

Small Group Discussion Guide — March 7, 2021

- Series: Way, Truth, Life
 - Sermon: Vine Life
 - Scripture: John 15: 1-17 (NIV)
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

How have you felt the Holy Spirit moving in your life recently? Have you sensed God telling you anything?

CONNECT:

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. Lifestyle-brand signs like "Lake Life" or "Salt Life" are easy to spot every day. What is your dream lifestyle brand and why?

ENGAGE:

1. Read John 15: 1-8.
 - In this teaching, identify the gardener, the vine, and the branches. What is the main function of each?
 - Notice especially what Jesus says in verse 5. What does this tell us about how fruit is produced in us?
 - In the process of tending the vine, what stays and what gets cut off? What happens to the branches that remain?
2. Read John 15: 9-13.
 - What "fruit" does Jesus say is the result of abiding in the vine? How does He say our behavior will change as a result?
3. Read John 15: 13-17.
 - How does Jesus distinguish between servants and friends? What are his friends asked to do?
 - How does it feel to be chosen by Jesus? How does that support the charge to bear fruit?

APPLY:

1. Think of a time when you have felt nourished, rooted, and at peace with being grafted into Jesus, the Vine. What fruit did you see as a result of being rooted in Jesus? If you don't feel that way now, what can you do to strengthen your grafting?
2. Has there been an area of your life that needed pruning? Describe that process and the result, including pain that came along with it. Is there anything now that God is working to prune, in order to deepen your grafting into Him and enable you to bear more fruit?
3. Jesus promises that the Father will "give us what we ask if we remain in Him." What does He mean? How does it change the way you pray?

PRAY:

Gracious and loving God, thank you for abiding in us and allowing us to abide in you. Help us daily to strengthen the graft between us, so that we can truly live the Vine Life and bear fruit in your name. Amen

GOING DEEPER

1. Read Isaiah 5. How does the vineyard song apply to the times we are living in? How might we cultivate God's vision of His vineyard in our communities today?
2. Read Galatians 5:22-26. What fruit are you bearing? What fruit would you like to bear more of? Ask God to help you bear more and better fruit.

SUPPORTING VERSES

Friendly reminder: Download one of the Bible apps on your phone or tablet to have quick access to the many different versions of scripture available.

Isaiah 27:6

Matthew 16:25-26

QUOTES

This search for an identity with which we are content is not limited to work, but it is most obvious in this pursuit. We also spend an enormous amount of time rearranging life with choices about relationships, children, communities, churches, houses, and other possessions, thinking that we will eventually construct an identity we find fulfilling. As a pastor I have watched too many of my parishioners use up most of their fleeting years making choices that really don't matter. That's because our ancestors had it right. You cannot determine who you are by what you do. But few people believe that anymore. Why else do we introduce ourselves at parties by telling people how we make a living? We do that because we assume we can make our own lives by the way we construct them for ourselves.

Craig Barnes

No man is an island, entire of himself...

John Donne