

The
New
Testament
in a Year

Week 42

Gospel of John 11-15

This week's reflector is
Steve Huntley. He serves as pastor
with Tansley United Church
in Burlington.

General Questions for Reflection

You might pick one part of each chapter
and think about these questions.

- What does this tell me about God
(including Jesus and the Holy Spirit)?
- What does this tell me about our world?
- What does it tell me about me?
- What does it say about following Jesus?
- Is there something here I'd like to learn
more about?

Why not use these thoughts to shape your
prayer today.

Monday

John 11

The death and resuscitation of Lazarus is a pre-cursor to Jesus' upcoming Passion and hastened the action of the religious authorities to do away with him.

Notice it was resuscitation, not resurrection. Lazarus would eventually die. This is an important difference for Christians today. We often live our lives as if Jesus was resuscitated, not resurrected. We want to have things back the way things were, rather than seeking the new life God has promised.

Tuesday

John 12

Jesus is anointed for his upcoming burial. The cross looms large in Jesus' thinking. Mary's perfume is expensive and extravagant, a disciple objects. What does this say about the munificence of God?

Many Jews continue in their unbelief, John reports (vs 34), primarily because the concept of a dying Messiah has no referent in the scriptures or Jewish religious tradition. God will do a new thing. *Do we sometimes limit what God can do based on the past?*

Wednesday

John 13

Foot washing becomes the clearest example our Lord makes regarding what it means to be a child of God. We are so addicted to winning/success in life that we forget that losing, or downward mobility is the life we are called to emulate. The last shall be first, and a little child will lead them. Christianity is neither about winning or success, it is being faithful.

A new commandment – Love one another. Whatever we understand about the Christian life let us never forget that love begets everything.

Thursday

John 14

Why didn't John learn how to write shorter chapters in grade school?!

"In my Father's house are many rooms," is an oft referenced passage at funerals. I heard a sermon at a funeral recently that imaged actual rooms in heaven for each believer! Nonsense. That kind of literalism is the death of our credibility to the world. John would be aghast! Further, according to N.T. Wright, going to heaven when we die, while important doctrine, is not the heart of Jesus' message. Joining with him in building the Kingdom of God is.

Friday

John 15

One of the finest (if not the finest) images of our relationship to the divine – "I am the vine and you are the branches." The Gospel writer John offers many images as a way of understanding our relationship with God. We cannot rightly act while disconnected to the source of our life, and God has chosen to work out His purposes in human history.

How do we embody the message of Christ Jesus as the branches? God chooses (for better or worse) clumsy people like you and I to be His instruments. *How do you discern God working in history today?*

While connected to the vine we can better incorporate the hatred the world has for God's people in our witness. (vs18)