

Abiding in Christ

John 15:1-12

MAIN IDEAS

At the Passover (John 13.1ff), John relates that Jesus, “knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father,” and set about preparing His disciples for life after His departure.

- Jesus begins with the illustration of the vine and the vinedresser to describe the principle of fruit-bearing
- The disciple can only be fruitful as he/she abides in Christ
- Those who choose to not abide in Christ will be ineffective and unfruitful, worthless in advancing Christ’s kingdom
- Jesus speaks to them about the priority of love, for God and for one another

What key word is repeated throughout this passage?

The disciples were troubled (John 14:1) at the thought of Jesus leaving them. He responds by promising the “Helper,” the Holy Spirit. Scan chapters 14-16 to see what the Spirit does that helps us to abide in Christ. What does this suggest about Jesus’ plan for His disciples following His departure?

Is bearing fruit a *condition* of becoming a disciple or a *proof* of being a disciple? What is the difference and how does it impact the way we view the gospel?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, yielding its fruit in season...

—Psalm 1:3

Do you hold yourself accountable for fruit-bearing? If so, how?

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and identify one fruit in your life that is lacking. How will you grow it?

What can you do to increase your dependence upon Christ? Are there areas in your life that you have tried to go it on your own rather than give it over to God? Think of one and

pray now that God would give you the wisdom, strength, and skills to deal with it.

A vineyard is a place for fruit-bearing. Where is your vineyard? Where in your life do you abide in Jesus?

What examples do you see in the life of Jesus where He drew apart from the world to spend time with His Father?

GROUP RESPONSE

Every church is a group of disciples and so these words of Jesus apply to us in two ways:

1. We struggle as citizens of heaven to live godly lives in this world.
2. To be effective in our communities, we must abide in Jesus.

How can we make DEC a place where we prioritize *being* a disciple and *doing* the work of Christ and become more effective and fruitful in the world outside?

According to DEC's mission statement:

We exist to glorify God by making mature disciples of Jesus through worship, community and proclaiming the gospel locally and globally.

Why is the first part of this mission necessary to accomplish the second?

The last words of this passage (v12-13) point to the importance of love, both for God and one another. What can we do to abide in Christ together as branches of the same Vine, Jesus?

In 1 Corinthians 16:14, Paul says, "Let all that you do be done in love." Jesus calls us not simply to *do* the work of ministry but is most concerned with the *way* we do it. What would this look like in our greeter's ministry, prayer ministry, ministry to children, etc.?

REPRODUCE

The writer of Hebrews urges us to "...consider how to stir up one another to love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24). What are some practical ways we can do this, especially for those who are struggling in their faith?

Find an older disciple who can talk with you about abiding in Christ for victory through the experiences that he/she has been through.

KEY VERSES

From the sermon:

- John 13:1
- John 15:1-12
- Psalm 1

Additional verses from the study:

- John 14:1
- John 14:25-27
- John 15:26-27
- John 16:7-11
- Galatians 5:22-23
- 1 Corinthians 16:14
- Hebrews 10:24