

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE / APRIL 21

TO APPLY, NOT REHASH, THE SERMON

Read

Read John 15:1–8 and consider making some observations about the passage.

Sermon Recap

Review the sermon with your group, highlighting the following:

- “Jesus calls us to abide, which is a relational term meaning to hang out with, to be connected to. To follow Jesus means to be in constant connection and relationship with him.”
- “We were created and saved to bear fruit. But what is fruit? Fruit is the visible display of the character of Christ through an abiding relationship with him, for the benefit of others and the glory of God.”
- “How does God bring about fruit in my life? Abiding, waiting, and suffering.”
- “Abiding is the required means by which you and I manifest the Christlike character of God to others.”
- “Our Father is never closer to us than when he is pruning us. His pruning is a sign of his care.”
- “Jesus talks about branches that don’t bear fruit and how they are taken away, thrown into the fire, and burned.”

Group Discussion

1. What does the “I am the vine” statement reveal about Jesus and his Father? What does “abiding” mean for you?
2. What does it mean to bear fruit? How do you see this in your life or in others? How can we grow in bearing fruit?
3. Discuss a time when suffering or waiting seemed to enhance your spiritual growth. How did that period of hardship help you bear more fruit?
4. What are some practical ways we can grow in abiding in Christ? How can we support each other in this?

DIG DEEPER

Read Isaiah 5:1–7. God describes Israel as a vineyard from which he expected good grapes, but it only produced bad fruit, reflecting unrighteousness and injustice. In John 15, Jesus calls himself the “true vine” and his followers the branches, expected to bear good fruit through abiding in him. Reflecting on these passages, what specific actions can we take as God’s people to ensure we are abiding and not producing “bad fruit” that displeases God?

PRAYER

- Pray that each member of the group deepens their abiding relationship with Christ, experiencing true connection beyond religious activities or achievements.
- Ask God for grace and comfort in times of pruning and challenges we will face. Pray that we remain faithful and trust in his process to cultivate patience, strength, and greater fruitfulness in us.