

“Abiding: John 15”

Week #1

INTRODUCTION

This week we begin a new sermon series based on John chapter 15. The focus of this study is “Abiding”. When we are abiding we tarry, remain or dwell in one place. If we fail to abide, we hinder authentic transformational growth. Jesus calls us to abide in Him. As we examine this chapter of John, let’s consider what it means for us to abide in Jesus.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

What is the longest you have lived in one place?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Q1. Read John 15:1-4; Colossians 1:10

Jesus’s illustration of abiding comes from a practice that was familiar to those he spoke to – agriculture. How did He refer to Himself in John 15:1? If He is the true vine, what are some of those “false vines” that might tempt us to spend our time and effort on them?

Jesus refers to the Father as a gardener. What specific tasks of the Father does he highlight in verse 2? Both the removal and the pruning of branches are based on fruitfulness. What do you think are some of the fruits that God is looking for in your life? Have you experienced any “pruning” that resulted in increased fruitfulness in your own life?

Q2. Read 2 Kings 5:6-8, 10-12, 14

One thing that can get in the way of abiding is impatience. Unfortunately instant gratification is not always the path God chooses for us. In the book of 2 Kings we see the story of Naaman. Nothing short of a miracle could cure his leprosy. Why do you think Naaman’s master mistakenly asked the king to heal him, rather than Elisha? God’s choice is not always the obvious, or popular choice. What did Naaman find offensive about Elisha’s solution? Has God ever directed you to do something that on the surface, didn’t make sense, but turned out for the best?

Q3 Read James 1:2-4; John 15:4

Some of the hardest times to abide and wait patiently for God are during times of testing. What does James tell us is the result of those times of the testing of our faith? In John 15:4 Jesus gives us a conditional promise. What is the condition? What is His promise? Have you ever experienced trying to “bear fruit” for God in your own power? What experiences have taught you the most about abiding in God?

Wrap-Up

We live in a “next” world, often focused on something in our future. But Jesus calls us to abide in Him and experience the life that He offers us now. It is when we are abiding in Him that we bear the greatest fruit. Too often we break the pattern of abiding because we are too impatient. Sometimes we listen to the wrong person to seek out a new direction, or we rely on what we think is the best way, when God is calling us in a different direction. Abiding is a choice we make and requires perseverance. When we abide in Christ, He abides in us and it is from Him that we will bear the fruit He seeks in our lives.

Memory Verse

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.
- John 15:4 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life:

Challenge:

Read John 15 for the first 15 minutes every day this week. Ask God to reveal a deeper understanding.

