

Study Guide, Term 3/2015

promises

from upstairs

Final lessons from Jesus
in John 13 -17



Members' Guide

“But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”

(John 16:4 ESV)

**GROW
TOGETHER
IN JESUS**
FOR GOD'S GLORY



Grace Community Groups

Each week, across the Sunshine Coast, small groups from Grace Christian Church meet to

- study the Bible,
- pray together,
- worship God,
- encourage each other,
- care for one-another,
- grow together as followers of Jesus,
- laugh, cry, discuss life's big questions,
- and build lasting friendships!

If you're not part of a group yet, why not? It might take courage to join a group, or it might take a bit of personal rescheduling, but we promise that you won't regret it!



Area/Group Focus	Meeting time	Contact	Phone
Bli Bli	Wednesday, 7.00pm	John Baird	(07) 5448 4040
Buderim	Monday, 7.00pm	Colin Weston	(07) 5476 9648
Buderim/Sippy Downs	Thursday, 7.00pm	Clint Lombard	0478 578 152
Kawana/Wurtulla	Monday (fortnightly), 7.00pm	Tim Richards	(07) 5438 2201
Nambour/Burnside	Tuesday, 7.00pm	Des Morris	(07) 5476 3892
Palmwoods	Monday, 7.00pm	Mark Porter	(07) 5445 0940
Woombye	1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.00pm	Hendrik Kroon	(07) 5442 3476
Ladies	Thursday, 10.00am	Alison Sheldon	(07) 5477 1895
Young Mums	Tuesday, 10:30am	Jean Bowen-Jones	0402 746 533
Students/Young Adults	Tuesday, 7.00pm	Callum Lewis	0421 230 119

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Introduction to the Study Guide

Welcome!

We're so glad you're joining us to dig deep in Jesus' words recorded in John 13-17. We trust that as you join us in reading, examining and discovering from this part of the Bible, both in our Sunday services, on your own, and in a weekly group, you will grow in your relationship with God through his Son Jesus Christ.

Introduction to John

The gospel of John was written by John, a disciple of Jesus. John was one of the first disciples Jesus called. He was a fisherman by trade, along with his brother James (you can read about it in Matthew 4:18-22).



John, together with James and Peter, formed a kind of inner-circle among Jesus' disciples. They were the only ones who got to see Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5:21-43), and the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain (Matthew 17:1-7). They were also the ones who were closest to Jesus during his agonising evening in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-38), just before he was arrested.

John's experience of Jesus, as recorded in all the gospels, was one of profound personal impact. He was utterly changed by meeting Jesus. Perhaps this is why he focusses so much on Jesus' teaching, the words Jesus actually said.

John's gospel is different from the other three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. We usually call these the 'synoptic gospels', because they give us a 'synopsis' or a survey of the life and ministry of Jesus.

John's gospel, by contrast, selects certain accounts of Jesus' teaching and activity (some of which is not contained in the other gospels), and arranges them in an unusual way. John is not writing a strict history, or a strict biography. Instead, in his own words:

"...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 ESV)

The Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

The section of John's gospel that we're going to focus on over the next term is known as the Upper Room Discourse (or the Farewell Discourse), and is recorded in John 13-17. It is one of the longest continuous portions of Jesus' teaching recorded anywhere in the Bible.

It takes place on the night before Jesus went to the cross. He and his disciples are gathered in a rented function room in Jerusalem (the "upper room"), enjoying the Passover meal together - the Last Supper.



Jesus has completed his earthly ministry, and now turns his attention exclusively to his small band of followers. These last few hours are crucial, as Jesus gives his disciples everything they need to know and trust as they watch their teacher and Lord head to the cross.

Jesus' encourages them with words about heaven, love, joy, the Holy Spirit, access to God, and future hope. But he also warns them of opposition, suffering, sorrow and separation from himself.

These things aren't just words, they are *promises*. God's promises to be trusted by troubled hearts, as they look towards Jesus' ultimate victory.

This is where the Upper Room Discourse is valuable for us today. These are promises to us as well, from Jesus himself, as we face the challenges of life following our Saviour, but apart from him. These are the things we also need to understand and trust to carry us through the troubles of this life, as we wait for the final victory of our Lord.

We pray that you would grow in your trust of Jesus, and find great peace in him, as we study this part of the Bible together.

- Ps Clint Lombard
9 July 2015

How to use this study guide

Each weekly study in this guide is divided into two major sections:

Sermon

Sermon Notes

The first section of each study is based around the Sunday sermon. There is a section for you to write notes during the sermon. You might want to write down

- The major points of the message
- Things that interested you
- Important verses and other verse references

This will help you follow what is being taught, but it will also help you remember what you learnt when you look over your notes later.

The Big Idea

This block is where you can write the one Big Idea of the message. Every message should have one simple, clear '**Big Idea**' which you can take away.

Questions

It's normal to go away from a Bible message still having questions. This section is for you to write down those things, so that you can try to find out later, maybe by asking the pastor or your group leader, or discussing it with your group.

Group Bible Study

You can do these studies in your own, but to get the most out of them, you should try and attend a weekly group Bible study - a Grace Community Group. The studies in this guide are designed using an easy framework called '**COMA**':

Context: These questions help you understand where the text fits into the big picture. It's about asking, "What's been happening up to this point?"

Observation: These questions help you to orientate yourself in the text by looking at what it says. It's about asking, "What ideas come up in the text?" and "What surprises are there?"

Meaning: These questions help you try to uncover what the author means. It's about asking, "What does this section tell me about God, about Jesus, and about myself?"

Application: These questions help you to work out how to respond to the Bible's message. It's about asking, "How does this passage challenge or confirm my understanding?", "Is there something in my life that needs to change?", or "What does this passage teach me about being a follower of Jesus?"

Prayer Points Finally, there is a section to write prayer points. This way you can remember to pray for each other during and after the group meeting, and also keep track of prayers answered. Prayer and praying for each other is a very important part of Christians meeting together.

19 July 2015

Love to the End

John 13:1-35

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

(take these questions to your home group and try to find some answers)

Group Bible Study - Week 1

 Ask a few people to share reading John 13:1-35 for the group.

Opening Question: If you knew you were going to die very soon, what do you think you might want to do with your final hours?

Context

Jesus and his disciples are in Jerusalem eating the Passover meal together. What does the Passover commemorate? (*for a clue, see Exodus 12*)

What major turning-point has just occurred in John's gospel? (*see 12:36-37, 44-50*)

Observation

What did Jesus do for his disciples in v2-5? Why is it surprising that Jesus would do this?

Why do you think Peter wanted to refuse Jesus in v6?

How does Jesus explain the significance of what he has done for his disciples? (v12-15).

What does Jesus say the effect of the disciples' love will be? (v34-35)

Why is Jesus telling his disciples these things? (v19)

Meaning

What characteristics of Jesus' love are demonstrated in v1-11? Find as many as you can, and note which verses you find them in.

What is the "cleaning" that Jesus is talking about in v7-11? (note particularly v7, and see also v19)

Application

As followers of Christ, we are called to love. But our love is a very particular love - it is meant to replicate the kind of love Jesus showed us.

How we can practically demonstrate this kind of love to the people we interact with everyday?

Prayer Points:

26 July 2015

The Road Less Travelled


John 13:36 - 14:11

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 2

 Ask someone to read John 13:36 - 14:11 for the group.

Opening Question: What do you think it really means to “follow Jesus”?

Context

Read 13:33, 7:32-36 and 8:21:20-27. What has Jesus been saying?

Observation

What is Peter’s question? (13:36)

What is Thomas’ question? (14:5)

What is Philip’s question? (14:8)

What does Jesus say is the solution to the disciples' troubled hearts? (14:1)

How does Jesus describe the relationship between himself and God? (14:2, 6-7, 10-11)

Meaning

Why are the disciples distressed? (14:1)

Considering everything Jesus has said in these verses, what does it mean to “... *believe in God, believe also in me.*”? (14:1)

According to 14:11, what is one purpose of the miracles that Jesus performed during his earthly ministry?

Application

How should Jesus' promises about heaven in 13:36 and 14:1-4 give us hope and encouragement? In what particular circumstances might these promises be welcome?

How should Jesus' promises about being the exclusive way to God in 14:6-7 and 9-11 give us hope and encouragement? In what particular circumstances might these promises be welcome?

Prayer Points:

2 August 2015

Left Behind, But Not Left Alone


John 14:12-31

Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 3

 Ask a couple of people to share reading John 14:12-31 for the group.

Opening Question: What things first come to mind when you think about the Holy Spirit?

Context

What were the major points of last week's study?

Observation

What does Jesus say he will do for the disciples when he returns to heaven? (v16)

What does the rest of the chapter tell us about this Helper?

What are there hallmarks of those who love Jesus? (v15, 21, 23, 28)

What is Jesus talking about in v29-31?

Meaning

Look over what we've discovered about the Holy Spirit in this chapter. What does Jesus mean when he says, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father."* ? (v12)

Why should the news that Jesus is returning to the Father cause the disciples to rejoice? (v28)

Application

Are you aware of the presence of Jesus within you, by his Holy Spirit? If so, how?

How does Jesus say we can recognise the presence of his Holy Spirit within us?

How is the promised presence of Jesus, through his Holy Spirit, that we have studied in John 14 an encouragement to you in your daily life, this side of heaven? Discuss with your group.

Prayer Points:

9 August 2015

A Cultivated Connection

John 15:1-17


Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 4

Opening Question: What part of being a Christian is most important to you?

 Ask one or two people to read John 15:1-17 for the group.

Context

Refresh yourself by discussing some of the major ideas of last week's study (see 14:12-31).

Observation

What big "I am" statement does Jesus make in v1?

What happens to those who are connected to the vine? (v2, 4, 8)

What happens to those who do not bear fruit, or are not connected to the vine? (v2, 6)

How is God glorified? (v8)

What is Jesus' commandment in v12?

Meaning

What is the fruit that Jesus is talking about? Give some examples. (*see also* Galatians 5:22, Colossians 1:10 and Hebrews 13:15)

What is the difference between a servant and a friend? Why has Jesus changed his relationship towards his disciples in v15?

Application

How can we be connected to Jesus, the vine? (see v3, 10)

What should you do if you believe you are connected to Jesus, but you don't feel like you are 'bearing fruit', i.e. your life doesn't reflect your connection to Jesus?

Prayer Points:

16 August 2015

Expect Opposition

John 15:18 - 16:15


Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 5

Opening Question: Have you ever had an experience where you were treated badly because you were a Christian?

 Ask one or two people to read John 15:18 - 16:15 for the group.

Context

How did Jesus describe the relationship that ought to exist between his followers in last week's study? (see John 15:12-17)

Observation

What does Jesus tell his followers to expect? (15:18-19, 16:1-2)

What will the work of the Holy Spirit be when he comes? (16:8-14)

Meaning

Why does Jesus say that his disciples can expect hostility? (v18-21)

Why does Jesus quote from Psalm 35:19 in 15:25? (*see* 15:22-25)

How does Jesus encourage his followers with insight into the work of the Spirit?
(*see* 15:26-27, 16:8-11, 13-15)

Application

If we understand Jesus' words in this passage, how are we to think through situations when we may be persecuted or treated unfairly for being his followers?

How can we put these things into action practically when we face hostility for being a Christian?

Prayer Points:

23 August 2015

The Night is Darkest Just Before the Dawn

John 16:16-33


Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 6

Opening Question: Does your hope in Jesus help you to face the struggles and challenges of everyday life? If so, how?

 Ask a couple of people to share in reading John 16:16-33 for the group.

Context

Why are the disciples troubled, or sorrowful? Remind yourself from 13:21-22, 13:26 - 14:1, 27-28, 16:5-6

Observation

What are the disciples confused about in v16-18?

What figure of speech (v25) does Jesus use to explain to his disciples what will happen? What clarity does it bring to future events? (v20-23)

What events is Jesus talking about in his “figure of speech”? (v16, 20-22)

What “lightbulb moment” do the disciples have in v29-30?

Where can the disciples find peace during the promised time of suffering? (v33)

Meaning

Why will there be a change of relationship between the disciples and the Father “in that day”? (v23-28, *see also* Romans 8:34, Hebrews 10:19-22)

How will the disciples’ confusion turn to grief, and then to joy? (v17, 20-24,

Application

When we face the struggles of life, with its confusion and sorrow, how can the knowledge that Jesus has gone to the Father give us peace and joy? (v33, *see also* Hebrews 4:14-16)

List some practical examples.

Prayer Points:

30 August 2015

How Jesus Prayed For You

John 17:1-26


Sermon Notes

What is the Big Idea?

What questions do I still have?

Group Bible Study - Week 7

Opening Question: What did you think when you first heard the gospel message?

 Ask two or three people to read John 17:1-26 for the group.

Context

Spend some time recapping on how Jesus' promises in these few chapters have been an encouragement to you as you wait for him to return.

Observation

How would you divide Jesus' prayer into sections?

What specific things to Jesus ask the Father for?

Meaning

How would the Father and the Son be glorified in the coming suffering and death of Jesus? (v1, *see also* 12:23-24, 13:31-32)

How has Jesus succeeded in his mission on earth? (v4-8, 12)

What sense do you get from this chapter of Jesus' relationship to the Father, and also to his followers?

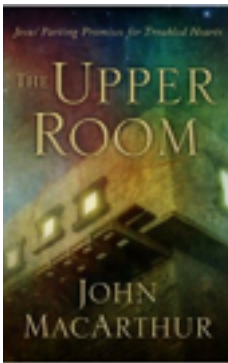
Application

In what ways does Jesus' prayer for his followers offer hope and encouragement for you?

Prayer Points:

Extra Resources

As a leader, you may want to do some further reading to help you lead your group well. Here are a few ideas. Some of these are also available from the Grace library near the front door.

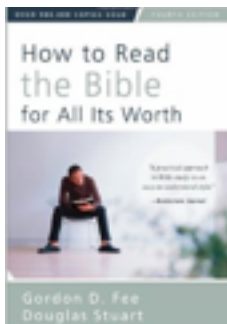
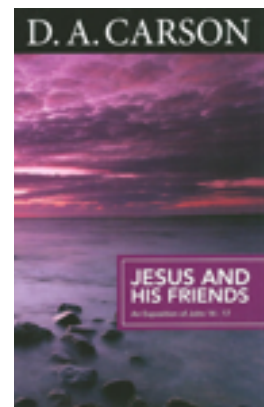


The Upper Room: Jesus' Parting Promises for Troubled Hearts by John MacArthur (© 2014, Kress Biblical Resources)

This new book from John MacArthur surveys the Upper Room Discourse, paying special attention to the promises of Jesus and the peace that trusting in those promises can bring.

Jesus and His Friends (An Exposition of John 14-17) by D.A. Carson (© 2010, Authentic Media)

In this book, respected Bible teacher Don Carson gives an account of some of the last things Jesus said to his disciples before he was crucified, as well as valuable insights into John's view of Jesus, and Jesus' exclusive claims of being mankind's only hope, and the focal point of all history.



How To Read The Bible For All Its Worth, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart (new edition © 2014, Zondervan)

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth helps readers of all kinds get the most out of their Bible-reading experience. This book contains simple and practical advice for non-Bible scholars to read, study and understand the Word of God.

One to One Bible Reading by David Helm, (© 2011 Matthias Media)

The 'COMA' method used in this study guide is based on this book. Helm helps his readers engage with what they read in the Bible by asking the right questions, both of the text and of themselves. The book includes examples to help you, and COMA outlines customised to different types of Biblical books.



All of these books are available online from koorong.com, or bookdepository.com or from Koorong stores



RECONCILED

GOD - ME - OTHERS

**Grow 2015: A day conference for women
with Lesley Ramsay and Robyn Bain**

8 August 2015
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
Contact Melissa Lombard on 0478 578 153 for
more info and to register
www.qcca.org.au

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