



International Baptist Church of Manila

Life of a Jesus Follower

Session Three: Abide—Spending Time With God

1 Corinthians 10:3; 2 Peter 1:3; John 14:15,21; James 4:6

8/30/2020

MAIN POINT

The primary call on our lives isn't to do something for Jesus but to be with Jesus. However, we don't spend time with Jesus because we allow our pride and self-sufficiency get in the way.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Who is the person you spend the most time with? What do you love about that person?

What is something surprising you've learned about this person as you've gotten to know them?

If you're married, you likely know and appreciate your spouse now in a way you couldn't when you were just dating. Why? Over time, your relationship has grown and developed through intimacy. Last week we saw that the primary relationship of a Jesus follower is their relationship with God. This week we're going to focus on how we develop that relationship. Like all relationships, we learn to love and appreciate God as we spend time with Him.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| WATCH THE VIDEO, "SESSION 3: ABIDE—I'M IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD".

Why is it so easy for even mature Jesus followers to confuse spiritual activity for spiritual maturity? When have you done this?

In this session, Vance shared some questions his mentor asked him: "Does a Christian want to sin? Does a Christian have to sin?" How would you have answered these questions before watching this session? How has your answer changed in light of what you heard?

| ASK A COUPLE OF VOLUNTEERS TO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 AND 2 PETER 1:3.

What options does a Christian have when confronted with sin?

How are these verses an encouragement to us when temptation comes?

God doesn't just give us an example of bad choices and the encouragement to make wise choices; He gives us the ability to do so. If we are in Christ, we never have to give in to temptation. God is faithful and always gives us a way out of temptation that doesn't include sinning against Him. We need to recognize the seriousness of our choices and stand with God in order to withstand temptation.

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ JOHN 14:15,21.

How is our willingness to sin related to our love for God? How have you found this to be true in your own life?

How have pride and self-sufficiency kept you from pursuing God? Is this happening in your life right now?

This session is all about three questions that help us understand why we don't spend time with God. Does a Christian have to sin? No. Does a Christian want to sin? No. If we don't want to sin and we don't have to sin, why do we?

That answer is a little more complicated. We sin because we don't love God (John 14:15). We don't love God because we don't know God. We don't know God because we don't spend time with Him. We don't spend time with Him because we're prideful and self-sufficient people.

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ JAMES 4:6.

Why does our humility grow in proportion to our love for God?

How can we be committed to spending time with God without it becoming just another activity we do for God?

James 4:6 says. "But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, 'God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'" We need to be people who humbly depend on God's grace. As we cultivate humility, we'll run to God freely in need. When we do this, according to John 14:23, God will disclose himself to us.

When we come to Jesus in humility, we'll be eager to spend time with Him, which grows our love for Him and decreases our desire to sin.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Do you willingly choose to love God in response to His great love, or is it dependent upon circumstances? Why should we love God independently of our circumstances?

What is the difference between obeying out of duty and obeying out of love? Which most often describes your obedience?

What have you learned about God through obeying Him? What is a step of obedience you need to take now to grow closer to Him?

PRAYER

Ask God for a renewed commitment to Him. Confess your pride and your need for God to sustain you. Pray for greater grace as you depend upon God personally and daily.

COMMENTARY

| 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

The warning to be careful not to fall raised another issue that Paul addressed. What if Christians are so tempted that they cannot resist turning from Christ? Perhaps he had in mind the attraction some Corinthians had toward the idolatrous fertility rituals practiced in Corinth. What if they were not able to resist? First, all temptations that Christians experience, including that of idolatry,

are common to man. Others had resisted the temptation toward idolatry, and the Corinthians could do so as well.

Second, God is faithful, and he will not desert his people (see Deut. 7:9; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23; Rev. 1:5). God can be trusted not to allow temptations beyond what Christians can bear. God will always provide a way out of temptation so believers can stand up and not fall into apostasy. He himself tempts no one (Jas. 1:13), but he is in control of Satan, who tempts believers to sin (Matt. 4:1; 6:13). Because of his great love for his children, God does not allow temptations to be so great that they overcome us. Instead, Christians sin because they do not search for a way out.

| 2 PETER 1:3

Peter reminded his readers of the resources they had through knowing Christ. He provides believers everything they need for life and godliness. Life is eternal life, whereas godliness is godly living; the latter cannot be obtained without the former. The divine call of believers served as a foundation for Peter's appeal for godly living. Christ calls to Himself those whom God has saved, and this calling is brought about by His own glory and goodness. Christ's glory and goodness combine and seem to refer to the moral excellence of Christ. By these—by Christ's glory and goodness—

| JOHN 14:15-21

14:15–18. How do people know that they are Christians? How do you and I gain confidence that we are born again by the regenerating power of God's Holy Spirit? The world cannot know because the world cannot accept the Holy Spirit. But the disciples were told that the Holy Spirit lives with you and will be in you. Pentecost was still in their future, so at the present time the Holy Spirit was constantly with them. But after Pentecost, he would actually be in them and in every other believer since that day. Consequently, they were identifiable (as we are) as God's children, not orphans.

What did Jesus mean by the promise at the end of verse 18: I will come to you? Some interpreters suggest this refers to the resurrection, while others see another promise of the second coming. But in the context of these verses, it surely means the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Jesus lives in us through the person and power of the Holy Spirit.

14:19–21. How well we remember the song that states, "Because he lives, I can face tomorrow; because he lives, all fears are gone." Perhaps the idea for the lyrics had its birth in John 14:19.

When did the disciples (later called the apostles) realize that Jesus was in the Father and that they dwelt in Him? Did they have to wait for the second coming for that? Of course not. The reference to that day must refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. That frightened, hesitant group of believers huddled in an upper room knew the power of the Holy Spirit broke forth upon them because it literally blasted them around the city, around the country and around their world.

| JAMES 4:6

We do not have to continue in a state of bitter, selfish conflict. In contrast to destructive infighting, greater grace is available to overcome hostility and restore relationships. The term "grace" has the sense of God's free gift and here refers to the necessary power to end chronic conflict with others, renew loyalty to Christ, and relate in love. James quoted Proverbs 3:34 to remind us of the peril of pride and the need for humility: God goes on setting Himself in opposition to the haughty and arrogant, but He continually extends His favor to people who are conscious of their need for His resources.