

## **Abiding in Jesus' Love**

### **John 15:1-17**

Drifting away from close communion with Christ is a perpetual temptation for every believer. Beware of drifting from a deep, conscious, daily dependence upon Jesus.

“Take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt...” Deuteronomy 8:11-14

"Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’” Deuteronomy 8:17

Abiding in Christ is the daily activity of drawing near to Christ, depending upon Him by faith, learning from Him, and letting His Spirit strengthen you and form you increasingly into His likeness.

“But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.” Psalm 73:28

What does it mean to abide in Christ?

### **A. Abiding in Jesus is Choosing a Lifestyle of Divine Pruning - John 15:1-17**

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear much fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 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 15:1-6

Christianity is not a self-help, self-improvement process. It is an abandonment of every form of self-salvation. It is a daily surrender to the only One who can both save us and transform us for the glory of God.

- **The goal of the Christian's life is not merely forgiveness. It is fullness/fruitfulness. Only Jesus is qualified and appointed to do both.**

Jesus is the true vine:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. John 15:1

"Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine that we may be saved! You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. ... Why then have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?"  
Psalm 80:7-12

"Jesus is saying, 'I am the genuine article. I am the true vine. When you see me what you are seeing is Israel. I am the new Israel. I am the faithful, genuine son of the Father. I am the vineyard that God has put His grace, His love, and His selection upon... What that vineyard did not produce, I will produce. What that vineyard (Israel) did not fulfill, I will fulfill.'" Chad Bird

- **The guarantee of fruitfulness is not human effort or religious drivenness/busyness but deep daily dependence on Christ through the Father's pruning process. It's abiding in Him.**

"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. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me, you can do nothing." John 15:4-5

"Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work

will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire." 1 Corinthians 3.10-15

Question: Will you wither or flourish?

The great challenge for us as Christians is deciding daily whether we will continue to embrace the process of divine pruning in dependence upon Jesus Christ or build our lives ourselves using some other power and following some other principle.

## **B. Abiding in Jesus is a Journey into the depths of the love and joy of Christ for us - John 15:7-11**

"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved you, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." John 15:7-11

**• Abiding in Jesus is letting His words penetrate and permeate your life - "If you abide in me and my words abide in you."**

"If we ever wonder why we do not seem to love Jesus very much – at least not as much as we should – maybe this is one of the reasons why: we are not reading the Bible in one of the ways we should. We are reading it in worship services, perhaps, or reading it for a class or a study group. We are reading it for content and maybe for application but not for relationship." - Philip Ryken

- **Abiding in Jesus means learning to process our lives in direct, continual, and dependent prayer** - “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.” (John 15:7)
- **Abiding in Jesus is learning more about how much He loves us as He leads us through the process of discipleship** - “By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved you, so I have loved you. Abide in my love.”

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.” 1 John 5:3

### **C. Abiding in Jesus is Learning What a Friend We Have in Jesus - John 15:12-17.**

“This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for His friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.” - John 15:12-14

“If friendships among believers are like hills, friendship with Jesus is the highest peak of the highest mountain. He is the God-man. We rightly long and hope for deeply satisfying friendships, but only friendship with him is truly and eternally satisfying. The words of the old hymn ring true: “There’s not a friend like the lowly Jesus, no, not one!” Kenyan pastor, Dan Gachuki

#### **Abiding in Jesus is a journey into the depths of divine love:**

- Sacrificial Love
- Electing Love
- Unfailing Love

As the greatest of friends, Christ lays down His life, chooses us to be His friends, and the insists we live the kind of love which would bring Him the greatest glory, others the greatest good, and us the greatest joy!

