



# Final Words.

## SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Message Series** // Final Words Part 2 ("Remain")

**Message Date** // March 21, 2021 (Pastor Russ Stutzman)

### BIG IDEA

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During this teaching series, we are taking a look at some of the last words Jesus spoke before his death on the cross. In the Bible book of John, the apostle John captures words Jesus spoke during the Last Supper. The words are spoken with boldness and humility, and John must have felt the obligation to make sure audiences that weren't present at the meal were able to get a glimpse into what was important to Jesus. May we, 2,000 years later, listen to these words and understand how we can live them out in our own lives.

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If someone remains in me and I in them, they will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." - John 15:5 (words of Jesus)*

### DISCUSSION

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Read **John 15:1-2** along with **Galatians 5:22-25**. Jesus is using powerful imagery to communicate roles in our relationship with him. Jesus refers to himself as the "true vine", and we are the "branches". And because we are the branches, we have the potential to bear "fruit" (**Galatians 5:22**). A basic truth we need to understand in our relationship with Jesus is this...when we are living in union with Jesus, we will most naturally bear fruitful lives. How would you describe this truth in your own words? In your own life, what ways have you seen your connection with Jesus result in embodying the list of character qualities found in Galatians 5:22?

Read **John 15:2-8**. Jesus continues to share some bold words, and one of those words is "prune". He says that in order to be more fruitful, we need to be "pruned". Why? Because even though we are saved from the penalty of sin when we start a relationship with Jesus (eternity in hell), we are not yet saved from the pleasures of sin. God prunes us in order to help us avoid the unproductive life that the pleasure of sin brings. Why is it necessary for us to hear these tough words from Jesus? How has God personally done pruning in your own life, and how has it resulted in personal spiritual growth?

In **John 15:4**, Jesus lets us know what we need to prioritize when it comes to our relationship with him. Jesus tells us that all we need to do is "remain" in Him. In other words, we need to keep maintaining our relationship with him. We often let culture dictate our lives, but focusing on continuing our relationship with Jesus allows him to dictate our lives. Pastor Russ mentioned 4 practices he engages in to "remain" with Jesus, and they are:

- Practice SILENCE and SOLITUDE. (Quietness of heart and focus on Christ)
- Practice SABBATH. (Stopping work and worshipping Jesus)
- Practice SIMPLICITY. (Eliminating things so we can focus on what really matters)
- Practice SLOWING. (Avoiding a hurried life and being able to live more intentionally)

How do these 4 practices help us "remain" in Christ? Which one would you say is the toughest for you to practice?

### NEXT STEPS

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Read **John 15:9-12**. Any relationship worth maintaining takes time. Corrie Ten Boom is famously quoted as saying..."If the devil can't make you sin, he will make you busy. Both sin and busyness have the same exact effect. They cut off your connection with God, to other people, and even to your own soul." What is one next step you can take to practice "remaining" in Jesus? How can your small group help you take this one next step?