

Reading Together
Bible Reading
February 22 - 28

Monday, February 22 – John 14: 15 – 31

In verses 15 – 31, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to teach us and remind us of everything Jesus said to us. Look carefully at verse 15. Our love of Jesus is proven by our obedience to him; but also notice that our obedience will come as a result of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Look also at verse 27-- because of the Holy Spirit's work we can have peace in our lives that is very different from any other kind of peace. Any other peace that we have in our lives is dependent on our changing circumstances, and what may or may not happen next in our lives. The peace the Holy Spirit gives to us is permanent and lasting because it is a peace that comes from God, who never changes.

Look also at verses 30 and 31. Satan is the prince of this world, but he has no hold over Jesus. What has a hold over Jesus is his desire to obey and do the will of the Father even if it will cost him his life.

Tuesday, February 23 – John 15: 1 – 25

Chapter fifteen tells us exactly what we need to do if we want to bear fruit for Christ. It all starts by finding and keeping our life in him (abiding/remaining in Jesus). Jesus is the true vine and if we attach ourselves to anything other than him we will never bear fruit that will last. Notice how God is at work in our lives as the master gardener, cutting away the parts of us that interfere with the production of fruit. Verse 16 says the whole reason why we have been chosen in Christ is to bear fruit. Fruit in our

lives comes as we allow Christ's love to fill our hearts to the point where that love overflows into the hearts of those around us.

Wednesday, February 24 – John 15: 26 - 16: 16

In these verses Jesus tells us much more about what the Holy Spirit will do in our lives. In verse 7, Jesus tells us plainly that his leaving will allow the Holy Spirit to come. Because Jesus took on flesh so he could die for our sins, he was limited and could not be in more than one place at a time. So, if Jesus remained here with us, he could not be seated at the right hand of the Father and mediate on our behalf. So as Jesus went to be with the Father, he sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and in us. Because the Holy Spirit is a spirit it can be in many places at one time, meaning that the Holy Spirit can fill each of our lives so that each of us can be what we were saved by Christ to be.

Thursday, February 25 – John 16: 17 – 33

As you read these verses it is clear that Jesus' disciples have no idea that he is about to go to his death, even though that death is less than 24 hours away. In this passage Jesus tells his disciples that even though they will be sad for time, because he is going to die; their sadness will turn to joy as they see Jesus rise from the grave. Look carefully at verse 33. Jesus makes it very clear that in this life we should expect to have trouble, but in the midst of our trouble we must always remember that Jesus has overcome the world, and as we trust him we will too.

Friday, February 26 – John 17: 1 – 26

Chapter seventeen contains three prayers that are all wrapped up in one. First, Jesus prays for himself. Notice how this prayer centers on God's glory.

Next Jesus prays for his disciples. In verse 9 that Jesus is not praying for the whole world, only those who are his. As Jesus is about to leave his disciples, he asks God to protect them from the power of Satan (which is no match to God's power), and to give them unity. Notice the connection between God's protection and unity. The most destructive thing Satan can do isn't to bring misfortune or harm into our lives; it is disrupt the mission of Christ's church by bringing disunity into it. Also notice that even though the world is a place filled with evil, Jesus is sending his disciples to spread the truth of the Gospel so that everyone can hear it.

Finally, Jesus prays for us in verses 20 - 26. Again notice the stress on unity in his prayer for us. Also notice in verse 26 the connection Jesus makes between knowing him and knowing his love in our lives. It is the love of Christ that gives us unity with God and with other believers.

Saturday, February 27 – John 18: 1 – 40

Chapter eighteen gives us a little more detail of Jesus' arrest and trial than the other Gospel accounts. Notice in verses 5 and 6 when Jesus says, "I am he," that the soldiers who came to arrest Jesus fall to the ground. Once again, this is because when Jesus uses the words "I am" every Jew knew that he was claiming to be God. It made the soldiers think twice before arresting Jesus. I also think Jesus did this to protect his disciples. By making the soldiers state twice that they were coming to arrest only him, Jesus makes it clear they had no authority to arrest his disciples as well. You can see how this plays out in verses 8 and 9.

John also includes a little more detail about Jesus' trial before Pilate. You can see that Pilate clearly does not want to have to

deal with Jesus, but he cares more about his political well being than doing what is right.

Sunday, February 28 – John 19: 1 – 37

In chapter nineteen, John continues to give us details about Jesus standing before Pilate and Pilate's fear about how to deal with Jesus. Notice in verse 15, that the Jewish leaders were so intent on having Jesus killed that they were ready to acknowledge Caesar as their only king, and in so doing they not only reject the Son of God they also reject God.

Some of the most important words in the Bible are written in John 19: 30, "It is finished." With those words Jesus wasn't saying his life was finished, he was saying his work was finished. His death on the cross is the completion of God's redemptive plan to free us from sin, Satan and ultimately even death. His work on behalf is complete in itself. There is nothing we can do or need to do to make it better.

In verse 34 when the soldier pierces Jesus' side with a spear and the blood and water pour out, it proves that Jesus had indeed died. As Jesus hung on the cross, the soldier would have had to plunge his spear upwards into Jesus' chest cavity which would have either pierced his lungs or his heart.

Finally notice how John makes a point of saying he is an eyewitness to all of this in verse 35. Also notice how John takes even the smallest detail of Jesus crucifixion and ties them back into the Old Testament (verse 24—Jesus' garment [Psalm 22:18], verse 36—bones not being broken [Psalm 34:20], and verse 37—side being pierced [Zechariah 12:10]. By doing this John puts an exclamation point on the words "It is finished."