

REFLECT

1. What are your regular patterns of Bible reading and prayer?
2. What hinders you from enjoying reading God's word?

ENCOUNTER

Someone described the paradox of the Christian life as "labour to be brought near." It is active and passive. We actively work to follow Christ and passively rest as God works in us. "John Calvin said, 'Let us therefore labor more to feel Christ living in us.' John Owen added, 'Labor, therefore, to fill your hearts with the cross of Christ.' And Jonathan Edwards exhorted, 'We should labour to be continually growing in divine love.' (quotes adapted from Rankin Wilbourne, *Union With Christ*, 144).

This paradox is exactly what Jesus taught about remaining in him in John 15:1-8. Let the all important truth from this week's sermon text take root in your heart. Read those verses together, discuss the sermon and what it means to remain in Christ.

3. How did this week's sermon help you understand what it means to be pruned?
4. In your own words, what does it mean to remain or abide in Christ?
5. What questions do you still have about these verses?

TRANSFORM

Jesus said, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you" (John 15:7 CSB). A key way we labor to abide in Christ is through the word and prayer.

6. Discuss Bible reading and prayer as a labor to be brought near. In other words, how is it passive and active remaining in Christ?
7. What is one *little* step you can take to fight to delight in God's word this week?

PRAYER REQUESTS

One More Disciple

*I need thy presence every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.*

~ "Abide With Me," Henry Francis Lyte