

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

FOR FAITHFULLY FOLLOWING JESUS THROUGH YOUR WEEK

DINNER TIME DISCUSSION:

Advent is a season of waiting and preparing our hearts for Christ's advent (His coming). Is there something you are waiting for right now? What makes waiting hard? Is there a truth from John 15 and the message this past week that helps you as you wait? Share around the table and as each person shares, allow another to pray for what is shared.

DEVELOPING DISCIPLINES:

The imagery of the vine and the branches (this dwelling place) is developed in the beautiful imagery of the Father, Son, and community of believers in John 15:1-11. Lean into the community aspect and invite someone into your space and practice being a loving presence, a branch that is deeply connected to the Vine.

GOSPEL IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Enter into your day with a desire to abide in Jesus, for apart from him you can do nothing! When you look at your day, where are you tempted to do things on your own apart from Christ? Repent and return to a humble posture of abiding in Him.

PRACTICING PRAYER:

Read this article from John Piper, "[Prayer Vocalizes Our Abiding in Christ](#)". Put one of the suggestions into practice.

VERSE MEMORY:

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love."

John 15:9



To be a Christ centered community helping people faithfully follow Jesus both locally and globally.

Leader Resource Guide

Date: December 15, 2024

Abide in Him



OPENER QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY

Share your favorite Christmas/Advent tradition.

What is your favorite kind of Christmas cookie? Why?

NOTES

ABIDE IN THE VINE

John 15:1

ABIDE TO BEAR FRUIT

John 15: 2 - 8

ABIDE FOR LOVE

John 15: 9 - 10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR FOSTERING CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY

1. Personal Scripture reading recap: Where have you been in Scripture this week? What truth about who God is or what He's done has captured your attention and adoration? How is that truth impacting the way you live?
2. Worship Song Listen and/or [read through the lyrics](#) to the song we sang together on Sunday called Abide. Look at each verse and the two choruses. Identify the biblical truth in the lyrics. Find scripture referenced by key words, phrases, and ideas. How do these lyrics serve as a reminder that impacts your abiding in Jesus?
3. Ponder the Scripture Passage: John 15:1-11. Read out loud John 15:1-11 together. First, have one person read the whole passage. Then choose different translations and popcorn through the 11 verses out loud.

What stands out as you navigate this passage in different translations?

- Set the stage for the people involved. Who is playing what role in this passage? *Christ is the vine and God is the Gardener who cares for the branches to make them fruitful. The branches are all those who claim to be followers of Christ.*
- What is each person's purpose? *The believer's first purpose is to abide/ remain and the fruit is an outer working of the branch remaining in/ staying connected to the Vine. The Vine and the Vinedresser work together to produce the fruit through the "remaining" branch.*
- What questions arise as you consider God the Father's purpose, Jesus' purpose, and the believers' purpose?

Look for repeated words/themes.

- What does "abiding" or "remaining" in Christ mean? *Use the following additional scriptures to help flesh this out: 1 John 4:15 (Believing that He is God's Son) John 1:12 (Receiving him as Savior and Lord), 1 John 3:24 (Doing what God says), 1 John 2:24 (Continuing to believe the Gospel) 1 John 15:12 (Relating in love to the community of believers).*
- What does it look like to be a fruitful branch? *Do a little Scripture search for fruit. What kinds of fruit, besides prayer, joy, and love are mentioned in Galatians 5:22-24, Colossians 3:12-16, and 2 Peter 1:5-8?*

- What is the purpose of the fruit? *Visit verse 8: fruit ultimately brings glory back to the Father, but is done so by others experiencing the fruit of the Spirit in your life. Fruit brings glory to God, is for you good and for the sake of others!*
- What helpful warning comes from this passage about being disconnected, unproductive and withering, in essence, not abiding in Christ?
- Tangibly, what does "abiding" mean for you/us? What does that look like for you? What practices can we "do" to help us abide?

4. Church Father Quote: Read aloud this quote taken from a sermon preached by John Chrysostom, late in the 4th century, "Christ is not known as God alone, or man alone, but both together. For I know He was hungry, and I know that with five loaves He fed five thousand. I know He was thirsty, and I know that He turned the water into wine. I know he was carried in a ship, and I know that He walked on the sea. I know that He died, and I know that He raised the dead. I know that He was set before Pilate, and I know that He sits with the Father on His throne. I know that He was worshiped by angels, and I know that He was stoned. For by reason of this He is said to have been both God and man." And for reason of this, we can come to be with Him, to abide with Him, and so to live with Him forever.

Discuss the things we know about Christ from this quote, other scripture, and our own experiences. *Abiding in Christ is not as simple as knowing the truth in your mind, but living in such a way that it demonstrates your faith and trust in Him in everyday life.* As you look at your week, how does your head knowledge and heart of faith match up? What joys and challenges are drawing you nearer to Jesus or are you looking to yourself or others as your source of abiding?

5. Advent Question: Advent is a season of waiting for Christ's arrival. How do abiding in the Vine and waiting interplay in the life of believers? Is it just this season? How does Advent prepare us for a lifetime of abiding and waiting on the Lord? Is there something you are waiting for right now? How can we hold each other in prayer as we exercise the practice of waiting and abiding?
6. Read Philippians 2-4 for next week. The sermon passage will be John 3:1-21.