

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 01 Dec 2013 ..... John 12 ..... Live Selflessly
- 2) 08 Dec ..... John 13 ..... Serve Humbly
- 3) 15 Dec ..... John 14 ..... Believe Exclusively
- 4) 22 Dec ..... Luke 1-2 ..... Christmas Message
- 5) 29 Dec ..... John 15:1-25 ..... Stay Open and Obedient
- 6) 05 Jan 2014 ..... John 15:26 – 16:33 ..... Depend on the Spirit
- 7) 12 Jan ..... John 17 ..... Honor Jesus
- 8) 19 Jan ..... Psalm 139 ..... Value Every Life
- 9) 26 Jan ..... John 18 ..... Our Messiah - Abused
- 10) 02 Feb ..... John 19:1-16 ..... Our King - Condemned
- 11) 09 Feb ..... John 19:17-42 ..... Our Savior - Crucified
- 12) 16 Feb ..... John 20 ..... Live in Resurrection Power
- 13) 23 Feb ..... John 21 ..... Follow with Renewed Purpose

INTRODUCTION

- We have one major goal imposed upon us by our Creator
  - ♦ We are to produce fruit – not a little, but a lot of fruit, and this fruit is used to bring glory, credit, and honor to our God; and this fruit is a byproduct of our prayer life – ask and it will be given!
- Take notice how many times Jesus repeats His instructions. The repetition drives home the priority and significance of His teachings on this vital subject of praying for MUCH fruit in our lives

Passage	Comments
John 15:1-11	<p><b>Our Position as Branches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v2a. Branches which do not bear fruit are taken away                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Remember Jesus is addressing His Disciples</li> <li>♦ The passage is not alluding to the loss of salvation, but to the loss of rewards</li> <li>♦ In extreme cases, a believer may be taken home early, further curtailing their ability to develop fruit while here on earth ..... cf 1Cor 3:13-15; 11:27-30</li> </ul> </li> <li>• v2b. God prunes the good branches for MORE fruit                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Pruning/disciplining may hurt for a moment, but in the end it produces fruit of righteousness.. Heb 12:11</li> <li>♦ Key to minimizing the pain of pruning is to take steps to avoid developing bad fruit (i.e., anger, greed, selfishness, impatience, etc.) which has to be cut out</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv4-5. Abide in Christ to bear MUCH fruit = obedience</li> <li>• v6. Jesus re-emphasizes the judgment aspect of being a disobedient Christian. God disciplines His own. Again, not a loss of salvation, but a loss of rewards</li> <li>• vv7-8. Ask whatever you wish, and it will be done!!                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ This is not a name-it-claim-it game</li> <li>♦ We need to pray for/ask for MUCH fruit in our lives</li> <li>♦ Such praying is fully in line with God’s will for us</li> <li>♦ God will be glorified by answering such prayers for MUCH fruit (love, joy, peace, patience, etc.)</li> <li>♦ A side benefit is skeptics will see our answered prayers (our changed character) as proof of our faith</li> </ul> </li> <li>• vv9-11. If we truly love God we will keep His commandments, we will want to willingly obey to speak kindly, obey the speed limit, think rightly, act properly</li> </ul>
15:12-17	<p><b>Our Position with Each Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv12-13. How do we lay down our lives for our friends?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Are we willing to give till it hurts, to speak kindly when abused, to forgive when offended?</li> <li>♦ Does “friends” mean just other Christian friends?</li> <li>♦ Or can it mean our unsaved neighbors?</li> <li>♦ Consider Psalms 35:13-14 “when my enemies were sick I prayed for them; I humbled my soul with fasting; my prayer for them was genuine; I treated them as though they were my friend or brother”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

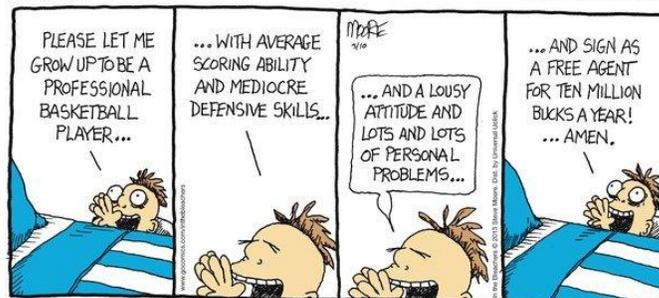
Passage	Comments
15:14-16	<p><b>Our Position as Friends of God</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv14-15. God has promoted us from slaves to friends                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ What does this mean? Is this applicable to the Apostles only or to us as well?</li> <li>♦ Since we too are now acquainted with the intimate design of His coming, His death, His resurrection, and ascension – we too are friends of God</li> <li>♦ But friendship is conditional (v14). We must obey</li> <li>♦ Willful disobedience leads to broken fellowship and loss of answered prayers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• v16a. We are chosen and appointed to bear permanent fruit – which means God is committed to help us bear fruit</li> <li>• v16b. Here is God’s commitment: Whatever fruit we ask for – we will get it                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ This is not a name-it-claim-it passage for more possessions or positions</li> <li>♦ The context is in producing fruit for the kingdom, and not seeking creature comforts                                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Try asking for more patience &amp; see what happens</li> <li>2. Ask for more witnessing opportunities</li> <li>3. Ask to grow more in grace and knowledge</li> <li>4. Ask for more responsibilities</li> </ol> </li> <li>♦ Consider Psalms 5:3 – “In the morning I will pray, then I will watch for an answer”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
15:18-27	<p><b>Our Position Before the World</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv18-20. Persecution awaits the chosen. American Christians have got it so easy, but our persecution may start in earnest any time</li> <li>• vv22-25. The wicked “now have no excuse for their sin” with the coming of Christ, who confirmed God’s word</li> <li>• vv26-27. The purpose of the Holy Spirit was to confirm to the Apostles the truth of the message of Christ, who then would testify to us about the validity of the Gospel</li> </ul>
Persecution is Real	<p>Christmas Day 2013 – Militants in Iraq targeted Christians in three separate Christmas Day bombings in Baghdad, killing at least 37 people</p>

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- The fruit God is looking for is not found in our possessions nor in our position in life, but in the qualities developed in our life (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) and in our accomplishments for the kingdom (souls converted, ministered to, and disciplined)

**NEXT WEEK: John 16.** Jesus continues to prepare His disciples for His imminent parting, but He speaks to them figuratively, metaphorically, allegorically, symbolically, nonliterally ..... WHY?

IN THE BLEACHERS BY STEVE MOORE



Modern Prayers