John 15:1-8. Pastor Shannon Popp
"Healthy Disciples make Healthy Disciples" 11.22.26

Small Groups Study Guide: Read the entire Passage first

- Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Other passages to review: Matthew 7:16–20; James 2:17; Colossians 2:6–7; Galatians 2:20; Jeremiah 2:21; Matthew 3:10; Romans 11:19-20

READ THE PASSAGE
What does this passage tell us about God? Who He is and what He does.

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

Jesus is saying He is God, and He is the true vine (vs 1)

Jesus' eternal life flows in us to nourish us, and through us to nourish those around us. (vs 1)

2 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 more fruit.

Context is always king. (vs2)

We will never produce real fruit if we do not have true faith (vs 2)

The fruit of a disciple is another disciple (vs 1-8)

3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

God's Word washes what God's grace has won (vs 3)

4 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.
5 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.

Abiding is to make our home with Jesus, as He lives in our hearts (vs 4-5)

6 If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

For Jesus' words to abide in us, we must abide in Jesus' words (vs 7)

When God's word fills our heart, God's will shapes our prayers (vs 7)

[8] By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Disciples who make disciples glorify God on earth (vs 8)

Put into Practice: Examine your Abiding, and be honest with the fruit in your life.
No fruit (2)
Some fruit (2)
More fruit (2)
Much fruit (5, 8)

Small Group Discussion Questions

John 15:1–8 | Healthy Disciples Make Healthy Disciples

1. True Faith Produces Real Fruit

Scripture: John 15:1–2, 6, 8; Matthew 7:16–20; James 2:17
Jesus describes Himself as the True Vine and His Father as the Gardener. In the sermon, we were reminded that we can do Christian things without actually depending on Christ.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think it is possible to attend church, serve, and participate in Christian activities without genuinely abiding in Jesus?
- Who has been instrumental in helping you grow as a disciple of Jesus? What did they do that made a lasting difference?
- If someone examined the fruit of your life today, what evidence would they see that you are following Jesus? Where would you like to see more fruit?

2. Abiding in Jesus Is Our Source of Life

Scripture: John 15:3–5; Colossians 2:6–7; Galatians 2:20
Jesus says, "Apart from me you can do nothing." Abiding means remaining continually connected to Jesus through faith, His Word, prayer, and obedience.

Discussion Questions:

- Think about a season when you felt particularly close to Jesus. What was different about your relationship with Him during that time?
- What tends to disconnect your daily attention from Jesus: busyness, worry, self-reliance, distractions, or something else?
- What does “abiding” in Jesus practically look like in your home, marriage, friendships, or workplace?
- How could this group help one another develop deeper, more consistent relationships with Jesus?

3. Healthy Disciples Make Healthy Disciples

Scripture: John 15:7–8; Matthew 28:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:2
Jesus teaches that the Father is glorified when His disciples bear much fruit. The sermon challenged us to move beyond simply growing personally to helping others grow as disciples who make disciples.

Discussion Questions:

- Who first invested in your spiritual growth? How did their encouragement, example, or intentional time with you influence your relationship with Jesus?
- Who has God placed in your life, where you live, learn, work, play, or worship, and who might need someone to walk alongside them spiritually?
- What fears or obstacles keep you from intentionally discipling someone else?
- What is one practical step you could take this week to begin investing spiritually in another person?

PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS

Small groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth together in deep Christian relationships through the application of God's Word. The goal is to care about each other enough to ask the BIG questions of life, such as: What is God doing in your life? What is He asking you to do about it? Then walk with each other through life.

sharing, **caring**, **praying**, **serving, and mobilizing** each other.
SHARING – We come together each week to share a meal, God's Word, and how His story impacts our daily walk.
CARING – We gather together each week to ask great questions, listen to understand each other, and what God is doing in and through our lives.
PRAYING – We meet together to pray with each other. Not just to speak to God, but to hear from Him each week in community, and daily individually.
SERVING - We work together, using our unique gifts, to serve one another by God's grace and build the body in love each week.
MOBILIZING – We are praying for our neighbors by name and pray through "Good Events" once a quarter.

Leader's Guide (WITH SUGGESTED AND HELPFUL ANSWERS)

Main Purpose

Help your group see that the gospel is not merely behavior improvement but identity transformation. In Adam, sin and death reign. In Christ, grace reigns. Because of this, we rejoice — not just in what God does, but in who He is.

Pathway

When people move off track of the purpose, point to Scripture and remind people of the purpose.

Understanding the Questions

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Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think it is possible to attend church, serve, and participate in Christian activities without genuinely abiding in Jesus?
- Who has been instrumental in helping you grow as a disciple of Jesus? What did they do that made a lasting difference?
- If someone examined the fruit of your life today, what evidence would they see that you are following Jesus? Where would you like to see more fruit?

Biblical Answer:

Jesus teaches that genuine faith produces visible fruit (John 15:2, 8). Our spiritual activities cannot substitute for a living relationship with Christ. James 2:17 reminds us that faith without works is dead. Healthy disciples are not merely consumers of spiritual nourishment; they become people through whom the life of Jesus reaches others. **True faith produces real fruit, and healthy disciples make healthy disciples.**

2. Abiding in Jesus Is Our Source of Life

Scripture: John 15:3–5; Colossians 2:6–7; Galatians 2:20

Jesus says, "Apart from me you can do nothing." Abiding means remaining continually connected to Jesus through faith, His Word, prayer, and obedience.

Discussion Questions:

- Think about a season when you felt particularly close to Jesus. What was different about your relationship with Him during that time?
- What tends to disconnect your daily attention from Jesus: busyness, worry, self-reliance, distractions, or something else?
- What does "abiding" in Jesus practically look like in your home, marriage, friendships, or workplace?
- How could this group help one another develop deeper, more consistent relationships with Jesus?

Biblical Answer:

John 15:4–5 teaches that just as branches cannot produce fruit apart from the vine, disciples cannot produce lasting spiritual fruit apart from Jesus. Colossians 2:6–7 calls

believers to walk in Christ, rooted and built up in Him. Abiding is not simply another religious activity; it is an ongoing relationship of dependence upon Jesus. **We do not produce spiritual life through our own strength; His life flows <u>in</u> us and <u>through</u> us.**

3. Healthy Disciples Make Healthy Disciples
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Jesus teaches that the Father is glorified when His disciples bear much fruit. The sermon challenged us to move beyond simply growing personally to helping others grow as disciples who make disciples.
Discussion Questions:

- Who first invested in your spiritual growth? How did their encouragement, example, or intentional time with you influence your relationship with Jesus?
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Biblical Answer:
John 15:8 teaches that bearing much fruit glorifies the Father and demonstrates genuine discipleship. Matthew 28:19–20 commands followers of Jesus to make disciples, teaching them to obey His commands. Paul reinforces this multiplication in 2 Timothy 2:2 by instructing Timothy to entrust biblical truth to faithful people who will teach others. **The goal of discipleship is not simply to become spiritually healthy, but to become healthy disciples who make healthy disciples.**

One Simple Step This Week
Examine your abiding. Spend ten minutes each day in John 15:1–8, asking Jesus to reveal where you are relying on your own strength instead of His. Then prayerfully identify one person you can intentionally encourage or invest in spiritually this week.