

John 15 Grow Group Resources

Sermon Summary

- In John 15:1-17, Jesus speaks to His disciples in the upper room on the night before His crucifixion. Knowing He is about to leave them, Jesus prepares them for the difficult days ahead by giving them firm anchors for their identity and faith. He uses the powerful image of a vine and its branches.
- Jesus declares, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser.” Every branch in Him that does not bear fruit is taken away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so it will bear more fruit. He tells them, “Already you are clean because of the word I have spoken to you.” Then comes the clear picture: “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.”
- In this extended metaphor, Jesus reveals profound truths about who He is and who we are.
- **I AM** - Who Jesus Is
- Jesus is the true vine — the only genuine source of life, purpose, significance, and identity. In the Old Testament, Israel saw itself as God’s vine, but Jesus now claims that role exclusively. He is not one option among many; He is the true and only vine. All other “vines” — whether career, relationships, possessions, status, nationality, hobbies, or even self-sufficiency — are false vines that cannot give real life. Jesus is the source from which everything we need flows. His Father is the vine dresser, the One who carefully prunes branches — cutting away what is dead or unproductive so that the life of the vine can flow more freely and produce greater fruit.
- **You Are** - Who We Are
 - Because of our connection to Jesus, our identity flows directly from Him. Jesus speaks several powerful truths over every believer:
 - You are clean — Positionally, through faith in Christ, you are already forgiven and prepared for relationship with God.
 - You are the branches — You are designed to be dependent on the vine, not self-sufficient.
 - You are in Christ — You are united with Him in a deep, living, abiding relationship (not like a plug that can easily be pulled out, but organically connected).
 - You have purpose — You are created to bear fruit — and not just a little, but much fruit that lasts eternally.
 - You are His disciple — A lifelong learner who follows and grows in His teaching.

- You are loved — With the same perfect, eternal love the Father has for the Son. Jesus demonstrated this love by laying down His life for His friends.
- You are His friend — Not a distant servant, but a friend to whom Jesus reveals the Father's heart and plans.
- You are chosen and appointed — Jesus chose you and appointed you to go and bear lasting fruit.
- **More Blessings:** Jesus also promises wonderful blessings for those who abide (remain, stay connected) in Him:
 - Full joy — Not mere happiness, but His own supernatural joy filling us.
 - Effective prayer — When we abide in Him and His words abide in us, our prayers align with God's heart and are answered.
 - Lasting fruit — Eternal impact that glorifies the Father.
 - Community — We are called to love one another as branches connected to the same vine.
 - Revelation — Jesus shares with us what the Father is doing.
- The Christian life is not primarily about trying harder to live for Jesus. It is about abiding in Jesus — moment by moment choosing to stay connected to the true vine so that His life flows through us. Abiding is not complicated: it happens through prayer, time in God's Word, dependence on the Holy Spirit (our Helper), and daily surrender. We are not alone — the Holy Spirit has been sent to help us abide.
- Jesus gives a clear warning: apart from Him we can do nothing, and branches that do not abide wither. Yet the good news is that if you have put your faith in Jesus, you are already connected to the vine. Abiding is simply continuing in that connection.
- If you have never trusted in Jesus, today is the day to connect to the true vine. He offers forgiveness, new life, and a deep relationship with God.
- If you already know Him, keep abiding. Choose moment by moment to draw your life, identity, and strength from Jesus. Let His life flow through you so you can bear much fruit that lasts.
- Your identity is not something you create — it is something you discover as it flows from who Jesus is. Knowing whose you are is the foundation for knowing who you are.

Discussion Questions

1. Start your time with a word of prayer, asking God to guide your conversations.
2. Have someone read John 15:1-17 out loud.
 - A. What stands out to you in Jesus teaching to His disciples? What questions arise?
 - B. Remind yourselves of the context in which Jesus words take place (What has recently happened? What will the coming days, weeks, and months look like for the disciples?)
3. Identity in a Shifting Culture. The pastor said, “Identity isn’t something that you form. It’s something that you find... Your identity is designed to flow from who He is.”
 - A. How does this idea challenge the way our culture tells us to create or change our identity? Share an area where you’ve felt pressure to “figure out who you are” on your own.
4. Jesus as the True Vine. Jesus declares, “I am the true vine” and contrasts Himself with false vines (career, possessions, self-sufficiency, group identity, etc.).
 - A. What are some “false vines” that people often try to draw life, purpose, or identity from? Which one have you been most tempted to rely on, and why?
5. Who You Are in Christ. The sermon highlights several truths Jesus speaks over believers: you are clean, you are the branches, you are loved, you are His friend, you are chosen, and you have purpose to bear fruit.
 - A. Which of these statements about your identity most encourages you right now, and why? Which one do you find hardest to believe or live out?
6. Abiding in Jesus. Jesus repeatedly emphasizes “abide in me.” Ryan explained that abiding is not about trying harder but about staying connected to the vine moment by moment through prayer, God’s Word, and dependence on the Holy Spirit.
 - A. What does “abiding” look like practically in your daily life? Share one habit or practice that helps you stay connected to Jesus.
7. The Role of the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Father is the vinedresser who prunes, and the Holy Spirit is the Helper who enables us to abide.
 - A. How does the idea of the Father pruning (cutting things away so we can bear more fruit) encourage or challenge you?
 - B. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit’s help in your walk with Jesus?

8. Living Out Our Identity and Purpose. Jesus says we are appointed to go and bear fruit that lasts, and that the Christian life is not just living for Jesus but letting Him live in and through us.
 - A. What would it look like this week for you to abide in Jesus so that His life flows through you in your relationships, work, or church community? Is there one specific step you can take?
9. Finish your time in prayer. Ask The Helper to help you as you abide this week. Take a moment to ask for and pray for prayer requests in the group.