

The Hour Has Come.

Conversations
leading up to
the cross



Digging Deep 2021-2022 Men's Bible Study Guide **By Westley Hazel and Caleb Colley**

Quarter Three (March through May)

- March: A Conversation about Fruit (John 15:1-8)
- April: A Conversation about Love (John 15:9-17)
- May: A Conversation about Persecution (John 15:18-16:4)

Instructions for using this material:

1. The Digging Deep study material is designed to facilitate in-depth group Bible study, and not to merely dispense information from “teacher” to “student.” As you go through the study, you will want to have separate paper or a computer on which to record your thoughts. (For your own flexibility, we do not leave space in this document for your answers to discussion-oriented questions.)
2. All the instructions and materials for participating in Digging Deep are posted at www.calebcolley.com/diggingdeep.
3. There are many tools that will help in digging, such as Bible encyclopedias, Greek and Hebrew lexical books, commentaries, etc. Many are available for free on-line (A list is posted at calebcolley.com/diggindeep. If you need help accessing such materials, ask others in your group or ask Westley or Caleb.
4. The Facebook group is an interactive portion of the study. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1564776240335067/> (or search “Digging Deep Men’s Bible Study” on Facebook). If you don’t have Facebook, you can still contribute to the discussion by emailing your comments to calebcolley@gmail.com or whazel@forrestpark.org.
5. As we go through the study together, please provide questions and comments to the nationwide study group on Facebook. It will be great to have an ongoing discussion about the material.
6. A monthly video podcast will be posted on the Facebook page and on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCC8CpAr8ic6DTYq0-MeyVPQ> (or search “Digging Deep Men’s Bible Study” on YouTube).
7. Glenn Colley will assist us by preaching a sermon each month on the topic for that month’s Digging Deep study. The sermons will be posted at calebcolley.com/diggingdeep.

Special Note

The Digging Deep study is based on the idea of the Digging Deep study for women, written and led by Cindy Colley. Inspiration and ideas for the men’s Digging Deep guide are taken from the 2021-2022 women’s study, *The Hour Has Come*. For more information concerning the women’s study, please visit The “Digging Deep in God’s

Word” Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/282349391779769>) or <https://thecolleyhouse.org/category/digging-deep-bible-study>.

Introduction and Study Plan

The 2021-2022 study deals with conversations Jesus had with various persons (primarily His disciples) during the last week of His life. The conversations all come from the gospel of John and are punctuated with the phrase “the hour has come” (John 12:23; 17:1). In this year’s corresponding Digging Deep Study for women, Cindy Colley writes these helpful words:

“I’m so thankful for the words of my Lord on these two monumental, but private days, prior to His arrest. Friday was coming. The earth was about to shake, the sky was about to darken at noon, the dead in this city to come forth from tombs, the veil of the temple to be rent, and one important sepulcher to be briefly inhabited before the eternal victory of the resurrection. But for now, let’s examine the quiet moments before the cross and the purposeful words just hours before that most remarkable event of all human events, past and future—the words of *the* Word (John 1:1) when His hour had come.”¹

Each study will be not just a historical discussion about what Jesus said and did during his final days prior to the crucifixion, but also a practical discussion about how we can grow to be more like Him. During His last week prior to death, as always, Jesus was leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21-25).

- **September: A Conversation about Purpose** (John 12:23-26)
- **October: A Conversation about Divine Unity** (John 12:44-50; 14:7-15)
- **November: A Conversation about Service** (John 13:1-17)
- **December: A Conversation about Betrayal** (John 13:18-38)
- **January: A Conversation about Heaven** (John 14:1-6)
- **February: A Conversation about the Holy Spirit** (John 14:16-31)
- **March: A Conversation about Fruit** (John 15:1-8)
- **April: A Conversation about Love** (John 15:9-17)
- **May: A Conversation about Persecution** (John 15:18-16:4)
- **June: A Conversation about Sorrow** (John 16:5-33)
- **July: A Conversation about Glorification** (John 17)
- **August: Final words from the Cross** (Various passages from Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19)

¹ ii.

Month Seven: A Conversation about Fruit (John 15:1-8)

Introduction:

- A. Examine the context. Read John 14:25-31. Are Jesus and the disciples still in the upper room at this point? Why or why not? If they are not in the upper room, where are they going?
- B. Review John 14. Make a list of all the ways in which Jesus expressed that His presence would continue to abide with the disciples after His departure.
- C. Now, we turn to a different way in which Jesus used an extended metaphor to emphasize that He would continue to abide with them: As the vine in to which they, as branches, were connected.
 - 1. In what other passages does Jesus use a parable or an illustration involving a vineyard? Do any of them focus on a vine in particular?
 - 2. What other metaphor(s) or image(s) are used in the New Testament to illustrate the believer's connection to Christ?
- D. NOTE: Two helpful resources for understanding this section:
 - 1. David L. Lipe, *John 13-21* (Searcy: Truth for Today, 2019), pp. 121-129.
 - 2. Wayne Jackson, "The Allegory of the Vine and Branches," Christian Courier, <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1074-the-allegory-of-the-vine-and-the-branches>.

I. Jesus is the vine; the Father is the vinedresser (John 15:1).

- A. A viable vine is alive. Find at least two New Testament passages that discuss salvation as passing from death to life.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
- B. A viable vine is growing. Find at least two New Testament passages that teach more directly that faithful Christians grow.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
- C. A viable vine must be maintained. Find at least two New Testament passages that teach that the Lord "prunes" the Christian, "cleaning" it.

1. _____
2. _____

D. Using a concordance, do a search of the Old Testament for the word “vine” (and related words), seeing how the metaphor is used of God’s people.

1. How is Psalms 80 a prophecy about Jesus? How does the “vine” metaphor function in this text, concerning Israel and the Lord? Write a paragraph about this.

II. Disciples are the branches, which must be pruned and must bear fruit by abiding in Christ (John 15:2-5).

- A. How would a person know whether he is “in Christ,” the true vine, or not? What Bible passages teach concerning the moment at which one goes from being outside of Christ to being “in Christ”? There are two verses that state this precisely. What are they? Use a concordance if necessary.
- B. Jesus says that a branch that is “in Me” can be removed if it does not bear fruit. This implies that a person who is saved (connected to Christ) can be finally lost.
- C. How does God cleanse/prune the Christian? In your answer, consider Romans 5:3-5; Hebrews 12:5-13 and James 1:2-4.
- D. Jesus says that His disciples are clean even though they would continue to be pruned. Are Christians saved even though they still need to be taught and to mature? What passages of Scripture could be used to prove that this is true?
- E. Jesus says that spiritual fruit comes only through connection to Him. And yet, the spiritual branches are unlike physical branches of a literal vine, in that the spiritual vines bear responsibility for remaining connected to (“abiding” with) the Lord.
 1. Using your lexical tools, give a summary of the meaning of the word translated “abide” in this text. What is the practical significance of this word as it is used here?
- F. In John 15:5, Jesus uses the last of seven “I am” statements in John. Make a list (with Scripture references) of the other six “I am” statements in John.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____

III. Separation from Christ is possible, and results in death (John 15:6).

- A. A person who is disconnected or unconnected from Christ will be lost. Jesus states this symbolically in strong terms. Write a paragraph in which you review the passages that (in your view) give Jesus' strongest statements about everlasting punishment.

IV. The conditional guarantee of affirmatively answered prayer (John 15:7).

- A. How, according to verse 7, does Jesus abide in His disciples? Are Jesus' presence and the application of His revelation interchangeable in this verse?
- B. The guarantee of an affirmative answer (a "yes" answer) to prayer is conditional. What other conditions must a person meet in order to be absolutely sure that God will say "Yes" to his prayer? Listen to the lesson here (<https://westhuntsville.org/sermons/ask-and-you-will-receive/>) and write a list of passages that provide partial answers to this question.
- C. There are two levels on which the faithful child of God prays. Find a New Testament passage that points to each of these levels:
1. We ask for our preferences, letting our requests be made known to God. Scripture reference: _____
 2. We ask as our overriding or overarching desire for God's will, having considered our requests, to be done. Scripture reference: _____
- D. Is it possible that God could refuse a person's immediate preference as expressed in prayer and yet grant an affirmative answer to his overarching prayer that God's will be done? Is there anything better we could desire than for the Lord's considered will being done?
1. What does 1 John 5:14-15 say about this matter?

V. The glorification of God (John 15:8).

- A. God is glorified by our bearing fruit for Him, not merely by our idea that we could possibly bear fruit. God's glorification is His being shown to great, as He truly is.
- B. What other passages discuss God being glorified through our obedience, and what passages discuss ways in which God could be discredited due to our disobedience? Write a paragraph in response to this question, commenting on the overall Bible doctrine of how we glorify God. Include in your discussion Isaiah 43:6-7.

Conclusion: Practical application.

- A. Often, this passage will be used to support denominationalism. Someone will use the idea that the various branches are the different denominations. Find a book or article that advocates for this false view, and then write a page-long response refuting the error.
1. If you need help understanding the difference between denominationalism and New Testament Christianity, listen to the sermon here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KGpkhkrtr0.

Month Eight: A Conversation about Love (John 15:9-17)

Introduction:

- A. Read John 15.
- B. Examine the context. Jesus is concerned with preparing his disciples for a time when He no longer will be with them physically (14:1-6). He not only comforted them with the prospect of the Spirit being sent, but also gave His expectations for their Christian behavior. Their actions would be the example for the fledgling church. Jesus expected them to bear fruit (15:1-8). In this section, we find that He expected them to love each other with the Love of God (15:9-17). It is reminiscent of a parent speaking to his children before leaving them at home alone: “Here are the things I want you to know and here are the things I want you to do.” Learning to love is an essential part of having joy in the Christian life (15:11).
- C. Read 1 Corinthians 13 (the love chapter), and identify two things in connection with each characteristic of love. First, identify a way in which Jesus showed love in this area. Second, identify a practical way in which you demonstrate love in this area. If it is difficult to think of how you are exhibiting love in one or more area, recommit yourself to Christian love. Ask for forgiveness from anyone you have wronged due to your lack of love.
 - 1. Patient
 - 2. Kind
 - 3. Not Jealous
 - 4. Does not brag
 - 5. Is not jealous
 - 6. Does not act unbecomingly
 - 7. Does not seek its own
 - 8. Is not provoked
 - 9. Does not take into account a wrong suffered
 - 10. Does not rejoice in unrighteousness
 - 11. Rejoices with truth
 - 12. Bears all things
 - 13. Believes all things

14. Hopes all things

15. Hopes all things

16. Endures all things

D. Write a paragraph to answer the following two questions:

1. In what way does 1 Corinthians 13 help the Christian understand that love is more than a feeling?
2. In what way does 1 Corinthians 13 help the Christian understand that love is more than just a collection of actions?

I. God is Love.

A. Read 1 John 4:8, and take note of the fact that God is not simply *loving*. One mistake students make with examining love is to think that God is being judged by a standard of love that is external to His own character and standards, and He passes the test. How could this wrong thinking lead someone to a false definition of what love really looks like?

1. Give examples from both the Bible and your own life of individuals developing a strange ideas about God because of an inaccurate definition of love.
2. God character is the basis for all principles of love, and so God can be said to *define* love. When we say that love is patient, we understand that this is true because God is patient. If God were not patient, then love would not be patient.
 - a) The “mètre étalon” or the standard meter was for some years the objective standard of a meter for the French people. No matter what anyone said about the length of the meter, the standard meter defined it. What is the difference between a “subjective” (self-made) definition of love, and God’s attitude toward us as the objective paradigm of love?
 - b) What are some other concepts of which God is said to be the very definition? Give biblical support for any answers you provide.
3. Give two passages from the Bible that discuss the love between the Father and Son. How should each of these examples challenge us in our efforts to show His love to the world?
 - a) _____
 - b) _____

B. Jesus loves *me*.

1. In one or two sentences, discuss what each of the following passages teaches about how Jesus has demonstrated His love for man.
 - a) John 3:16.
 - b) Ephesians 2:4-6.
 - c) John 15:13.
2. Write a paragraph answering the following two questions: Is there a sense in which we cannot be separated from the love of God? Is there a sense in which we can be separated from the love of God? In your answer, discuss Romans 8:35-37; Ephesians 2:1-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Hebrews 2:1-4 (written to Christians, warning them not to neglect their salvation).
3. In one or two sentences, discuss how each of the following passages speaks to the impact understanding the love of Jesus ought to have on His disciples' lives.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
 - b) Galatians 2:20
 - c) Ephesians 5:25

C. The main way in which we show love to God, and have friendship with God, as emphasized in John 15:9-11, is keeping His commandments as Jesus kept His commandments. It is not "legalistic" or wrong to insist upon respect for and obedience to God's commandments in our sphere of influence.

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-9, and key in on verse 9. Using your lexical tools, study the word translated "ambition" or "aim." What does the meaning of this word teach us about how to become a friend of God?
2. How would you respond to someone who said, "I'm not obligated to keep Jesus' commandments, because I'm not a Christian!" Is everybody (even non-Christians) obligated to keep the law of Christ? If not, should we be evangelizing? Write a one-paragraph response to these two questions, using in your answer Matthew 28:18; Acts 3:19; 17:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

II. We Must Love One Another.

- A. In the previous chapter (John 13:35) Jesus says that men will know that we are His disciples by the love we have for one another. Why is this characteristic of the Christian pattern of life singled out?

- B. In what way is the commandment to love one another old? To answer this question, consult Leviticus 19 and Deuteronomy 6.
- C. Jesus' commandment new because it makes Christ the example of love that one must imitate (15:12). What makes Jesus' love unique? In a paragraph, discuss the extreme level of Jesus's example of love, taking into account John 15:13; Romans 5:7-8; Hebrews 5:7-10). What was Jesus willing to endure for us, because He loved us?
- D. Why is it often hard for us to love one another? Think of three main obstacles to love, with at least one biblical passage supporting the reality of each obstacle. Then, think of a verse that shows how using Jesus as the example and motivation for our love allows us to conquer each obstacle?

Obstacle	Supporting passage	Motivation from Jesus' love	Supporting passage

- E. How does our love for one another impact our relationship with Jesus?
1. Makes us friends with Jesus (John 15:14). Use your Bible study resources (Bible encyclopedia, topical Bible, etc.) to learn about the subject of friendship with God. What other Bible passage(s) discusses friendship with God? Make a list for your future study, and for now, write a brief answer to this question: How is it possible for a human to be God's friend?
 2. No longer slaves (John 15:15). Use your Bible study resources (encyclopedia, etc.) to learn about the subject of spiritual slavery in the Bible. What other Bible passage(s) discuss the transition from being slaves to sin to being the freed servants of God? Make a list for your future study, and for now, write a brief answer to this question: How is a saved person both freed and enslaved?
 3. Chosen (John 15:16). Use your Bible study resources (encyclopedia, etc.) to learn about the subject of election in the Bible. What other Bible passage(s) discuss our becoming chosen as children of God? Make a list for your future study, and for now,

write a brief answer to this question: How does a person know if God has chosen him? (As you formulate your answer, consult the article here: <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/806-1-thessalonians-1-4-5-election-through-the-gospel>).

Conclusion: Practical application.

A. Challenge yourself to be more loving with others. Given what the Bible says in our passage, how do you want to more effectively share God's love with:

1. Friends and brothers?
2. Strangers?
3. Enemies?

Month Nine: A Conversation about Persecution (John 15:18-16:4)

Introduction:

- A. Examine the context. Read John 15. Write a two-sentence summary of what Jesus says in each section of this chapter.
- B. Imagine that you were one of the disciples who was part of the consolatory discourse. Putting yourself in their shoes, what would you think that Jesus was trying to accomplish in this discourse, and how do you think you would feel about your future as an apostle? How would Jesus' discourse to this point have give you assurance?

I. The world's disposition toward Jesus and toward the disciples (John 15:18-21).

- A. Jesus said that the world would hate the disciples. Do a word study of the Greek verb "μισέω," translated "to hate" or "to persecute." What kind of threat Jesus was mentioning?
- B. What are the possible meanings of the word "world" in the Bible? Watch the lesson here (www.youtube.com/watch?v=KV0-QIZoH74&t=2160s) and make a list of the possible meanings.
 1. Which sense is under consideration in John 14:18-19?
 2. God loves the "world" (John 3:16) but tells us not to love the "world" (1 John 2:15). Explain how God is not contradicting Himself on this point.
- C. How did the world exhibit its hatred of Jesus while He was on Earth? (Make a list of Bible passages to explain.) How does the world exhibit its hatred of Jesus today? Make a list of personal observations.
 1. Bible passages:

 2. Personal observations:

- D. Jesus taught that the world predictably hates His disciples because they hated Jesus to begin with.

1. Using a church history resource (e.g., Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, book II, chapter 2, https://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/2_ch02.htm), do a brief study of persecution of early Christians, and make a list of several things that the “world” found objectionable about Christianity at that time.
2. Reflect on your own experience and your knowledge of contemporary Christians’ experiences. What is it that the “world” find objectionable about Christianity today? Make a list.
3. How have you suffered persecution due to your faith? How does the persecution you have endured compare to the suffering that the Christians endured in the early days of the church? How does this affect your perspective of the significance and urgency of Christianity?

II. The world’s guilt as a result of its response to the ministry of Jesus (John 15:22-25).

- A. In addition to being guilty because of their sins, the world was adding additional guilt to their record by rejecting the evidence for the divinity of Jesus.
- B. Jesus said that He had done “works which no one else did.”
 1. Find at least three passages in which Jesus or the gospel authors stressed the superlative nature of the works that He did.
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 2. The Jews bore culpability due to their rejection of the works that Jesus did. Will people living today bear culpability if they reject the works that Jesus did while He was on Earth? Why or why not?
- C. Notice that “the world” here is primarily the Jewish world, for Jesus said, “But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written *in their Law*, ‘They hated Me without a cause’” (John 15:25). Using your study Bible or a concordance, find two Psalms where this prophecy is given.

III. The Helper’s testimony and the disciple’s testimony (John 15:26-27).

- A. The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of truth,” and so what does this guarantee about His testimony? What does 1 Corinthians 2 teach about this reliability?

- B. The apostles were officially designated spokespeople for Christ. Listen to the lesson here ([youtube.com/watch?v=clmG3t0AhpE&t=2651s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clmG3t0AhpE&t=2651s)) and make a list of the qualifications that every apostle met for this special office.

1. Are there living apostles on Earth today, as some religious people suggest?

2. Suppose you were talking with a person who claimed to be an apostle. Is it possible to prove to him from the Bible that he is not an apostle? How could you do this?

IV. The disciples' preparation for concrete persecution (John 16:1-4).

- A. Using a Bible study resource (e.g., Bible encyclopedia or topical Bible), locate at least 10 passages that discuss the kinds of persecutions that Christians in the first-century should expect.
- B. What tools does the Bible provide to equip every Christian (regardless of the generation in which he lives) to handle persecution? Listen to the lesson here and make a list ([youtube.com/watch?v=3YcjNgPebdE&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YcjNgPebdE&t=1s)). Try to expand upon the list given in the lesson. What Bible passages have made you confident in your Christianity, through the providential blessing of Christ?
1. Jesus said that He gave the disciples details concerning their persecution “so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them” (John 16:4). In what way is Jesus’ prediction of terrible suffering comforting? Explain. More broadly, why is it strengthening for *any* person to expect tribulation in life, even as a Christian? Is there additional suffering that this expectation itself will allow a person to avoid?
- C. Find an article to read about present-day religious persecution against those who claim Christianity. What is it about Christianity that makes some people hate it so much today? How does this compare to what made so many hate Christianity in the first century?

Conclusion: Practical application.

- A. Has persecution had practical value in your life? (If this question seems paradoxical, consult the article here: <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/366-the-value-of-persecution>.)
- B. Collecting the study notes you have made in this month’s digging, develop a lesson about the Bible doctrine of persecution. Prepare to give this lesson in a Bible class or sermon.

