
SERMON NOTES December 6, 2020

Today's notes also available at CCPL.life/Connect

John 15:1-7
Abiding In the Vine
Pastor Mike

I. The illustration of _____

a. It's _____ is the branch's _____

b. Jesus doesn't just _____ our nature, he _____ our nature

II. The contrast of _____ of branches

a. They are distinguished by the _____ of fruit

b. One bears _____ because it's _____ to the vine

c. One bears _____ and is being _____

III. Growing _____ by abiding in _____

a. We abide in Jesus when _____ in us

Is God's word _____ and given _____ in your heart?

Welcoming God's word means we _____ to make it fit

b. The promise of _____ we ask for

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. In John 15 Jesus illustrates the nature of our relationship with him by saying that he is the vine, and we are the branches.
 - a. What is the meaning and significance of this illustration? What does it teach you about the nature of your relationship with Jesus?
 - b. Throughout the illustration Jesus refers to the fruit of the vine. He teaches that we are to bear much fruit, and the father takes away branches that bear no fruit. What is the fruit that he is talking about? What fruit are you bearing in your life?
 - c. Jesus teaches that if we are connected to the vine, then it is natural that we will bear fruit. Does this mean that someone who bears no spiritual fruit in their lives isn't connected to the vine, and should question their salvation? Explain your answer.

2. In John 15:2, Jesus contrasts two types of branches, symbolizing the two types of relationship with Jesus, the true vine, that people can have.
 - a. One is the branch that does not bear fruit, which Jesus says that the Father "takes away." Pastor Mike pointed out that Jesus said that the Father takes away or removes these branches, not that he cuts them off. Why is this significant?
 - b. The second is the branch that does bear fruit and that the Father prunes, that it might bear more fruit. Jesus doesn't just say that pruning is something that happens to the true branches, but that it is something essential to their nature. What is the pruning that Jesus is talking about here? How is pruning an essential part of our relationship with Jesus?

3. The main picture through John 15:1-7 is the illustration of the vine and the branches, and the main teaching is that as the branches must abide in the vine for life and fruitfulness, so we need to abide in Jesus. But practically, what does it mean to abide in Jesus? What does it mean for you?

4. Jesus teaches us, "*as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.*" He promises that when we abide in him, we will bear much fruit, but he also warns that "*apart from me you can do nothing.*"
 - a. How do we try to bear fruit apart from abiding in Jesus?
 - b. Why will any effort to bear fruit apart from Jesus ultimately fail?

5. In John 15:7 Jesus correlates our abiding in him with our allowing his word to abide in us. What does it mean for his word to abide in us?
 - a. In John 8:37 Jesus told the religious leaders who had rejected him, "*you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you.*" It is possible to hear God's word and not welcome it – not give it a place. How do you know if you have given God's word a home in your life, or if it finds no place in you?
 - b. Does God's word abide in you? What are you doing to welcome God's word in your life? What are you doing to make God's word a priority in your life?

6. In John 15:7 Jesus makes an incredible promise. He promises each of us, "*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*" What is he promising? How can you embrace this promise in your life?