

Weekly Study Guide

The Week of January 5, 2014

Daily Readings

Monday	Isaiah 27:2-6	Tuesday	Psalm 80	Wednesday	John 14:1-14
Thursday	John 14:1-14	Friday	John 14:15-31	Saturday	John 15:1-17

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *Pruning*

Next week's readings: John 15:1-17

Jesus teaches that God wants us to have growing and fruitful lives. Gardeners know that good growth and fruit requires pruning. Join us next week to learn more about how God prunes the excess in our lives so that we can be more fruitful.

first lutheran church

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Group Discussion

Connect

Get started by connecting or reconnecting with your group. Pick one or both of these questions:

1. What was your favorite part about Christmas this year?
2. What are you most hopeful about in 2014?

Learn

We are learning what Jesus says about a fruitful life in relationship to God by reading his words in John 15. Start today simply by having someone in your group read **John 15:1-17** aloud.

- What are your first impressions of this passage?
- What questions do you have, that you might want to explore over the next few weeks of learning from this passage?

When Jesus talked to his first disciples about God and vineyards, they would have recognized this image. In the Old Testament, God sometimes identified himself as the tender of a vineyard and Israel as that vineyard.

- **Read Isaiah 27:2-6 and Psalm 80:8-15.** Jesus and his first disciples would all have known these passages.
- What do you notice is similar or different about what Jesus is saying here?
- Jesus says he is the “true” vine. Why do you think that’s important?

The main thing that Jesus tells his disciples to do in this passage is to “abide” or “remain” in him or “stay” with him. **Re-read John 15:4-5** to see this emphasis.

- Brainstorm a list of the things that help you “abide” or stay connected to Jesus.
- Brainstorm a list of the things that tend to weaken your connection to Jesus.
- In John 15, the purpose of “abiding” is fruit bearing. Do you see a connection between the things on these lists and the presence of healthy “fruit” in your life?

Apply

What steps would you like to take this week to increase the abiding in your life?

Pray

Jesus says that God is the gardener. Pray for God to work in you and your group, to garden you toward spiritual health and fruitfulness.