Faithful and Fruitful

Small Group Handout • November 22, 2026 • Joy in Thanksgiving

Read together Mark 11:12–25; John 15:5 • Also consider Galatians 5:22–23

Key verse "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5 (KJV)

In Mark 11, Jesus found a leafy fig tree with no fruit and pronounced judgment on it. Mark places this event around Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, where religious activity had obscured its purpose as a house of prayer. Together, these scenes warn against an outward appearance of spiritual life that lacks its substance. Jesus looks for fruit in the lives of His disciples.

Jesus explained that He is the vine and we are the branches. To abide means to remain in Him, continuing in His Word and love. Spiritual fruit grows through His life at work in us as we respond in obedience. God also prunes fruitful branches so they can bear more fruit (John 15:1–5). His Spirit develops love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance in us (Galatians 5:22–23).

After the disciples saw the withered tree, Jesus taught them to have faith in God, pray believing, and forgive others (Mark 11:20–25). Fruitfulness involves both trust in God and how we treat people. The Parable of the Sower also calls us to receive the Word deeply and remove distractions that choke its growth (Matthew 13:18–23). We cooperate with God through prayer, Scripture, forgiveness, and obedience, trusting His Spirit to produce lasting change.

Discuss Together

1. What is the difference between appearing spiritually active and bearing spiritual fruit? What warning signs might show that we are drifting from Jesus?

2. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." What does abiding in Him look like in daily life, and how does it differ from relying on willpower alone?

3. What fruit of the Spirit is God developing in your life right now? How might a difficult season or His pruning help that fruit grow?

4. How do Jesus' instructions about faith, prayer, and forgiveness challenge you? What distraction, habit, or resentment can you surrender so His Word takes deeper root?

Take a Step

This week I will: _____

Pray Together

Ask Jesus to deepen our connection with Him, make our hearts receptive to His Word, and cultivate the fruit of the Spirit. Pray for faith, forgiving hearts, and willingness to obey.