**Small Group Guide**

**WEEK 2**

1. How does learning about the author help us understand his book and his writing?

1. How does John's purpose for writing help you when reading John 15?

**“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**

1. What questions does John's purpose for writing cause you to ask when reading John 15?

1. Which sign declares who you need Jesus to be in your life right now? Why?
   1. Turning water into wine John 2:1-11
   2. Healing the nobleman’s son John 4:43-54
   3. Healing the lame man by the pool of Bethesda John 5:1-14
   4. Feeding the 5000 John 6:1-15
   5. Walking on the Water John 6:16-24
   6. Healing the man born blind John 9:1-7
   7. Raising Lazarus from the dead John 11:1-45

1. Which “I am” statement describes what you need to know most about Jesus right now? Why?
   1. Turning water into wine. John 2:1-11
   2. Healing the nobleman’s son. John 4:43-54
   3. Healing the lame man by the pool of Bethesda. John 5:1-14
   4. Feeding the 5000. John 6:1-15
   5. Walking on the Water. John. 6:16-24
   6. Healing the man born blind. John 9:1-7
   7. Raising Lazarus from the dead John 11:1-45

1. Was there anything from the teaching time that you wanted to talk about?

**DAY 1** **WEEK 2**

Welcome back. We are going to continue with observations today. If we do a thorough job of observing what is in the text, we stand a greater chance of drawing accurate interpretations and applications. It is vital to be thorough.

1. Read verses 12-17. List what words and phrases are appearing repeatedly in this section.

1. Is there a command?

1. How does this command relate to the previous commands?

1. What do you notice in verses 14 and 15?

1. What does this new phrase that Jesus use to refer to the disciple indicate?

1. In point form, make a list of all the observations you have of this text (no interpreting). Stay as close to the text as you can.

1. What indicates friendship with Jesus (John 15:14-15)?

1. What stood out in today's study?  What questions do you have?

1. Write down what ways Jesus is inviting you to enjoy greater friendship with Him.

Spend some time praying about this.

**DAY 2 WEEK 2**

Welcome back. There is a reason Matthew 7:13-14 says,

**“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”**

Becoming a friend of Jesus has consequences. John 15:11 states that Jesus shares these truths with us so our joy will be full, but that does not mean being his disciple is easy.

1. Spend some time praying to clear your mind from the things that are cluttering it up. Pray that God will help you see what is in the passage today.
2. Slowly and purposefully read John 15:18-27.

1. Just to remind us, who is speaking and who is he speaking to?

1. What other subjects appear in this section? (Just a reminder for those of us who don’t enjoy grammar. The subject in grammar is the person, place, thing, or idea that is doing or being something.)

1. Write down your observations from this section.

1. Has the tone changed?

1. What are your observations of the world in this section?

1. In verse 22 - 24, what is it that makes them guilty of sin?

1. What are your observations about Jesus and the Father in this section?

1. What observations do you make about the disciples in this section?

1. What are your observations of the Helper in this section?

1. What questions or thoughts do you have? Spend some time praying about the questions you have in regards to this portion of scripture

**DAY 3 WEEK 2**

  How are you doing? Are you hanging in there? I hope you stick with it and that you continue to study! It is my deep desire and prayer that we become a family of 2 Timothy 2:15 believers.

**Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15**

Learning these skills is not easy, but it is so important!  Keep at it!

 I would like to invite you to spend some time in prayer asking God to get you ready to head into John 15 again.

We spent the first week and a half in our homework making observations. We were trying to look strictly at what the text said, without adding any of our own conclusions. When we dig into the text with observations we start to see what it is saying. The purpose of this is to not impose our context and understanding onto the text too quickly. We want to be able to read what the text itself has to say.

Now that we have our initial observations made. We want to take a look at the structure. Of the passage:

1. Read through John 15 (provided at the end of the homework). Now choose a different translation either the NIV or NET. You may not have a different translation at home but the You Version app for Smart Phones and the website b**iblegateway.com** can give you different versions to read. Read John 15 again, slowly and carefully.
2. Does the writer develop the ideas and thoughts through John 15? Draw a flow chart of main ideas.

Jesus is The True Vine

God is the Vine Dresser

Branches that don't bear fruit           Branches that bear fruit get pruned

The Vine dresser takes away          to bear more fruit.

Begin a new flow chart for each new main idea.

How are you doing? If you are struggling, that is okay. Keep going because even if you have learned one new thing, it is worth it. When a child is learning a new skill, we expect it to take time. Why should it be different for us? We expect them to fall when they learn to walk, why can’t we?

If you are feeling discouraged, call a friend and/or video chat with them and work through it together. Just remember, let the text speak for itself and use the text to help you understand what is there. The harder we work at properly understanding scripture, the greater our reward!!

This is where our small groups are of great benefit. When we discuss ideas and topics together, things become clearer. The more brains the better and the Spirit guides us to what lines up with the passage and the Word. The Bible is meant to be studied in community for that very reason.

We want to pull out a couple of threads of thought and see how the author develops them little more closely now.

1. The phrase, “Jesus’ words” is used in scripture to refer to the teachings of Jesus. Take note of what the text says about the words of Jesus in the following passages:
   1. John 15:3
   2. John 15:7
   3. John 15:15
   4. John 15:20

1. What does the text have to say about Jesus’ commands?
   1. John 15:10
   2. John 15:12
   3. John 15:14
   4. John 15:17
   5. How is the idea of commands developed through these verses? Did you learn something that gives you a greater understanding of what John 15 is saying?
2. What do the following passages in John 15 say about love?
   1. John 15:9
   2. John 15:10
   3. John 15:12
   4. John 15:1
   5. How is the idea of love built through these verses? What are the points the author is trying to make in the passage? What are the points the author is trying to highlight?
3. What does the text say about fruit?
   1. John 15:2
   2. John 15:4
   3. John 15:8
   4. John 15:16-17
   5. How is the idea of fruit developed through the chapter? Does this help you understand what John 15 is saying about fruit?

Take a moment to write down any questions you have. Try to see what the text says to address those questions. Spend some time talking to God about those questions.

**DAY 4 WEEK 2**

In week one, we learned that the main goal of studying the Bible is to allow the text to say what it is saying, rather than adding our own meaning. Now we are going to learn proper interpretations and applications of the text. To do this we look closer at how the Bible uses those images. This means that we are going to get into the text itself as deeply as possible.

Study of scripture is much different than devotional reading. Study is detailed. It is so important and as we discover truth, it leads to devotional reading. I wish we could visit one on one so I could hear from you the connections that are being revealed to you and how your understanding of this text is growing.

Last week we used the document Bible Study tool: Specific things to observe. You used it to help you make observations about the passage.  You will see on that document that identifying the “literary form” of the passage is an important step. Identifying the Literary form gives us a framework from which to understand what we are reading. Is it figurative or literal? Is it descriptive or historical? Each literary form is valuable but we approach them differently. There are many literary forms that can be observed throughout the Bible, such as narrative (storytelling), discourse (talking), and prophecy, to name a few.

This passage in John 15 is Jesus talking with his disciples. This means that the literary form of the passage is discourse. Jesus is teaching them, and using imagery to develop the idea of how they are to relationally bind to him. This helps us interact with the text more as the disciples in the scene would have, as well as the original readers of the text.

1. As you read, look at how are the main ideas grouped in John 15?
2. Do you like how the different sections in John 15 are grouped? Do the sections each have a main thought?
3. What idea or progression of thought does the structure highlight?
4. Go back to the flow charts you created for the passage in yesterday’s homework. How does each new focus or main idea connect to the one before and after it? Write the connections between each arrow in the flow chart you created.
5. Take a look at the passage at the end of the homework. Divide the passage into its natural sections, where the different thoughts start and end. Create a heading for each section around the main idea. Use different pens or highlighters to identify the sections and then write your headings in the margin. What do your groupings highlight?
6. What stood out to you today? Spend some time talking to God about what stood out to you or what you noticed today.

**DAY 5 WEEK 2**

Do you feel like you are in Grade 12 English Literature again? I am sorry! But really I’m not. It is so good for our minds to engage, work and struggle. Honestly, I am having so much fun and my brain is spinning so hard there are nights I just cannot unwind. I LOVE it!! I hope it is becoming a labor of love for you too.

Now that we have a grasp on the structure of the passage and the main ideas, we want to look at how those ideas are related.

1. Look again at how the text is grouped or how you chose to group the verses. How does each section relate to the next section?
2. What do you learn about the text from these connections? How do these connections help you better understand the text?
3. Where are the changes of thought?
4. In your own words, summarize what Jesus is saying to his disciples in John 15.
5. What do you learn about Jesus?
   1. What do you learn about Jesus and his relationship to the Father?
   2. What do you learn about Jesus and his relationship to his Disciples?
   3. In your own words, what does verse 11 say?
6. What was new or stood out to you today?