

The Abiding Life

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BIG IDEA

We flourish not by striving harder for God, but by abiding more deeply in Jesus.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:28, Jeremiah 17:8, Matthew 5: 3-11, John 14:23, John 14:26, John 15: 1-8, John 16:12-13

1. Genesis 3 shows humanity reaching for flourishing apart from God. Where are you most tempted to believe, “I can make my life work if I just...”? What does self-sufficient flourishing look like for you?
2. Jesus says, “Abide in me, and I in you” (John 15:4). What do you think it practically means to abide in Christ –not just for an hour during church or quiet time, but throughout an ordinary day?
3. Jesus says flourishing doesn’t begin with “doing for God,” but in “being with God.” Towards which do you naturally gravitate? How can you tell when serving God has shifted from relationship with Him to trying to prove something to Him?
4. Read John 15:1-8 slowly together. What words or phrases does Jesus repeat? What do those repetitions reveal about what Jesus believes is most important for a fruitful life?
5. “Fruit isn’t the price of God’s presence; it’s the product of God’s presence.” How does that change the way you think about spiritual growth, obedience, or failure?
6. Jesus describes the “blessed” life in ways that seem upside-down: poor in spirit, mourning, meek, merciful, persecuted. Read Matthew 5: 3-11 and consider this: Which Beatitude most challenges your own definition of a flourishing life—and why?
7. John 15:5 says, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” What is the difference between being capable of accomplishing something and producing the kind of fruit that only comes from Christ? Where do you need His life to produce something in you that you cannot manufacture yourself?
8. Think about a recent moment when you were tired, disappointed, irritated, or overwhelmed. What fruit came out of you? What might that moment reveal about your connection to Christ?
9. Jeremiah 17:7-8 describes a flourishing life as a tree that continues to bear fruit even during drought. Have you seen someone flourish even when their circumstances don’t seem to promote thriving? Can you think of a time when that was true for you?
10. The sermon suggested three practices: Return, Remember, and Recenter. Which one do you most need right now? What is one concrete way you could practice it this week when you notice yourself becoming anxious, controlling, discouraged, or self-reliant?
11. If abiding means “learning to live from the life that is already being given to you,” what would change in your life if you genuinely believed that? What is one area where Jesus might be inviting you to stop striving and start abiding?
12. If someone watched your life this week—especially when you were tired, disappointed, or inconvenienced—what kind of “fruit” would they see? What might that reveal about what you are abiding in?