



Walking With Your God

Abide in Jesus

John 15:1-17

Message #40 – S536

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Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Abide in Jesus

John 15:1-17

Opening Comments

- Turn to **John 15**
- We will take a break from our study of Luke
- We'll come back to it next
- Sit back, open the Bible and open your heart to what the Spirit has for you today
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Abide in Jesus**
- We are in the section of John called the Upper Room Discourse
- But it is likely that this part was not actually said in the Upper Room
- At the end of chapter 14, Jesus told the disciples it was time to go
- Possible this was said on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane
- That is especially meaningful in relation to the next thing Jesus says
- **John 15:1**
- This is the 7th and final 'I am' statement in John
- To the Jew, a spreading and fruitful vine was the symbol of prosperity and blessings
- Jesus often used the things around Him to illustrate what He was trying to teach
- It is possible that Jesus and the disciples were walking past the temple
- On its massive doors was an exquisite vine with clusters of fruit as large as a man
- All throughout the OT, the vine was a symbol of Israel **Isaiah 5:7**
For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant.
- Here Jesus says 'true vine' = genuine – real deal
- Father is vinedresser – tends, cares for, protects, supplies the vine
- Attached to the vine are branches – and they have a purpose
- **John 15:2**

- This message was given to believers about their connection to and relationship to Jesus
- If we are in a right relationship to Jesus, we will bear fruit
- In fact, fruit is proof of a right relationship with Jesus
- What is the fruit that is produced when we are connected to Jesus

Galatians 5:22-23

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

- Jesus perfectly displayed all these fruit in His life
- Usually when we think of fruit in our lives we think of good works
- The greatest fruit that we can produce is to let the life of Christ be seen in us through the fruit of the Spirit
- God expects His people to bear good fruit
- You are either abiding in Christ and God is working with you to bear more fruit, or you are not abiding in Christ and God is working against you
- And in a moment, we will see that it has nothing to do with what we do, but where we are
- But something interesting first – if you bear fruit – Father ‘prunes’
- Bearing fruit is good – but God wants to work in your life to bear more fruit
- The Temecula Valley is known for wine grapes
- If you could watch the vinedressers work, would see them regularly clipping and trimming the plants
- They do that to get the greatest possible yield of the best possible grapes
- Anything that might hinder good fruit is trimmed away
- God does the same thing with us
- I am certain that if the grape plants were conscious, they would object to the work of the vinedresser – it hurts
- Not only that, but the vinedresser trims away what is growing naturally to guide the growth along a desired pathway
- God does that with us also
- Without God’s pruning, your life would follow a pathway that is not the one God’s wants for you – the one that bears more fruit

- Jesus goes on to tell the disciples how they are being pruned
- **John 15:3**
- It is the word of God that prunes or cleans our lives **Psalm 119:9**
How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.
- This is why some people have so little spiritual fruit in their lives
- They have no real connection to the word of God
- **John 15:4**
- ‘abide’ = Aorist active imperative – it is a command to do it and continue doing it
- constant communion – a shared life
- Do you understand how radical that is – God the Son wants to live in you, and wants you to live in Him?
- Vine supplies sap to the branches
- Speaks of the Holy Spirit
- Ephesians 5:18 = be filled with the Spirit
- Idea of constant and repeated action = ‘be being filled with the Spirit’
- **John 15:5**
- If we abide, stay in constant communion with Jesus and be being filled with the Spirit, will bear much fruit
- Apart = do nothing = no spiritual fruit
- Cut a branch from the vine it cannot produce fruit **R. Kent Hughes**
Abiding involves a growing sense of weakness.
- But that growing sense of weakness shows up in your life as growing strength as your life is bearing great spiritual fruit
- Follows with a warning
- **John 15:6**
- Not saying that you will lose your salvation
- You were created to produce fruit, if you don’t, you will be removed from the place of producing fruit
- There is nothing sadder than a fruitless Christian
- Verse 16 says we are placed where we can produce fruit
- Then three quick results of abiding in Christ
- **John 15:7**
- You will have an **effectual prayer life**

- If you are abiding in Christ and His word is abiding in you, you will see your prayers being answered
- If they aren't, draw nearer to Jesus and to His word
- The second result of abiding = **Abundant Fruit**
- **John 15:8**
- We won't need to strive to bear fruit, simply abiding produces fruit
- Trees and vines don't try to bear fruit, they simply abide in the earth
- The third result of abiding = **Celestial Joy**
- **John 15:9-11**
- Notice that one of the keys to abiding is 'keep My commandments'
- You can't abide with Christ and disobey what He said
- The Christian life was never meant to be dull and joyless
- If you hang around us, you will see we enjoy each other
- An abiding, fruit-bearing Christian is fun to be around
- If you are not experiencing joy in this life, it is not about changing your circumstances
- Joy is produced by abiding in Christ and bearing spiritual fruit from that constant communion with Him
- And that communion also includes a change in relationship
- **John 15:12-15**
- Jesus calls you friend, if you keep His commandments
- And the main commandment we is telling us to keep is to love one another
- You cannot be a friend of Jesus and hate another Christian
- Verse 13 tells us there is a greater love – lay down one's life
- Most interpret that to mean, to die for someone
- That thought is included but it is the extreme expression of that greater love
- There is also an everyday kind of expression of the 'greater love'
- The phrase 'lay down' = to set aside is found in **John 13:3-4**
Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.
- Jesus laid down His garments to serve the disciples
- The greater love is a sacrificial love

- It is the setting aside of my life so that I can love someone else by serving them
- To love with the greater love, I need to set aside my wants, needs, dreams, wishes, hopes, expectations, fears, worries, concerns, everything
- This frees me to love with abandon – to love anyone, anywhere
- And because I trust God, I know He has all the stuff of my life in His hands, He will take care of me
- By laying aside my life, I am also freer to obey Jesus’ commands
- As I abide in Jesus I am filled more and more with His love and joy
- And if I can lay aside my life, all of it, that love can flow out more and more
- For many in the world the greatest question they have is, ‘Why am I here?’
- If you are a Christian here, Jesus answers that question for you
- **John 15:16-17**
- Jesus chose us and appointed us to bear fruit
- You have been set aside to bear spiritual fruit
- Where you are right now is where God put you to bear good spiritual fruit
- Connect yourself to Christ through His Word and through the Spirit
- And if you will abide in Christ, your prayers will be answered
- Ends our text for the day reminded us to love
- End with the fairy tale of the frog and the princess
- Handsome prince is cursed, turned into a frog
- Only the kiss of a lovely princess will break the curse
- Problem, princesses don’t usually go around kissing frogs
- Eventually princess kisses the frog, poof, handsome prince – live happily ever after
- We are the King’s kids – princes and princesses
- The purpose of the church and Christians is to kiss frogs
- All around us are people both inside the church and outside that are under a curse
- They are trapped in a life that God wants to free them from

- And the only thing that will free them is a spiritual kiss from a Christian abiding in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and in obedience to the word of God
- Want to get in a boost in your faith, abide in Christ and start kissing frogs
- **Prayer**