean from the dust of that day’s journey. Then He tells them about the one who would betray Him and the one who would deny Him. There was an enormous difference between these disciples, wasn’t there? After the betrayer left, Jesus could freely comfort and instruct His disciples - those who were His followers then and those who have followed Him through the centuries since that evening. We need this comfort and instruction from our Savior just as much today as they did that night.

INFORMATION - John 13 and 14

For background on that night, you can also read Matthew 26: 17 - 35,
Mark 14: 12 - 31 and Luke 22: 1 - 34

OBSERVATION - Take one section at a time and listen carefully to what Jesus is saying. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why is it important?

1. John 13: 31- 38 - “I will be with you only a little longer.”
2. John 14: 1 - 14 - Words of comfort and clarity -
3. John 14: 15 - 31 - Jesus tells them about the Holy Spirit -

MEDITATION -

1. What do you think Jesus is telling us about Himself and the Father in this conversation?
2. Jesus will be leaving the disciples soon and He wants them to understand some things about the future. What impresses you about this?
3. In each of these paragraphs, one of the disciples asks Jesus a question? Think about Jesus’ response to His friends. How would these answers have helped them?

INVITATION -

1. What have you learned about God the Father, His Son - Jesus, and the Holy Spirit from these verses in John? Take some time to tell each one of them your response.
2. Jesus made many promises to His disciples at this time. Do any of them meet a need in your life today? Do any of them give you hope or security or encouragement? Then Jesus would like to re-assure you of His unchanging love and of the Holy Spirit’s presence.

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Lesson 2

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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.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

Jesus and His 11 disciples may still be in the Upper Room, getting ready to leave, or they may already be walking through a vineyard or by the temple gates on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. Can you even begin to imagine the intensity of these moments for our Savior as He talks with them at this time? He wants them to grasp these concepts and to hold on to them throughout the next weekend and for the rest of their lives. He wants them to know that they have been chosen by Him for the single purpose of bearing fruit -- fruit that will last. He wants them to know that even as the world hated Him, they also can expect to be treated in the same way. Wow - the minds of the disciples must have been spinning as they listened to His every word, trying to understand the meaning of what they were hearing. They must have been intent on trying to remember every concept and detail - vine, branch, fruit, abide, friend, Counselor, and persecution. Imagine that you were there that night.

INFORMATION - John 15: 1 - 16: 4

OBSERVATION - Take one section at a time and listen carefully to what Jesus is saying. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why was it important?

John 15: 1 - 17 - It's all about bearing fruit - no fruit, some fruit, more fruit, much fruit! (It may be helpful for you to remember that this was spoken to believers only. The words "cuts off" or "takes away" in verse 2 can also be translated "lifts up". A vine dresser takes an unproductive branch from the dirt, lifts it up, washes it, and attaches it again to the trellis, so that it can have sunlight and the opportunity to become fruit-bearing.)

John 15:18 - 16: 4 - It's a warning, so that His disciples will not stumble when persecution comes.

MEDITATION -

1. What do you think fruit-bearing means? What is the process of moving from "no fruit" to being a very productive branch? What are the responsibilities of the gardener, the vine, and finally, the branch?
Colossians 1:10, Philippians 1: 9 - 11, Galatians 5: 22 -23, Ephesians 5: 8 - 10
2. How do you "abide" or "remain" or "live" in Jesus? What does this mean? What is involved? What are the results for the branch?
3. Love has been a major theme, hasn't it? Go back and think about everything that Jesus has been saying about His love and their love for Him and for each other, starting in chapter 13. Notice whether love is a noun or a verb - an emotion or an action.

INVITATION - Consider what kind of a branch you are right now. Yes, you are a believer, but do you have the great joy that comes from bearing fruit, more fruit, or much fruit? It's O.K. to be honest because God knows the truth and He wants so much to take you to the next place, but it may mean some pruning. Tell him about your desires and readiness to cooperate. It will be a fantastic journey, you know. Talk to anyone who is on it!

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Lesson 3

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Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that IN ME you may have peace.

In this world you will have trouble.

But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16: 33

Jesus has some final words of comfort and instruction for His disciples. Following that conversation, He prayed with them, and on His own, in that olive grove. Then suddenly Judas and the soldiers were there. Jesus was preparing Himself and His friends for this moment in time, for He had come to do His Father's will and to do all that the Father had commanded Him to do. As He encouraged the disciples with the illustration of the temporary but incredible pain of a mother in labor, so He must have been reminding Himself that His unlimited anguish would be forgotten when the joy of the Father's resurrection power was revealed. It is almost impossible to think about, much less believe, words about joy when you are in the midst of pain and sorrow, isn't it? But that doesn't change the reality of it. Do you think there are some valuable lessons for us from these final words?

INFORMATION - John 16: 5 - 33

OBSERVATION - Take one section at a time and listen carefully to what Jesus is saying. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why is it important?

1. John 16: 5 - 16 - More about the "Counselor" or "Helper" that will be coming -
2. John 16: 17 - 33 - Your time of grief will turn to joy -

MEDITATION -

1. What is the relationship of God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
What is the ministry of the Holy Spirit? Learn all that you can about Him from this passage.
2. The disciples are filled with grief as they hear what Jesus is saying to them. These final words were meant to encourage them and to give them a short term (for the coming weekend) and a long term perspective on life. What did they finally understand and believe?
3. Peace - His final promise to them - in the midst of trouble. How does this become a reality for us?

John 14:27

John 20, 21

Romans 15:13

Galatians 5:22

Philippians 4:7

Colossians 3:15

INVITATION -

What a mystery and yet what a reality - the coming of the Spirit of God - to dwell in every believer. What do you think that He wants you to understand about His presence in your life today? Make the Holy Spirit part of your conversation with the Father and the Son and listen for His voice.

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Lesson 4

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**Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.** John 17: 3

Don't you love to hear some people pray? It almost feels as if you are in the presence of God Himself as you listen to them talk to Him. What would it have been like to see Jesus look toward heaven and then to hear Him pray to His Father? This must have been the most intimate moment for those disciples, and yet the most unnerving as they realized what Jesus was asking His Father to do. It is no wonder that when they got to the Garden of Gethsemane they were exhausted, and still unprepared for the events that they were to observe. Jesus had one thing on His mind, however, and nothing would deter Him from completing that work. What gave Him His strength and courage?

INFORMATION - John 17 - Read it several times -

OBSERVATION - Take one section at a time and listen carefully to what Jesus is saying. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why is it important?

1. John 17: 1 - 5 - Jesus prays to His Father for Himself -
2. John 17: 6 - 19 - Jesus prays for His disciples -
3. John 17: 20 - 25 - Jesus prays for those who will believe in Him -

MEDITATION -

1. What is Jesus requesting when He asks, "Glorify your Son, that your son may glorify you"?
Read Philippians 2: 6 - 11.
2. Try to rewrite verses 6 -19 in your own words, phrase by phrase.
What is Jesus talking over with His Father and what requests is He making of Him?
3. The disciples were clearly going to be sent into the world, and eventually around the world, and so Jesus prays for future believers. What are His heart's concerns for them?
4. If you were to model your prayer to your heavenly Father after Jesus prayer, what would that look like? Who would you pray for and what would your requests be?

INVITATION -

As you read this prayer of Jesus, there are so many things that He longs to see you experience as His beloved child and His ambassador. What do you hear Him saying to you? He longs to meet you and to give you "the full measure of His joy".

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Lesson 5

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It's the most important information that you will ever read in your entire life! Deny it and you will forever be separated from the life that God had in mind for you from the beginning. Doubt it and you will live in confusion and bewilderment throughout your days. Believe and you will be a new creature in Christ. But why? Why did Jesus have to suffer and die this way? Why didn't the Jews recognize Him as their promised Messiah. Maybe the answers are too simple for some; maybe too complicated for others. There are two things that are totally clear, however. The first is that the coming of Jesus and His death, resurrection, and ascension changed the world. The second is that believing in Him means life – real life for eternity.

**But these are written 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

INFORMATION - John 18: 1 - John 20: 18

OBSERVATION –

Take one section at a time and think carefully about the event that is being described. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why is it important?

1. John 18 - About Jesus Arrest and Trials and Peter's Denials
2. John 19 - When Jesus died and was buried . . .
3. John 20: 1 - 18 - "Early on the first day of the week . . ."

MEDITATION -

Read the accounts in each of the Gospels and let the truth of "the full extent of His Love" soak into your heart and soul, your mind and your spirit. Experience the whole weekend with Jesus, with the disciples, with Mary His mother, with Pilate, and the crowds, and with the new believers.

Matthew 26: 36 - Matthew 28

Mark 14: 32 - Mark 16

Luke 22: 39 - Luke 24

INVITATION -

Kneel at the foot of the cross, knowing that for You Jesus came from heaven. He came to show you the "full extent of His Father's love" for you. He came to take the full punishment for your sin, so that you could live for a while for His glory on earth and for eternity for His glory in heaven!

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Lesson 6

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Jesus said, "Do you truly love Me?" John 21:16

Peter and another disciple had been in the empty tomb. Mary Magdalene had seen Jesus in the garden and told the disciples about her conversation with him. And the rumors were being spread that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus. So what do you think it was like in the locked room where 10 of the disciples were hiding? And then Jesus came! He was alive and He was exactly the One they were wanted to see. He brought them peace; He brought them a challenge; and He gave them the Holy Spirit, as He had promised. Everything would be different from then on. Isn't that the way it is when a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. He indwells that person and everything is made new. Read on . . .

INFORMATION - John 20: 19 - John 21

OBSERVATION –

Take one section at a time and think carefully about the event that is being described.. How would you summarize it? How would you explain it? What questions do you have? Why is it important?

1. John 20: 19 - 23 - On Sunday night behind closed doors -:
2. John 20: 24 - 31 - Thomas meets Jesus one week later -
3. John 21: 1 - 14 - We're going fishing . . .
4. John 21: 15 - 19 - Jesus said, "Do you love Me?"
5. John 21: 20 - In conclusion -

MEDITATION -

1. How many times did the disciples see Jesus? What were the similarities and differences between these events?
2. Do you identify with any of these disciples? In what ways?
3. John 20: 21 is a verse often used at missionary conferences. In what ways had Jesus already prepared the disciples for this plan? Is this a verse that all Christians today should consider seriously? What would that mean?

Matthew 4: 18 - 20,
Matthew 28: 18 - 20

John 4:39
John 14: 12
John 17: 20, 21

4. Jesus' invitation to the fisherman 3 years before was to "follow Him". Jesus' invitation to Peter is repeated once again. What will this mean for Peter?

INVITATION - Jesus is inviting you to "follow Him" today no matter what others are doing.

If this is the desire of your heart, then listen to His voice and you will know the way He wants you to go.