

Sept 10th, 2023
Where do you Dwell?
John 15

Open with prayer

**Psalm - 84. For extra reading*

Read for insight into the scripture

Where we live matters. Most of you who are using this discussion guide decided at one point that moving to Santa Rosa Beach was the best place for you to live. Maybe it was the slower lifestyle, maybe it was the beach, the sunsets, or the temperature that made you feel like you were healthy again.

Deciding where you live is important and it sets the pace for your life. No one moves to Missouri so they can spend more time in the sun. No one moves to Kansas so they can spend more time climbing mountains. When Jesus says “abide in me”, he is giving direction. He is asking us to move into the life of Jesus Christ, to walk as he walked and become like him. He is saying, “When you live in my love, you will bear fruit, experience joy, and you will learn to love like I love.” You can’t move into Jesus and not be changed.

Abiding is where you are living, dwelling, or spending your time. Where we abide, shapes us. We can’t not be changed by where we dwell and who/ what we allow to take claim on us.

Read John 15:1-6

- ***What stands out to you in this scripture?***
- ***Note right away in vs 2 that Jesus calls himself the true vine. As if there were counterfeits who also try to offer life.***

What are some of the “vines” you go to for life (tv, books, scrolling, calling your kids, a best friend, food, happy hour every hour, working out...)?

Read vs. 2: The greek for “take away” here is actually the word a-ee-ro. It more literally translates as “lifts up”, “elevates”, “raise”. When looking at this scripture, it seems as though Jesus is saying, “if you don’t bear fruit, I’m cutting you off.” Though what this is actually saying is, “If you are not bearing fruit, I will lift you up and position you to be able to bear fruit.”

- ***What does the scripture say about those who bear fruit in vs. 2?***
- ***According to this scripture, what does it say is the only way we can do nothing?***

It seems our efforts of abiding matter. We take the steps to abide and God works out the growth with and in us.

Read John 15:7-11

This section talks about results - Break it down together.

- **Vs. 7** What happens if we ask?
 - **When we ask, what does it do to for the Father?**
 - **When is the last time you asked God for something that only he could do, so as to glorify the Father?**
 - **Vs. 8** What is it proving when we bear fruit.
 - **Vs. 10** What happens if we keep his commands?
 - **Vs 11. Why is he telling us this?**
- REWARD is worth the RISK!

Read John 15: 12-17

- In this section, what does Jesus call those who abide and what difference does this make for you?
- Vs 16 tells us that not only are we called to abide, but our fruit will abide. This is bounty of the Kingdom of God.
- **Vs. 17** sums it up - Jesus says, “These things I command you”...why?

Discuss what you think this scripture is telling us the result of abiding is.

So, what in your life is showing fruit of abiding?

Practice for this week:

The challenge that Andrew issued was that we would work to abide. Take time to start to build your home in the active life of Jesus. To sort-of-quote from Andrew’s sermon, ***What if we were people that woke up a few minutes early each morning and prayed through our day. What if we lifted up our fears and concerns. What if we prayed for our different meetings or responsibilities. What if we opened up our bible and read...not to try to prove a point, or check it off a list, but to reflect upon the words of our faith. What if we thought longingly about who the words were written to, why they were written, and what they were saying to the original hearers then and what are they saying to us now. What if then throughout the day we paused to give thanks, notice the created beauty, slowed down so we could interact with other image carriers. Maybe in the car or on a walk we didn’t listen to music or podcasts, but we listened to the silence and asked God to speak to us...and then we listened for the voice of God. Maybe instead of watching a show at the end of the day, we picked up a psalm, or a book that guides our thoughts and heart to Jesus. And then as we lay in bed, we give thanks for another day, and pray for God to guide us as we follow after him.***

Prayer Request and closing Prayer

Ask if anyone has any prayers they would like to add to our prayer team, report back to Sarah. sarah@thechapelatseaside.com

Quotes from Sermon

“The general human failing is to want what is right and important, but at the same time not to commit to the kind of life that will produce the action we know to be right and the condition we want to enjoy. This is the feature of human character that explains why the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We intend what is right, but we avoid the life that would make it reality.” Dallas Willard

“If you want to experience the life of Jesus, you need to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus.” - John Mark Comer

“How we spend our days is of course how we spend our lives.” - Annie Dillard,

“I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love.” - John 15 from the Message

“The first and most basic thing we can and must do is to keep God before our minds. This is the fundamental secret of caring for our souls. Our part in thus “practicing the presence of God” is to direct and redirect our minds constantly to Him. In the early time of our “practicing” we may well be challenged by our burdensome habits of dwelling on things less than God. But these are habits—not the law of gravity—and can be broken. A new, grace-filled habit will replace the former ones as we take intentional steps toward keeping God before us. Soon our minds will return to God as the needle of a compass constantly returns to the north. If God is the great longing of our souls, He will become the pole star of our inward beings.” - Dallas Willard