



FINDING JOY – WEEK 1 – REPRESENT LOVE

ARRIVAL/CONNECTING and SNACK: (15 Minutes) Spend time catching up and socializing with one another. Follow up on prayer requests and any action steps from your last time together.

SHORT OPENING PRAYER FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER: (2 minutes)

SCRIPTURE and DISCUSSION: (40-50 minutes) Have someone read the following Scripture passage, slowly enough for everyone to enjoy. Then reflect quietly for a moment. Read it again if you like and discuss the following questions.

John 15:1-11: *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

- Consider the metaphor of the Vine and the branches. What primary idea or ideas do you think Jesus is attempting to communicate with this metaphor?
- When Jesus says, “Abide in me, and I in you” what does he mean? (15:4) What does “abiding” mean in practical terms?
- Read verse 10 again. What “commandments” do you think Jesus has in mind? What is there in the surrounding text that gives you that impression or supports your opinion?

REFLECTION: (15 minutes)

- What do you think Jesus has in mind when he speaks of “bearing much fruit?” What is “the fruit” he wants us to bear?
- According to this passage, who is responsible for the spiritual fruit in your life?
- What are the results of us “bearing much fruit?”

SURRENDER: (15 minutes)

- What specific kinds of spiritual fruit would you like to see increase in your life?
- Practically, how can you go about pursuing more of that specific spiritual fruit?
- Each of you share an area in your life where God has given you some increase in spiritual fruit and give thanks for that life change.

PRAYER: (10 minutes) Pray for one another to gain a deeper understanding of “abiding in Christ and in his love.” Pray also that others in your group will enjoy an increase in the specific kinds of spiritual fruit they desire to bear.