

# *The Gospel of John*

## 12:20-26

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.

As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

✠ **John 12:20-22** *Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.*

So why were the Greeks there? Wasn't Passover for the Jews only?

Yes, the Passover was for the Jews, but God also instructed Moses that others might participate in Passover also.

† **Num 9:14** *'And if a stranger dwells among you, and would keep the LORD's Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; you shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.'*

Actually not only were there many Greeks there, but also the Gentiles. They were all to stay outside of the temple in an area known as the Court of the Gentiles.

† **Rev 11:2** *But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.*

So the Greeks come to Philip, possible because his name was Greek and he was from Bethsaida, which was a Greek district of Israel.

The Greeks wanted to see or speak to Jesus, so what does Philip do? He brings them to Andrew, whom we know from past studies was always bringing people to Jesus. together they brought the Greeks to Jesus.

✠ **John 12:23-26** *But Jesus answered them, saying, "**The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.**"*

*But Jesus answered them, saying, "**The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.**"* This was something that Jesus' disciples have been waiting to hear. For three years they have been hearing Jesus say this it wasn't time yet.

† **John 2:4** *Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."*

† **John 7:6** *Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready."*

But not anymore, and they were probably excited about this, yet they still didn't understand the true meaning of it. If they did then they would understand Jesus' next statement.

✠ ***Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.***

It's really a pretty simple concept if you think about it. Take an apple seed and plant it, the results are that an apple tree will grow. Now each apple has seeds in it and this tree would produce many more apples, which would all have seeds. You would then plant those seeds, and soon you would have an orchard of apple trees. Eventually you could have enough apples to feed the whole world, all starting from one little apple seed. But in order for that first apple tree to grow from a seed, the apple seed must die first. Only then could an apple tree be made from it.

We are always talking about producing fruit as Christians, but in order for us to produce fruit, we must die to ourselves first, be watered by the water of the word, then we can produce fruit.

So how do we die to ourselves so that we can produce fruit? Simply by leaving the things of this world and the thoughts of this world behind us. To die in Jesus Christ is to leave those old things behind, and work with what the Lord is producing in us.

Think of the things you used to do before you became a Christian.

† **Romans 1:28-32 (NLT)** *When they refused to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their evil minds and let them do things that should never be done. Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, fighting, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They are forever inventing new ways of sinning and are disobedient to their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, and are heartless and unforgiving. They are fully aware of God's death penalty for those who do these things, yet they go right ahead and do them anyway. And, worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.*

† **Eph 5:8-11** *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.*

We all were once in a place in our lives that we would be ashamed to even talk about now. We all used to practice the things spoken of in Romans and as it says in Ephesians ***“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.”***

We no longer should be walking in or doing these things.

† **2 Cor 6:14** *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?*

Some of you may say that you have left your old friends so this does not apply to you. But what about your old ways, do you still continue in them or try to serve the Lord and your flesh at the same time? Sure you may have separated yourself from your old party friends, but do you still continue to party in the secret place behind closed doors thinking that no one sees you? ***And what communion has light with darkness?***

Maybe it's not partying anymore, but do you watch an “R” rated movie full of sex and violence in your house on Saturday night then go and worship the Lord on Sunday morning? ***And what communion has light with darkness?***

We must die to these things, only when we do will we be able to produce fruit of righteousness.

The disciples didn't understand this concept at this point, but after Jesus died and rose from the dead, then they would finally understand that only by Jesus dieing for the sins of the world could He produce a harvest of righteous people to worship the Lord. Because it's not by our righteousness that we can approach the throne of God, but because of Jesus' righteousness in us.

† **2 Peter 1:1** *Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:*

† **Heb 4:16** *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Jesus goes on to say.

✠ ***He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.***

Once again, dieing to yourself and the things of this world.

*“Everyday I pray and ask forgiveness for my sins. I hate the things I do that are not pleasing to the Lord. I struggle and struggle but it seems like some things just wont go away.”*

Sound familiar? It should because we all go through this. But let me encourage you that if you hate your sins that you are struggling with, then that's a good thing. It's only when you don't care anymore about your sins and stop asking for forgiveness that you should start worrying.

Paul said:

✠ **Romans 7:15-25 (NLT)** *I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.*

If Paul struggled with sin, then know that you are in good company if you also struggle with sin (and we all do). But also know that:

✠ **Romans 8:1 (NLT)** *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.*

And as Paul said in verse 25 ***Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.***

The only condemnation we feel as Christians is either from our own selves trying to work our way into heaven, or from the lies of satan who does want us to believe that, "*Jesus would ever forgive someone like you for doing such an evil thing. And you call yourself a Christian?*"

We have all heard it in our own minds and the worse thing is that we believe it sometimes. But why do we believe the father of lies.

✠ **John 8:44b** *When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

By doing so we are calling God a liar.

† **Num 23:19** *God is not a man, that He should lie,  
Nor a son of man, that He should repent.  
Has He said, and will He not do?  
Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*

† **Titus 1:2** *in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before  
time began,*

Who are you trusting your eternity to, the father of lies, or God who cannot lie?  
So hate sin and the sins you yourself commit, but also remember that the Lord loves you  
and will forgive you and deliver you from your sins.

† **Psalms 50:15** *Call upon Me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.*

† **Psalms 91:3** *Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler  
And from the perilous pestilence.*

† **Jer 15:21** *I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked,  
And I will redeem you from the grip of the terrible.*

† **Psalms 103:11-14** *For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His  
mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has  
He removed our transgressions from us. as a father pities his children, so the  
LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that  
we are dust.*

God cannot lie and He will deliver you when you call upon Him!  
I know that sometimes it doesn't seem like it, but continue to trust in the Lord.

† **Prov 3:5-6** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own  
understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your  
paths.*

We know so many verses like this, but when will we start believing them and living  
them?

✠ *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will  
be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

We all want to follow Jesus. There were others in the bible that thought that they wanted  
to follow Jesus also. But Jesus explained the cost of following Him.

† **Luke 9:57-62** *Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone  
said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him,  
"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has*

*nowhere to lay His head." Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

† *John 13:36-38 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times."*

Let's look at all four of these men one by one.

† *Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

When you follow Jesus, you really have nowhere to go on this earth, because we are only here for a short time and the world has nothing to offer us.

† *Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."*

You have to realize that this man's father was not dead yet, but he wanted to wait until he died, then he would follow Jesus.

Following the Lord also means that you can't give your family the worldly things it may want. Your car and home may not be the best because you don't work as much. You do this because you spend that time you would be working a second or third job serving the Lord. But then by following Jesus we give our families something better than what this world has to offer, and that something better is eternal life in Jesus Christ.

† *And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

By following Jesus, we learn that we need to leave the things of this world behind, now, not later. The parties, alcohol, drugs, sex, filthy language and jokes, trusting in money and the things of this world and so on are all the things we need to let go of now and not return to them.

† *Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times."*

When we follow Jesus we learn that we can't do anything of our own strength.

Peter's words were bold, but he couldn't live up to them at this time. Yes, there would come a time that Peter would have to die for his faith in Jesus Christ. But when that time came, it was the Lord who was his strength.

Finally, Jesus says this to those who want to follow Him.

† *Luke 9:23-26 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels."*

One word that sticks out is the word "**daily**". It's not just a one-time thing you do by going forward on a Sunday at a church, but rather a daily lifestyle that we now live. Everyday our watches and clocks run our lives. We set our clocks to get up in the morning. We have so much time to get ready for work. We have allowed ourselves a certain amount of time to get to work. So many hours to work before our first break, then lunch, then another break. We drive home to be on time for dinner. We spend a little time with our children before they go to bed. Then we rest in front of the TV, getting ourselves ready for the next day of doing the same thing.

Now I'm not saying that this is a bad thing, because we should keep our lives in order, because God is a God of order not chaos. But we allow time to run our lives so much that we allow time to rule us instead of the Lord. Do you fit time into your daily schedule to spend time with the Lord each day in prayer and in His word? *If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself.*

The Lord has given us our families and jobs and we should take care of them. But the Lord has also given us His Son Jesus. Who or what is really first in your life?

† *For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?*

† *For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.*

† *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

That's it for this week, next week we will continue on in chapter 12.

May the Lord richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy, and may you make Jesus (the creator of time) first in your life!