

Bearing The Fruit of Abiding in Christ

John 15:1-17

We believe that people experience and grow in their faith when they get to spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also hearing from other Christians. This discussion guide is provided as a resource for you to further reflect on and apply the truths we study on Sunday mornings, whether individually or with a group.

STUDY/DISCUSSION:

1. **Read John 15:9-11.** Jesus clearly tells his disciples that one of the ways that they abide/remain/live in his love is by obeying his commandments, and that our bearing the "fruit" of obedience to his commandments is one of the clear evidences that we are abiding in Christ, and that Christ is abiding in us. If you consider yourself to be a follower of Christ, in what areas of obedience to God's commands have you experienced growth recently? If you have been a Christian for any length of time, in what areas what you experienced growth over the long haul? What are some areas of obedience that you recognize you most need to grow?
2. **Read John 15:11.** Jesus tells his disciples that his purpose for calling them to grow in obedience to his commandments is that they might experience genuine "joy" like He himself has as he obeys The Father's will. How have you experienced growth in obedience to God's commands as a source of joy? How do both personal joy and personal obedience go together? Similarly, how have you seen a lack of obedience to God's commands result in personal sorrow rather than joy?
3. **Read John 15:7.** Here, Jesus promises his followers that "*ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*" It's an amazing promise, but also one Jesus roots in the conditions, "*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you...*" How does our abiding in God's Word, and having the words of Christ abide in us actually the change the way we pray? How have you seen the attitude/posture with which you pray, or the things for which you pray change as you have grown in your knowledge of God's Word?
4. **Read James 4:3.** How does James' teaching here correct the idea that Jesus' promise in John 15:7 is that God will give us *anything* we ask for? Looking back on your prayer life, are there times when you recognize that you have prayed with selfish motives that further your own "passions" rather than the passions or desires of the Lord? What are some examples?
5. **Read John 15:12-15.** Jesus clearly calls his followers to love one another with a sacrificial love that emulates his own sacrificial love for His people that makes former "enemies" his friends. What are some examples you have seen of this kind of love displayed in the church? How have you seen God grown you in showing this kind of sacrificial love to others, especially those different from you?

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6. **Read John 15:16.** Jesus tells his disciples that He chose them and “set them apart” to bear fruit. This verb of being “set apart” to bear fruit, is most often used in the New Testament to describe being set apart to bear fruit of helping new people come to know Jesus Christ. Why is a commitment to helping other people discover the truth of Christ such a vital fruit for all Christians to bear (on par with knowing & obeying the commands, prayer, and love for fellow believers)?

7. **Read John 15:1-4.** While on the one hand the fruits that Jesus calls his followers to bear are a means of their abiding/remaining/living in Him, they are also *evidences* that Jesus abides in them. How does the absence of such fruits in the life of a person indicate the absence of Christ in them? How does this help to explain the occurrence of people who once identified as Christians, or even Christian leaders, but do so no longer?