



flourish

cultivating gospel growth

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

- John 15:5



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Study One :: The CONNECTION for Flourishing
Read :: John 15:1-11



Overview :: *For anything to flourish as intended, it must come from God and be connected to God. The first two chapters of the Bible (Genesis 1 & 2) give us a picture of this flourishing, this shalom, how God intended things to be (Genesis 1:31-2:3, 2:15). The first words of the Bible reveal this flourishing is rooted and held together by God - 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'*

This passage reveals that we are connected to God, made clean - holy and righteous (vs. 3) - through the love of Jesus and his life, death and resurrection. Our acceptance is based on his love for us, his keeping God's commandments for us, his sacrifice for us. If we know and believe in Jesus, if we know God, if we know his love, his sacrifice - it will result in a life of joyful obedience connected to God which bears fruit for his glory.

1. What does this passage teach us about God? His mission/purpose? Our relationship with Him and role in his mission?

2. Abiding (or remaining) in Jesus is used 11 times in this passage. Why is that so significant?

3. Verse 3 reveals the result of the Gospel - the good news - that through trust and belief in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we are made clean and are connected to God. Why is this good news? What are implications of this truth for your life (values, career, marriage, parenting, relationships etc.)?

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4. If the follower of Jesus is already 'clean' (3), why must there be continual pruning (cleaning)(2)? How does that happen?

5. In 15:1-7 reveal that the people of God are branches that are rooted in the vine (Jesus) and are to bear fruit (5, 8). What is the fruit that comes from Jesus that the church is to bear (see John 20:21, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Galatians 5:22-26)?

6. Why must the church (people of God) be connected to Jesus in order to flourish (5-6) and what is the result (7-11)? What happens if it is not (2, 6)?

7. What avenues do we have to 'abide' (remain in/connected to) Jesus? What are areas/things that draw you away from Jesus and his mission?

8. How would your year look different practically if you are abiding (resting) in your acceptance in Christ (3, 9, 10, 11, 12) vs. striving to earn acceptance (from God, others, yourself)?

memory verse :: *'I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.'* John 15:5

Study Two :: The COMMAND for Flourishing
Read :: John 15:12-17



Overview :: *Jesus' commandment to 'love one another' brings to light the 'greatest commandments' that sum up God's laws and allow true flourishing to occur :: loving God and loving people (Mark 12:28-31). What the scriptures reveal is that all people have failed to fully love God and love others which is why we experience brokenness in our lives and in this world. This passage tells of the good news that although we don't fully love God and others, Jesus does for us - that Jesus loved us and laid down his life for us so that we are now friends with our creator God. This gives us the motivation and ability to actually fulfill the command to love others so that they may know and experience God's love and friendship through Jesus.*

1. What does this passage teach us about God? His mission/purpose? Our relationship with Him and role in his mission?

2. What is Jesus commandment to love one another rooted in (12)? How does this allow us to love others (church, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.)?

3. What does love look like to Jesus and how did he fulfill his own command (see Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 5:6-8, 1 John 3:16)? Why is this good news?

4. Have you ever thought of Jesus as a friend? Why is this significant and how does it affect your relationship with God (what do you do with friends? How do you grow as friends, etc.)?

5. Why does Jesus have to make a command to love another (12)? What is challenging about loving people? How does the gospel give you the motivation and ability to do this and how can you grow in it practically?
6. Who are specific people that don't know Jesus' love and friendship that you can intercede for, invest in and invite further into your life so they can experience it (16-17)?
7. What is encouraging about knowing that God chose you? How does this bring humility in light of vs. 15?
8. Why is it important to invest in fruit that will abide (last)? How can you make choices that have eternal significance and longevity vs. temporary?

memory verse :: *'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.'* John 15:12

Study Three :: The COST of Flourishing
Read :: John 15:18-27



Overview :: *In the previous verses, Jesus spoke of His love for us and the love we should have for one another. Here He shifts from our relationship with Him and his followers to our relationship with the world we live in. This passage reveals that there is a cost to flourishing on mission with Jesus. Instead of being loved, Christians are now shown as being opposed by and even hated by the world. However, it's important for us to realize that we were all once Jesus' enemies. We too hated and opposed God before receiving his mercy, grace, and love. Not forgetting our previous condition allows us as His followers to navigate and actually move toward opposition. Jesus sends his Spirit to lead, guide, comfort and point people to Jesus through this opposition.*

1. What does this passage teach us about God? His mission/purpose? Our relationship with Him and role in his mission?

2. Why does Jesus warn his disciples (and ultimately us) about the world's view of his followers? What is true about this? What is hard about this?

3. Read John 3:16 and Matthew 5:43-48. How does this show how God views a world that hates Him and how Christians should view the world? How does knowing that you opposed God and hated Jesus before experiencing his grace and forgiveness (19) allow you to love those who are against God?

4. Jesus makes sure to make a connection between some of His earthly sufferings and ours. How does this bring comfort and encouragement (see 2 Corinthians 1:3-11)?

5. Where and how have you experienced opposition (Work? School? Family?, etc.)? What impact did/does it have on you? If you have not, why?

6. The boldest sin the world has committed was rejecting Jesus and ultimately the Father (21-24). Where do we see Jesus being rejected? Where have you done this?

7. What promise does Jesus give us in this passage (26) and what does he bring? What does it mean for us and for the world around us in regards to our mission?

8. What are some areas you need to grow in to be on mission even in the face of opposition? How can the group pray for you?

memory verse :: *'But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.'* John 15:26

PRAYER REQUESTS



week 1 ::

week 2 ::

week 3 ::

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