

The Path to Real Change | John 15:1-5 Sermon Discussion

Purpose of Discussion: To discuss and answer *how do you live the Christian life? Emphasis on How.*

Sermon Reminder: Keith continued in our Jesus is More sermon series through the I Am statements of Jesus, looking at “I am the True Vine” in John 15: 1-5. Jesus shows us a different way to live that doesn’t depend on your willpower but on God’s spirit power.

Icebreaker: What’s your favorite guilty pleasure food, like Keith eating cinnamon toast crunch, that you’ll give into if it’s in your house?

Transition: It’s easy to talk or laugh about the silly foods we love or give into eating, even when they’re not the best for us to eat regularly. Like Keith said, will-power will not get you very far. What ways do we lean on ourselves or our own willpower to change, instead of looking to Jesus?

Discussion

Read: [John 15:1-5](#)

“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. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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.

1. Why does Jesus say, "Apart from me, you can do nothing"? How are *WWJD?* and Nike’s slogan *Just Do It* different from what Jesus tells us in v. 5?
2. Let’s recap: Jesus is the true vine. We are the branches. The Father is the gardener. But what’s the fruit?
3. Read Galatians 5:22-23
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control; against such things there is no law.

Often we view these as a list of areas to grow in, each individually. But they are all good fruit of *abiding* in Jesus. Keith gave an illustration of a branch and fruit, holding up fruit to staple it to look like it had fresh fruit. We try to attach fruit to disconnected branches. In what ways are you fruit stapling?

4. What is true about our lives when you recognize that He is the True Vine?

5. Read these verses together:

[John 15:2](#) Every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

[Psalm 119:71](#) It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes.

Affliction, discipline and correction are a good sign. According to John 15:2, what promise comes with pruning the branches?

Share a time that God used his love through discipline or correction to grow.

6. Read the rest of John 15:6-17 and note what else Jesus promises when we abide in Him.

[John 15: 6-17](#)

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.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

7. Let's look at other examples of abiding, read these passages out loud together:

[1 John 2: 4-6](#) Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

[John 8:31](#) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples."

What comfort comes from abiding in Christ?

8. What is a way you personally need to be reminded that Jesus is the True Vine right now? Are there obstacles in your life that keep you from abiding with Jesus?

Sharing and Prayer:

Consider splitting up men and women or into 2 smaller groups for this time.

In love, Jesus says, "If you aren't bearing spiritual fruit in your life, then you need to examine your faith – examine your heart." If you want the fruit that he promises, you need to be in his word. Discuss how you can pray for each other in light of evaluating your need for Jesus right now.