

Abiding in Jesus  
John 15:1-16  
June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

1. We must \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus.
  - a. We abide in Jesus like \_\_\_\_\_ connected to a \_\_\_\_\_ . (vv. 1-6)
  - b. We abide in Jesus by abiding in His \_\_\_\_\_. (v. 7a)
  - c. We abide in Jesus by abiding in His \_\_\_\_\_. (vv. 9-10)
  - d. We abide in Jesus by abiding in \_\_\_\_\_. (vv. 7, 16)
2. Abiding in Jesus produces \_\_\_\_\_. (15: 2, 5, 8, 16)
3. If we \_\_\_\_\_ abide in Jesus:
  - a. We might not be a \_\_\_\_\_. (vv. 2, 6)
  - b. We will miss out on \_\_\_\_\_. (v. 11)

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on John 15:1-16

1. Have you ever felt confused by what it means to “abide in Jesus?” If so, why? What led to that confusion? Was there anything in the message that helped clear it up?
2. How is the language of a vine used of Israel in the Old Testament? (Is. 5:1-7; Hos. 10:1-2) In what sense is Jesus the “true vine” that Israel failed to be?
3. What are some ways that God may “prune” us to bear more fruit? (v. 2)
4. What happens when Christians forget the simple truth in v. 5, “apart from Me you can do nothing”?
5. In what way is abiding in Jesus connected to His words abiding in us? (v. 7) What steps can we take to have Jesus’ words abiding in us?
6. Jesus says that He loves His people “Just as the Father has loved Me.” (v. 9) How is the Father’s love for the Son described and displayed in scripture? What should be our response to this type of love?
7. According to Jesus, how can our joy become full? (v. 11) What then should a Christian who is not consistently abiding in Jesus expect to experience?

## Abiding in Jesus

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Big idea: We must remain connected to Jesus to bear fruit as His disciples.

### Intro

A few years ago, I traveled to the Republic of Georgia in eastern Europe to work with some pastors there. I didn't realize that Georgia is full of vineyards. As we drove through the countryside from the capital city of Tbilisi to the smaller village that we would be teaching in, the road was lined with vineyards much of the way. Most of the men in class had small vineyards at their homes as well. Even small homes on tiny lots often had an ancient grape vine creeping along a wall. Sometimes the vines are more than 100 years old. They said it's considered a great offense to cut down a grape vine after you buy a home.

It's this analogy of a grape vine that Jesus uses in John 15 to explain the need for us to remain deeply connected to Him. The prominent analogy is of a vine. The prominent word is "abide" or some translations say, "remain."

To abide means to live in close communion with Jesus – close relationship with Jesus.

It is a command in v. 4 – abide.

The Christian is "in Christ" – more than 200 times in the NT in some way the Christian is described as "in Christ" or "in Him." We are united to Jesus by faith and He is in us.

The command is to abide/remain in life giving connection to Jesus.

That might seem mystical or hard to understand, but I don't think it needs to be. He gets pretty specific here.

1. We must **abide** in Jesus.
  - a. We abide in Jesus like **branches** connected to a **vine**. (vv. 1-6)
    - i. Jesus is the true vine
      1. In this analogy, He is the vine – He is the real, true vine.
      2. But there is a sense also in which He is the true vine by fulfilling what Israel did not.
      3. Israel is described as a vine throughout the OT who consistently failed to bear the fruit expected of them.
      4. **Jeremiah 2:21** "Yet I planted you a choice vine, A completely faithful seed. How then have you turned yourself before Me Into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?"
      5. Psalm 80:8-16; Isaiah 5:1-7
    - ii. The Father is the vinedresser – the farmer who prunes and manages the vineyard.
    - iii. Branches that don't bear fruit are taken away – come back to this later.
    - iv. Branches that bear fruit are pruned to bear even more fruit.
      1. Cutting off parts of the branches that were not productive so that the productive parts would bear more fruit
      2. God will be at work in your life to prune you to bear more fruit – He might remove things that are distracting. He might allow difficult things to shape you.
      3. My example of a stress fracture in my back my jr year of high school

- v. The life of the vine flows through the branches. If you disconnected the branch from the vine, it would have no life. It would wither and dry up. Fruit would be impossible.
    - 1. v. 5 – apart from Me you can do nothing.
    - 2. Nothing of true fruit – nothing of lasting spiritual value – nothing of lasting, heart level transformation.
  - vi. Even if we get the analogy, we might still be left with a sense of, “how do I practically do that?”
- b. We abide in Jesus by abiding in His **Word**. (v. 7a)
- i. Abiding in Him and His words abiding in us are essentially parallel thoughts.
  - ii. You cannot abide in the Son of God if you don’t abide in the Word of God.
  - iii. We feed on the word of God like food.
    - 1. Deut 8:3 quoted by Jesus in Mt 4:4 – we don’t live by bread alone but on every that proceeds from the mouth of God.
    - 2. One thing I know about every one of you is that you have eaten recently and regularly. Our bodies need it.
  - iv. The psalmist in Psalm 1 describes how he delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night.
    - 1. Not merely to read and move on but to delight in, think about, struggle with understanding, apply, be corrected by, be confronted by, be encouraged by, be shaped by God’s Word.
    - 2. Johnny Ardavanis – statistically, each one of you checks your phone 186 times in a day. Spends 7 hours in front of a screen.
    - 3. You might be less than that, which means that someone else in here evens out the average by spending more than that.
    - 4. We abide in our phones, in our devices and often not for our good.
    - 5. iPhones alert you each week to your average screen time. By default the notification comes on Sunday morning. I glance down and am reminded of how much time I didn’t use productively.
  - v. Don’t think of your Bible intake as a mechanical, necessary act of obedience.
    - 1. Think of it as a branch staying connected to the vine to bear much fruit.
    - 2. Think of it as the life of Christ flowing into you.
- c. We abide in Jesus by abiding in His **love**. (vv. 9-10)
- i. Command in v. 9 to abide in His love.
  - ii. The magnitude of that love is capture in the phrase right before it – just as the Father has love Me, I have also loved you.
  - iii. “Just as” – the immeasurable ocean of love that the Father has for the Son stretching back to eternity without beginning – a love never tainted by sin or selfishness – that type of love, that degree of love is the love with which Christ loves you.
    - 1. Ardavanis – Command from Jesus that your day and your heart and your mind is planted in the conscious awareness of His profound love for you.

2. **Psalm 90:14** O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.
  - iv. Even that is connected to abiding in His word – because it is in His word that we gain an appreciation for His love.
    1. **Psalm 119:41** May Your lovingkindnesses also come to me, O LORD, Your salvation according to Your word;
    - v. We see repeated here in John 15 what we saw in John 14, that the growing experience of God’s love – not the growing, objective reality of His love – is connected to our obedience.
    - vi. Our obedience doesn’t earn God’s love, but His love for us echoes back in our love for Him and our love for Him results in obedience.
    - vii. The end of v. 10 says that Jesus models this in His own obedience to the Father.
  - d. We abide in Jesus by abiding in **prayer** (vv. 7, 16)
    - i. Ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you, whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you
      1. But it is as we abide in Jesus – as His word abides in us and shapes us and forms us so that we ask in His name with requests that He Himself would sign off on.
    - ii. He speaks to us in His word. We speak to Him in prayer. That’s relationship.
    - iii. Prayer is a demonstration that we actually believe that apart from Him we can do nothing.
      1. Self-confidence leads to prayerlessness.
      2. Humility leads to prayerfulness.
        - a. Are you trusting in your parenting techniques to raise godly children?
        - b. Are we trusting in our decorations, planning, administration, snacks, etc. to bring kids to Jesus?
        - c. Or are we striving to faithfully use our gifts and talents and time, but we are trusting in Jesus to work through that to save?
        - d. “apart from Me you can do nothing.”
    - iv. John Piper 'One of the great uses of Twitter and Facebook will be to prove at the Last Day that prayerlessness was not from lack of time.'
2. Abiding in Jesus produces **fruit**. (15: 2, 5, 8, 16)
    - a. He prunes so that we bear more fruit. (v. 2)
      - i. He is relentlessly committed to your transformation.
      - ii. **Hebrews 12:10-11** <sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness. <sup>11</sup> All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.
    - b. Apart from Him we can do nothing. (v. 5)
    - c. This fruit glorifies the Father. (v. 8)
    - d. What fruit is He talking about?

- i. **Galatians 5:22-23a** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control;
    - 1. Singular “fruit” described in 9 terms
    - 2. We don’t pursue the fruit as products in themselves, but they grow in the vine as we abide in Jesus.
    - 3. I’m in the process of starting three little grape vines. Right now they are frail, little things. They are alive, they have leaves, but no fruit yet. I could go to the store and buy grapes and more grapes. But eventually these little vines will bear fruit because they are truly alive.
  - ii. The Christian life is not a Christmas tree, it is a grape vine.
    - 1. They are not ornaments attached onto a tree but they grow organically through the branches like fruit.
  - iii. Love echoes in this passage again as we are once again commanded to love one another (v. 12) – love is a fruit, love comes as we abide in Jesus.
- e. This fruit remains. (v. 16)
- i. Superficial change doesn’t last. It’s like the grapes I buy from the store. I could staple them to the grape vine, but they would wither. They wouldn’t last. But if these vines make it, there will be fruit year after year. It could be like the grape vines in Georgia that are still bearing fruit 100 years later.
  - ii. This is lasting change – sometimes change is attempted but it’s not lasting because it isn’t change that comes from being connected to Jesus. But change that comes from being connected to Jesus is lasting change.
  - iii. That’s why a major concern we have in counseling is trying to answer the question, “Does this person know Jesus?” Not just “what is the problem in their marriage? How can I help them not be sad or anxious?”
3. If we **don’t** abide in Jesus:
- a. We might not be a **believer**. (vv. 2, 6)
    - i. In the analogy of the vine, He describes how branches that produce zero fruit are cut off and collected and thrown in the fire to be burned.
    - ii. To say they were once saved and connected to the vine and then lost it would be to press the analogy so far that it contradicts Jesus’ prior teaching.
      - 1. **John 10:28-29** and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.
    - iii. But there are some who profess faith in Jesus but don’t possess true saving faith in Jesus.
      - 1. Those in Matt. 7:22-23 who say “Lord, Lord did I not do all of this in your name?” and Jesus says to them, “depart from me, I never knew you.”
  - b. We will miss out on **joy**. (v. 11)
    - i. But there seems to be a warning to the believer that it’s possible to be in Christ and yet not consistently living out that reality by abiding deeply in Christ.
      - 1. There is a casual relationship with the Word of God.

2. Prayer is minimal to non-existent.
  3. Not much thought is given to the love of Christ.
  4. There is fruit, but it's minimal and could be more.
- ii. That believer needs to heed the command of Jesus to abide – remain – connect deeply.
  - iii. And if they miss out on the fullness of joy that could be theirs.
  - iv. V. 11 – these things I have spoken to you – why? – so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be made full.
    1. Flowing through the vine to the branches is joy – His joy.
    2. And His joy leads to our joy – full joy.
    3. It isn't given a la cart like picking out one course of a meal but as a package deal along with love and obedience.
    4. Some people describe the miserable middle where many Christians live. They aren't committing the 'big sins' but they are living wracked by guilt for disobedience, lacking in awareness of the depth of Jesus' love for them, occasionally sipping from God's Word rather than abiding in God's word. There is fruit but there could be more.
    5. Heaven will be their future, so what are they missing out on now?
      - a. Joy

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