

# John 15:1-17

CG Discussion Guide // Week of 24 September, 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

- Icebreaker: Do you have a favorite fruit-based dessert? What is it?
- Take some time to pray for one another's needs and requests (refer to Prayer Guide as needed)
- Pray for Harbor Network sister church: Sojourn Church North, Goshen, KY (Pastor: Chad Lewis)
- Choose discussion questions, prayer guide, or abide time questions depending on your group's needs

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *For CG Leaders: Since John 15:1-17 is ALL about abiding in Christ, I (Ptr. Matt) highly suggest going through the Abide Time section in lieu of the discussion questions.*
- What sticks out to you the most about this passage? What do you find encouraging about Jesus' teaching in this passage? What do you find the most head-scratching or troubling in the passage?
  - *For CG Leaders: For some, the passage about unfruitful vines being taken away by the Divine Vinedresser, the Father, and cast off into the fire raises the question of whether true Christians can lose their salvation. But we must balance the warnings of John 15:2 and 6 with passages like John 15:3 and 16, John 6:37-40, and John 10:27-30, which teach that true Christians are eternally kept secure by Jesus and the Father. The point of the passage is not to discuss whether a Christian finally lose salvation, but to illustrate the reality of life in Jesus Christ. **We live, thrive, and bear fruit only if we abide in Him, and when we abide in Him- WE WILL BEAR FRUIT!** On the other hand, **we are dead and will be cast off if we don't abide-we have no assurance or security apart from Jesus and His life.** In short, Jesus is challenging us: "Will you abide in Me or not?" God willing, our answer ought to be, "Yes, we will. Abide in us, Lord, and help us to abide in You!"*
  - *If the discussion is getting too heated or sidetracked on the issue of losing salvation, offer to discuss it outside the CG time, and invite them to chat with an elder if they desire a more in-depth discussion.*
- Share about your experiences when the Father pruned you. What was the result of the pruning?
- Jesus tells us that life and fruitfulness only happen when we abide in Him, and He abides in us. Drawing from vv. 7-10's pictures of what mutual abiding looks like, what are some practical ways we can apply "abiding" daily?
- What are some tangible fruits have you discerned in your abiding experiences with Jesus, like joy in v. 11? Please share!
- What do you make of Jesus' posture and love towards you in vv. 12-17? How can we practically love each other and our neighbors with the love of Jesus this week?

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**Abide Time: John 15:1-17**

- What realities are you facing this week? What is occupying your thoughts? How do you feel?
  
- Read the passage and let God speak to you in you reality through his Word. Write down your reflections as God shepherds you:
  - What does the text say is true about God and his character?
  
  - What does it say about the world around you?
  
- How do your reflections above speak to your reality?
  
- What did you experience in your heart and soul as God spoke to you and your reality?
  
- What did you experience in your body, given your reflections and what you experienced in your heart and soul?
  
- How is God inviting you to live differently?
  
- What does all of what you shared above say about God and his relationship with you?

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## WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

*The Bible promises that anything we ask for in Jesus' name – that is according to His will – shall be granted to us (John 14:13-14). In view of this great promise, the prayer requests are all grounded in Scripture. When we pray Scripture, we can be certain that we are praying according to God's will.*

*That does not mean God will grant our requests in our preferred time or according to our frail wisdom; but it does mean that we can pray confidently knowing that God delights to answer these requests, for they are His words.*

*Use the accompanying Scripture verses to shape and inform your prayers.*

### **PRAY FOR YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY:**

- That your daily life will bring honor to the name of Jesus – (2 Thess. 1:11-12)
- That you will cast all of your anxieties on God – (1 Peter 5:6-7)
- That you will consider your trials as an opportunity for joy – (James 1:2-4)

### **PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH:**

- That the power of Christ will rest on our church and ministries [Worship Gathering, Community Groups, Men/Women, Youth, Children, etc.] – (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
- That God will give us the wisdom and faith that we desperately need to continue in faithful mission – (James 1:5-8)
- That God will make us fruitful in ministry – (John 15:1-2) – and bold in witness – (Eph. 6:18-20)

### **PRAY FOR OUR CITY:**

- That God will give wisdom to our government (local, state, and national) that we may lead peaceful, godly lives – (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- That the Lord will continue to provide open doors of gospel ministry in IU and the Bloomington community – (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- That the work of God will be displayed in the lives of the members of our sister churches – (John 9:3)

### **PRAY FOR OUR WORLD:**

- That the persecuted church will find fellowship with Jesus as they share in his sufferings – (Philippians 3:10-11)
- That the Lord of the harvest will send out more workers to unreached people groups because they have been gripped by Paul's missionary logic in Romans 10:13-17 – (Matthew 9:37-38)
- That Christ will return bringing the fullness of salvation with him – (Revelation 22:20)

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- September 29-30: Gospel-Shaped Parenting Conference
- October 4: Redeemer Men
- October 15: Redeemer-in-10
- October 18: Spiritual Formation Classes start (contact Ptr. Matt for details)
- October 20: 16th Annual Chili Supper
- October 29: Child + Family Dedication

**Reminder:** All events are listed in the Events tab in our Redeemer app. You can RSVP for specific events by going to the Events tab, clicking on an event, and following the link to register.