

**READ John 15: 1-11** “Here Jesus gives us the Marks of a True Disciple of Christ. *Simply, What Jesus is Saying is...You Prove You’re a Genuine Follower of Christ When You Bear Fruit...But You Cannot Do That On Your Own. To Bear Spiritual Fruit You Must...ABIDE IN CHRIST.*

Jesus uses the Metaphor of a Grapevine and its Branches. God, the Father, is the Gardener. Jesus, the Son, is the Vine, and His Followers [US] are the Branches. God (The Gardener) Expects to see “Grapes” when He walks through His Vineyard, and Verse 2 says, If He sees grapes, he prunes those branches. He prunes the fruitful branches, so they can bear even more fruit! **Notice the Progression: In verse 2, Jesus talks about “Fruit” and “More Fruit.” Then in Verse 5, Jesus talks about “Much Fruit.”**

- In our lives, the Pruning Process can be Painful, But it is Well Worth It...KEY...The Fruit-Bearing Followers of Jesus Are Not Exempt from Suffering and Pain
- God uses the painful pruning to make Us even more fruitful! As We Trust God, Our Heavenly Father’s Pruning...We WILL Come Out More Productive on the Other Side!
- **POINT: When God Sees Grapes...The Fruit of the Spirit In Our Lives...He Prunes those branches [US] so We can Bear Even More Fruit...**

Verse 2 Makes Clear: If God (Gardener) Does NOT See Grapes On a Branch...He Does 1 of 2 Things... He Either Props it Up to Get it into the Sunlight... Or He Cuts it Off and Puts it in the Burn Pile.

- The original language says He Literally, Lifts You Up from the Thick Undergrowth... Into the Light of His Word, So You Will Bear Much Fruit.

Satan Wants To Keep You in a Dark Place. But, You Have a Choice... You Can Stay in that Dark Place or You Can Take Your Eyes Off the Problems that Cloud Your Heart & Mind and Turn Your Eyes to Jesus...

**READ John 15: 9-10** *Abiding in Christ is Not so Much about Doing Something as it is About Receiving His Love and Responding with Loving Obedience. KEY: Obedience is the Root...Emotions are the Fruit! When We Root Our Relationship in Christ with Obedience...(ABIDE IN HIM) We Grow in His Grace and We Will Bear Much Fruit!*

**KEY: As You Stay in His Word...The Bible...He Will Bring You Safely Through...The Result is that “You Will Be BLESSED Instead of STRESSED”.**

- Verse 7...Jesus says, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you and you’ll find real joy even in the face of adversity”.
- Remember what Jesus said on the Eve of His Crucifixion...John 15:11 “I have told You this so that My Joy may be in You and that Your Joy May Be Complete.”

**To Simplify What It Really Means for Us to Abide in Christ let us look at Psalm 46:10 This Verse Makes it Clear what God Wants from You and Me as We Abide with Him.**

- **Psalm 46:10 says, “Be Still, And Know That I Am God” He Says...BE STILL!!**

The Christian life is Not so Much a Life of Doing and Acting...But of BEING. We are Called to Abide in Christ in Exactly the Same Way Christ Abides in His Father. Jesus said, “Abide in Me, and I in You”.

- Just As the Branch Cannot Bear Fruit of itself, Unless it Abides in the Vine...So Neither Can You, Unless You Abide in Me... **John 15:4-5**

Jesus prayed in John 17: 20-21 *“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in US so that the World may Believe that You have Sent Me.”*

- Obedience is Us Abiding in Jesus just as He Abides in the Father.

So many of Us try Our Best to Follow Christ’s Example in All We Do. And All Too Often the Result is that We just End Up Tired and Frustrated.

**It's been said so many times: The Christian Life Isn't Difficult...It's Impossible!! It's been lived Successfully by Only One Person, Jesus Christ.** We Need to Understand If it's Lived by You and Me... It Will Only Be Because Jesus Christ Lives It Through Us.

However, We Tend to Still Think We Must Do IT (PRIDE) Instead of Humbly Abiding in Christ and Letting God Fill Us and Then Do Amazing Things With and Through Us!

- We try harder and Do More. We Go to Conferences. We read the Bible and Pray. We go to Church every time the door is open... **Thinking Everything Will Be Fine! But It Won't—That's Not the Way God Ordained for Us to Walk with Him.**

**He sent Jesus to Reconcile Us to Himself-Our Salvation Must Lead to Sanctification!**

- We are Not to Be Religious...Focused On What We Can Do...Rather, We Are to Realize.../ Can't but God Can As I Allow Him to Accomplish It Through Me!

**Simply...Obedience to God...is 100 Percent About Abiding in Jesus Christ...Obedience to God Demands That We Surrender Everything and Daily Follow Jesus...THAT'S IT!**

- John 6:29 Amplified Version says, "This is the work of God, that you believe in [Cleave To, Trust, Rely On, have Faith In, Lean On] Him Whom He Has Sent". **It's a Relationship.**

The Greek word for Abide is Meno which means physically to just stay where you are. It can also mean to not change, to stay strong in one's resolve, remain in common purpose with others. It means to stay present, not just physically but mentally and spiritually. It Means to Survive Unchanged.

Abiding In Christ Is An Act Of Faith. **Col. 2:6.** We Walk in Him the Same Way We Received Him By F.

Abiding In Christ Is An Act Of Time: We Must Intentionally Make Time to Spend with Jesus Daily. You can't abide with someone without talking and listening to him. The same is true for Christ.

**Someone has said that Hurry isn't from the devil...Hurry "Is" the devil. That's True!** Each of Us Need to Stop Doing Things and Start Just Being With the One Who Just Wants To Be With Us.

**In Closing...Growth comes from Abiding in Christ in the same way He Abides in the Father.** \_We Don't Abide in Him by Growing. That's why so many are frustrated in their Walk with Christ.

- A dog doesn't bark to become a dog...A Dog Barks Because he is a Dog. Likewise, a Christian doesn't do good things in order to be a Christian.
- A Christian does good things because they are a Christian. **(Saved Unto Good Works)**
- **KEY: As You Stay Close, Abiding in Christ, You'll be Surprised at the Growth.**

His Gift to You for Just Being with Him is that He Makes You More and More like Him.

Galatians 5:22 Outlines What It Means to Be More Like Christ...The Fruits of God the Holy Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control...These are a Gift from Abiding with Christ...They are Not the Things You Do in Order to Abide in Christ...They are the Fruit that Come from Abiding in Christ.

- Don't let its Simplicity Fool You. Choose to Spend Time With Christ...Abide in Him...Make Him the Priority of Your Time...Let His Holy Spirit Change You to Become More Like Christ.

To Abide in Christ Will Require That You Be Intentional!!! May That Be Your Desire!

**"LIFE" POINT: Obedience To God Demands I Abide In Jesus**