



Gospel Community Notes & Questions

Title: Abide in the Vine

Text: John 15:1-17

Theme: The key to living and loving like Jesus is being in constant communion with him.

Teaching Notes: In contrast to old covenant Israel, which failed in its calling to be God's fruitful vineyard, Jesus is the true Vine. By abiding in him, and allowing his word to abide in us, believers flourish spiritually. His life nourishes our lives and we bear the fruit of his character. The Father works actively in our lives to prune away anything that would hinder our fruitfulness.

Outline:

1. Invitation.

- Abiding in Christ and in his love is the central invitation of text.

2. Illustration.

- Jesus = vine, the rootstock
- Believers = branches, tendrils
- Father = vinedresser, gardener

3. Intention.

- Just as the point of a vineyard is grapes, the point of abiding in Christ is fruitfulness.

4. Implications.

- a. The Lord will remove every branch that won't bear fruit.
- b. The Lord will prune every branch that bears fruit.

5. Impact.

- a. The fruit of answered prayer.
- b. The fruit of unconditional love.
- c. The fruit of fullness of joy.
- d. The fruit of friendship with God.



Questions to explore individually and with your group:

1. Share one thing that stood out to you from the text and message.
2. Abiding in Christ can feel like an abstract theological concept rather than a call to action. How would you make abiding practical and actionable if you were explaining it to someone else?
3. Consider what you know about the sap (xylem + phloem) of a fruit-bearing vine. What are some spiritual things that are analogous to the function performed by that sap?
4. If you wanted to bear Cabernet grapes, what would need to be true about your vine/rootstock? What spiritual applications can you draw from this basic fact?
5. The sermon mentioned that the ultimate purpose of pruning is to maximize the yield + quality of fruit (by controlling growth, cropload, and disease). If the Father prunes our lives in a similar fashion – and for similar reasons – what kinds of things would you expect him to cut away? [Think: What hinders you from being more fruitful spiritually?]
6. What's the connection between abiding in Christ and answered prayer? How does this change the way you think about your prayer life?
7. How does the analogy of a vine and branches illustrate the truth that Jesus doesn't think of us as his slaves, but as his friends? What's your biggest takeaway from the fact that Jesus calls you his friend?
8. According to this text, what's the "secret" to bearing fruits like unconditional love for others and fullness of joy? If you don't currently experience those fruits, or if you simply want more of those fruits, how would pursue them?
9. The key to fruitful Christian discipleship is . . . *what*, based on this teaching? How will that impact your approach to following Jesus going forward?
10. What one actionable thing will you do this week in response to this Scripture?

Prayer Prompts:

1. Praise Father, Son, and Spirit for their roles in providing you with everything necessary for a fruitful life that embodies the power and character of Jesus.
2. Invite and embrace the pruning work of the Father, especially where he is removing temptation and sin from your life.
3. Ask the Spirit to teach you how to abide in Christ – and to fill you with his life as you do so.