

March 18, 2018
DISCIPLES - Part 1

“Disciples Abide”

The Great Commission

Jesus: “¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:19-20 ESV)

A Working Definition of a Disciple: someone who follows Jesus, looks at what Jesus did and seeks to imitate him.

Jesus: “¹³You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”
(John 13:13-15 ESV)

Jesus: “³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35 ESV)

Jesus: “...Rise, let us go from here.” (John 14:31 ESV)

John 15:1-2 (ESV): “¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every 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.”

A vine was a common symbol in the Old Testament of Israel and its prosperity.

Psalms 80:8-9 (ESV): “⁸You [God] brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. ⁹You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land.”

Psalms 80:16 (ESV): “They have burned it with fire; they have cut it down...”

What should be a luxurious, valuable vine, “brought... out of Egypt” and “planted” by God Himself and deeply loved, keeps producing bad fruit.

Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV): “²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control...”

"I AM" in Hebrew is the name God claims for Himself in Exodus 3 in His meeting with Moses.

Two typical ways grape vines were pruned to bear more fruit:

- 1. In early spring, the dead wood that couldn't bear fruit was cut away.**
- 2. In late summer, after the blossoms have become ripening grapes, little shoots that began to grow out of the vine were cut away so that the main fruitbearing branches could receive the most nourishment and produce the best grapes.**

"prunes" (Greek, *kathairo*) - to make clean

"Pruning" has two focuses in our lives:

- 1. Moral purification - anything that goes against God's commandments and laws needs to go**
- 2. Things that aren't helpful or aren't the best are also pruned away so that only the best fruit can grow**

Sometimes God allows hardships and adversity into our lives, even when we ask Him to take them away.

God's purpose isn't our happiness but our holiness, conforming us increasingly into the image and likeness of Jesus, to lead us to *imitate* him in our daily lives.

James 1:2-4 (NIV): ²Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Hebrews 12:11 (NLT): "No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way."

John 15:4-6 (ESV): 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶If 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."

Abide - "to remain," "to stay put," "to linger in one place," or "to dwell"

To be the person God created us to be, to fulfill His Will in our lives, to be Jesus' disciple and imitate him, we have to "abide in (him)" as he abides "in (us)."

Galatians 2:20 (ESV): "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me...."

Jesus: "Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you." (**John 15:3** ESV)

Jesus: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." (**John 15:7** ESV)

John Eldredge: "If I'm not abiding in Jesus, then where is it that I abide?"