

Abiding in Jesus

Primary Passage: John 15:1–8; John 15:10

Introduction

Jesus did not simply call His followers to believe in Him from a distance. He called them to **abide** in Him. In John 15, Jesus uses the picture of a vine and its branches to show what that kind of relationship looks like. A branch cannot produce life on its own. It must remain connected to the vine. In the same way, following Jesus is not simply about trying harder, doing more good things, or becoming more religious. It is about remaining connected to Jesus and depending on Him for life. Over the next five days, we will explore what it means to abide in Jesus, why that connection matters, and how we can learn to remain attentive and responsive to Him in everyday life.

Day One

Remain With Jesus

Scripture: John 15:1–5

Key Thought: To abide means to remain, stay, continue, or dwell. Jesus is inviting us into an ongoing relationship with Him, not an occasional connection.

Jesus tells His disciples, “Abide in Me.” That may not be a word we use very often, but the idea is simple. Jesus is saying, “Remain with Me. Stay with Me. Continue with Me.”

It is possible to believe in Jesus and still become distracted from our relationship with Him. Life gets busy. Responsibilities increase. Prayer becomes less frequent. Time in Scripture gets pushed aside. The distance may not happen because of one big decision. It can happen through a thousand small distractions.

Jesus does not call us to simply visit Him when we need something. He calls us to remain with Him.

Questions

1. When you hear the words “abide in Jesus,” what do you think they mean for your everyday life?

2. What distractions tend to pull your attention away from your relationship with Jesus?
3. Have there been times when you were still doing Christian things but felt less connected to Jesus? What was happening in your life?
4. What might it look like for you to remain more intentionally attentive to Jesus today?

Reflection

Following Jesus is not something we turn on for a few hours each week. Jesus describes a relationship of remaining and continuing. The question is not simply whether we believe in Him. The deeper question is whether we are learning to live connected to Him.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, show me where distraction has created distance between You and me. Help me not simply visit You when I need something, but learn to remain with You throughout my everyday life.

Day Two

Connection Beyond Feelings

Scripture: John 15:4–5

Key Thought: Abiding is not about always feeling close to Jesus. It is about remaining in relationship with Him even when our feelings change.

There will be days when prayer feels easy and times when it feels difficult. There may be moments when you feel deeply aware of the presence of Jesus and other times when you wonder if your prayers are getting past the ceiling.

Jesus does not tell us to chase a feeling. He tells us to remain.

Relationships are not held together by constant emotion. There are days when married couples feel especially close and other days filled with work, schedules, responsibilities, and ordinary routines. The relationship does not disappear because the feelings are different.

In the same way, a disciple learns to remain with Jesus.

Questions

1. Do you tend to judge your relationship with Jesus by how close to Him you feel?
2. How do you normally respond when prayer feels difficult or when God seems distant?
3. What is the difference between experiencing a feeling and remaining in a relationship?
4. How might understanding this change the way you approach a spiritually difficult season?

Reflection

Feelings can change from day to day. Jesus remains worthy of our attention and trust even when our emotions are different. Abiding means continuing in the relationship rather than allowing temporary feelings to determine whether we stay connected.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, help me remain with You even when I do not feel close to You. Teach me to build my relationship with You on something deeper than my emotions and to continue seeking You in every season.

Day Three *Depend on the Vine*

Scripture: John 15:4–5

Key Thought: Abiding means more than staying close to Jesus. It means depending on Him as the source of the life He has called us to live.

A branch does not have life in itself. It receives what it needs from the vine. Jesus uses that picture to make an important point: “Apart from Me you can do nothing.”

It is possible to become more patient, disciplined, generous, or kind through effort. Those may all be good things. But following Jesus is not simply about becoming a better version of ourselves. The goal is for the life of Jesus to become visible in us.

That cannot be manufactured through determination alone.

The branch does not produce fruit by trying harder to be a branch. It produces fruit because it remains connected to the vine.

Questions

1. Where in your life are you most tempted to depend on your own effort rather than on Jesus?
2. What is the difference between becoming a “better person” and becoming more like Jesus?
3. Are there areas where you may be trying to serve Jesus while neglecting your relationship with Jesus?
4. Where might you be doing something *for* Jesus that you need to begin doing *with* Jesus?

Reflection

Connection comes before fruit. Relationship comes before results. Life comes before production. Jesus does not simply call us to work harder at changing ourselves. He calls us to remain connected to Him and depend on Him.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, forgive me for the times I try to live the life You have called me to live through my own strength. Help me depend on You instead of trying to produce change by myself.

Day Four

Fruit From Connection

Scripture: John 15:2, 5, 8

Key Thought: Fruit is evidence of life. The life we see on the outside should be the overflow of what Jesus is doing on the inside.

Jesus repeatedly talks about fruit in John 15. The branch that remains connected to the vine bears fruit.

A branch does not strain to manufacture grapes. Fruit appears because life is flowing through the branch from the vine. Jesus gives us that picture to show how spiritual change happens.

As we remain connected to Jesus, His life begins to become visible in ours. In the sermon, Jesus' teaching beyond the opening verses was described as producing obedience, love, joy, and change in the way we relate to other people.

The question is not simply, “Am I doing good things?”

A better question may be, “Is the life of Jesus becoming visible in my life?”

Questions

1. When you think about spiritual growth, do you tend to focus more on outward behavior or inward connection with Jesus?
2. What does the picture of fruit teach you about the relationship between connection and change?
3. Where do you see evidence that Jesus is changing the kind of person you are?
4. Where are you tempted to manufacture outward results instead of allowing change to grow from your relationship with Jesus?

Reflection

Doing good things matters, but outward activity is not the starting point. Jesus teaches that fruit grows from connection. The goal of discipleship is not simply to do more Christian things. It is for the life of Jesus to increasingly show up in our lives.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, continue Your work in me. Help me remain connected to You so that what people see in my life becomes the overflow of what You are doing within me.

Day Five

Practice Abiding Daily

Scripture: John 15:1–8; John 15:10

Key Thought: Abiding becomes part of ordinary life as we learn to be with Jesus, be quiet with Jesus, and respond to Jesus.

Abiding may sound deeply spiritual or complicated, but it can take place in ordinary moments. At work. While driving. At home. In the middle of family life.

The sermon gave three simple ways to practice abiding.

First, **be with Jesus**. Spend intentional time with Him through prayer and Scripture. The goal is not to complete another religious task. Relationship requires presence.

Second, **be quiet with Jesus**. Distractions can slowly pull us away from Him. Sometimes we need to become quiet enough to pay attention to God's Word and become sensitive to the prompting and direction of the Holy Spirit.

Third, **respond to Jesus**. John 15:10 connects remaining in Jesus' love with keeping His commands. Abiding includes obedience. That response may involve forgiveness, repentance, generosity, loving someone difficult, or taking a step of faith.

Questions

1. Which of these three practices comes most naturally to you: being with Jesus, being quiet with Jesus, or responding to Jesus?
2. Which one is most difficult for you right now?
3. What distractions could you intentionally remove so that you can become more attentive to Jesus?
4. Is there something Jesus has already been showing you that requires a response of obedience?

Reflection

The goal is not simply to leave this study determined to try harder. Jesus did not say, "Try harder." He said, "Abide in Me."

Ask yourself: Am I actually abiding in Jesus, or am I simply doing things for Jesus? Am I remaining connected to the vine, or am I trying to produce fruit on my own? Am I making space to be with Jesus, to be quiet with Jesus, and to respond to what He is saying?

Most importantly, **is the life of Jesus becoming visible in my life?**

Daily Prayer

Jesus, teach me to abide in You. Help me make space to be with You, become quiet enough to listen, and respond when You lead me. Keep me connected to You so that Your life becomes increasingly visible in mine. Amen.