

The Benefits of Abiding

JOHN 15:11-17

We can get through almost anything in life with friends to share our sorrow and divide our grief. The ancient Hebrews saw true friendship as an ideal to pursue and a blessing to enjoy. In these final moments with His followers, Jesus uses a most tender term for their relationship—they were friends!

1. Abiding in Christ leads to _____.

2. Abiding in Christ leads to deeper _____ with others.

3. Abiding in Christ leads to _____ with Jesus.

4. Abiding in Christ leads to a life of _____.

Scripture References (In order of use): Nehemiah 8:10; Romans 15:13; Luke 2:10; John 13:35

Reference Works: Addresses on the Gospel of John (H. A. Ironside); The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John (Bob Utley); The Gospel of John (Jack Wilson Stallings); John (Kenneth O. Gangel); John (Barnabas Lindars)

Discussion Questions

1. What is one thing that consistently brings you joy? How long does that joy typically last?
2. Read John 15:11-17. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Patrick mentioned three "joy stealers": the sinful world, our bent toward sin, and the satan. Which of these tends to steal your joy most often? Why?
4. Read Nehemiah 8:10. How does the joy of the Lord provide strength differently than happiness from circumstances or achievements?
5. Read John 13:35. How effectively do you think our love for one another proves to the world that we are Jesus' disciples? What could improve?
6. Is there someone in your life (particularly in the church community) that you find difficult to love? Without naming them, what would it look like to commit to loving them this week?
7. Jesus distinguishes between servants and friends. Have you experienced seasons where you felt more like a servant than a friend to Jesus? What was different about those times?
8. The sermon states that disobedience creates estrangement from God, affecting our relationship (not our salvation). Can you identify an area of disobedience that might be hindering your friendship with Jesus?
9. Jesus appointed the disciples to "go and produce lasting fruit." How would you describe your current sense of purpose in God's kingdom?
10. What does "lasting fruit" look like in your everyday life—at work, at home, in your community?



**We all woke up this morning behind enemy lines.
We were born in a war zone.**

Daily Devotions

Day 1: The Source of True Joy

Reading: Nehemiah 8:10; Romans 15:13; Luke 2:10

Joy is not something we manufacture through circumstances or achievements. The angels announced that Jesus brings "good news that will bring great joy to all people." This joy is fundamentally different from happiness dependent on happenings. The joy of the Lord is your strength, a divine gift accessible through abiding in Christ. Like standing near a fire to get warm, you must draw near to the Joy Giver to experience His joy. Today, recognize that joy stealers—the sinful world, your bent toward sin, and the enemy—want to rob you of this strength. Choose joy by choosing Christ. Don't try to create it; simply receive what He freely offers.

Day 2: Love as Commitment, Not Emotion

Reading: John 13:35; John 15:12-13; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Jesus commands us to love one another as He loved us. Notice this is a command, not a suggestion based on feelings. Love is not a passing emotion but a continual devotion—a commitment to seek the highest good of others. Jesus laid down His life for His enemies, demonstrating that agape love transcends emotions and circumstances. There may be people in your life, even in the church, whom you struggle to love emotionally. Remember, if Jesus commands it, He provides the ability to obey. Love is treating others the way Jesus treats you, regardless of how you feel. This identifying mark of discipleship flows from abiding in the Vine.

Day 3: From Servant to Friend

Reading: John 15:14-15; James 2:23; Exodus 33:11

Jesus distinguishes between servants and friends based on obedience. A servant doesn't know what the master is doing, but a friend does. Through obedience, you graduate from mere servanthood to friendship with Christ, gaining greater insight into God's heart and purposes. If you feel estranged from God, examine your obedience. This isn't about losing salvation but about the quality of relationship. Friendship with Jesus brings privileges—He shares what He hears from the Father with those who obey. Abraham was called "God's friend" because of his faithful obedience. What insight and intimacy are you missing because of disobedience? Abiding in Christ through obedience opens the door to deeper friendship.

Day 4: Chosen for Purpose

Reading: John 15:16-17; Ephesians 2:10; Jeremiah 29:11

You believed in Christ. Then He appointed you to bear lasting fruit. This isn't about salvation, but about purpose and mission. Many people's greatest fear is living without purpose or meaning—going through life "living small" without realizing it until too late. Jesus never intended aimless distraction for your life. You were created for good works prepared in advance. Your purpose flows from abiding in Christ and bearing fruit that remains. Like the disciples who were chosen for a specific mission, you have a divine assignment. Stop spinning your wheels in meaningless activity. Discover your purpose by staying connected to the Vine and allowing His life to produce fruit through you.

Day 5: Identity Rooted in Christ

Reading: Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:3

Scottie Scheffler's wife reminded him that his identity isn't a golf score—win or lose, Jesus loves him and nothing changes. Your identity is not found in accomplishments, failures, relationships, or roles. It's found in who you know, not what you do. When you abide in Christ, fruit naturally follows, but the fruit doesn't define you. You are defined by whose you are. This truth liberates you from the exhausting treadmill of performance-based acceptance. At your fingertips are joy, love, friendship, and purpose—all available through abiding in Christ. The only one stopping you from receiving these gifts is you. Today, rest in your identity as God's beloved child, chosen and appointed for His purposes.

Deacons on Call

John Harris and Jason Swann

Weekly Events

- **Worship:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **Small Groups:** Sundays at 11 AM
- **Deep Dive:** Wednesdays at Noon and 6:45 PM
- **First Kids:** See you at **VBS ... June 28-July 1**
- **First Youth:** See Eric for summer schedule

Welcome

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

TODAY'S MESSAGE

The Benefits of Abiding

JOHN 15:11-17

— Verses we all need to Memorize —

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching 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

June 21, 2026