



THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL WEEK FIVE

Intimacy With God: The Way to True Fulfillment



I AM THE
TRUE VINE

REST IN A RESTLESS WORLD

THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL

WEEK FIVE

DAY ONE

FRUIT

SERIES: 8 WEEK ABIDING CHALLENGE

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 15:5

READING: Colossians 1:27; Luke 6:43–45; Matthew 7:16–20

CHAPTER FOUR: FRUIT

INTRODUCTION

I am the True Vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. John 15:5

Fruit is a result of abiding in the vine which is Jesus. Jesus assures us in this passage that fruitfulness is inevitable if we stay connected to the vine. You will never be fruitful if you do not heed the call to abide in the Vine. Abiding in the vine reveals two aspects of our union with Christ.

- 1.) You are to abide in Christ (YOU IN CHRIST)
- 2.) Christ to abide in you (CHRIST IN YOU.)

To abide in Christ- is **Redemption**; but for Christ to abide in you - is **Sanctification**. To be in Christ-that makes you fit for **Heaven**; But for Christ to be in you - makes you **fruitful** on earth! To be in Christ - changes your **Destination**; But for Christ to be in you- changes your **Destiny** which is to bear fruit. One makes heaven your home the other allows heaven to invade your world and cause you to be fruitful. Colossians 1:27 says; “... Christ in you the hope of Glory” and in Galatians 2:20, Paul writes, I have been crucified with Christ [that is, in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body I live by faith [by adhering to, relying on, and completely trusting] in the Son

of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Let's explore these truths about fruit:

- Fruit reveals the Vine
- Fruit is the evidence of an abiding life
- Fruit is the result of the nutrients the branch saps from the vine
- The branch only receives from the vine and displays the fruit
- Fruit is for the Gardener's benefit – that is God's glory!

A Tree and Its Fruit - *“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for such tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.* Luke 6:43–45

You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, you will recognize them by their fruits. Matthew 7:16–20

Fruit is not what we do for Christ rather, it is what Christ does in you and through you. Fruit is partnering with God in the work for which He has called you to do. There are three categories of fruit that is a result of us abiding in the vine which is Christ.

- **Fruit that is born within** - *For it is [not your strength, but it is] God Who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] and for His good pleasure.* Philippians 2:13 Amp.

Remember we are God's image bearers, and the fruit born within transforms and shapes our character to be like Christ Who is the image of the invisible God. Fruit born within is having the mind of Christ – It is bearing the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long suffering,

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. [Galatians 5:22-23]

2 Corinthians 3:18: reads; *"We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness, from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord Who is the Spirit"*

Philippians 2:5: "In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus"

Romans 8:29: "God predestined [all believers] to be conformed to the likeness of His Son" [The True Vine]

1 John 3:2: "When He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is".

- **Fruit that is born without** – These are acts of service, our deeds, good works. They are your kingdom assignment and life's purpose. Ephesians 2:10 says; *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"*.

Jesus said in John 6:27-28 that – *"Do not work for food that perishes, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval."* Then they inquired, *"What must we do to perform the works of God?"*

- **Fruit by Association / Influence** – Those we influence in and around our orbit. Matthew 5:16 says; "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven". This fruit is born in the lives within your sphere of influence like family, friends and colleagues. Here are some Bible verses about influencing others:

1 Corinthians 16:14 - "Do everything in love". This verse encourages us to consider the well-being of others, show empathy, and create a supportive environment.

1 Corinthians 15:33 - "Evil company corrupts good habits". This verse emphasizes the negative side of influence.

Proverbs 27:17 - "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend". This verse emphasizes the positive side of influence.

Proverbs 13:20 - "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed". This verse emphasizes both the negative and positive sides of influence.

Matthew 5:13-16 - "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?". This verse encourages people to let their light shine before others.

Proverbs 11:25 - "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed". This verse encourages people to give to others and experience the joy of giving.

It is impossible to bear the Godkind of fruit without abiding in the Vine. I would translate John 15:4-5 like this: Abide in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bring forth fruit from of itself were it not abiding in the vine, even so, neither can you if you are not abiding in Me. I, Myself, am the vine, you the branches. The one who abides in Me and I in him, he it is that brings forth much fruit. For without Me, it's impossible to bear the Godkind of fruit. The fruit of a tree or vine is the end-product of all that it has done with what it has consumed, i.e. what it has taken in through the roots and foliage. Jesus is saying that it is the same with man.

RESPONSE

FRUIT

- **REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING TWO VERSES OF SCRIPTURE**

Philippians 2:13 Amp

For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to **fulfill your purpose**] for **His good pleasure**.

➤ **What is Christ doing in and through you!**

• **CHRIST IN YOU**

Philippians 2:5

"In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus"

• **THE EVIDENCE OF FRUIT IN YOUR LIFE**

➤ **Fruit that is born within** [Being Christlike] In what areas of your life do you see the Lord transforming?

➤ **Fruit that is born without** [Acts of Service & Good Works]- What is Christ doing through you?

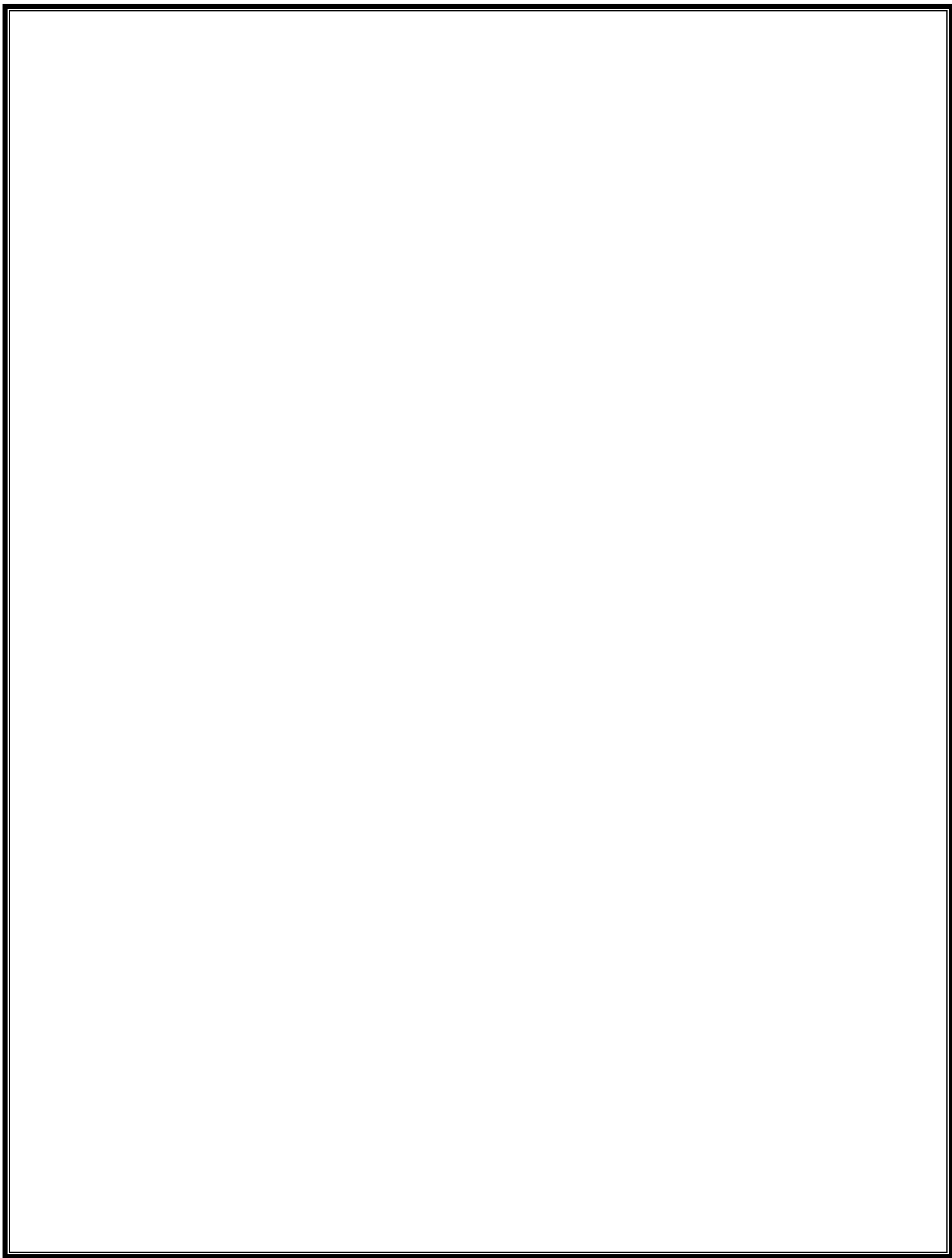
➤ **Fruit by Association / Influence** [Your Sphere of Influence] – How are you or have you influenced those in your orbit?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Matthew 5:16; Matthew 5:13-16; Ephesians 2:10; Romans 8:29

Meditate on the scriptures above and let the Lord speak to your heart. To meditate, you need to memorize, analyze, visualize and personalize.

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THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL

WEEK FIVE

DAY TWO

FRUITFULNESS

SERIES: 8 WEEK ABIDING CHALLENGE

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 15:16

READING: Psalm 128:2-3; Psalm 92:14; Romans 7:5; Galatians 5:22-23

CHAPTER FOUR: FRUIT

INTRODUCTION

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you.

John 15:16

The idea of fruitfulness and bearing fruit appear throughout the entire story of the Bible. The primary word that the Bible uses to define fruitfulness is productivity. That is, a productive person is someone who bears fruit. In scripture, fruitfulness is a term that can have multiple meanings, including Productivity: - The word "fruitfulness" to describe someone who is productive, which means doing or achieving a lot: working hard and getting good results. **Spiritual maturity:** - Fruitfulness is a symbol of spiritual maturity and well-being. It can refer to a believer who is receptive to the Word of God and produces the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. **Reflecting the character of Christ:** - To be fruitful means to live a life that reflects the character of Christ and produces good works. It means remaining connected to Christ and allowing Him to work through us to accomplish His purposes.

Jesus uses the metaphor of a vineyard to represent God's people. He refers to Himself as the True Vine and His disciples as branches and instructs them on how to abide in Him and be fruitful. The Christian life is about the fruit we bear for God's glory. Psalm 92:14: "Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital and green". Psalm 128:2-3 "Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in His ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours". "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table". Galatians 5:22-23: The type of fruit produced in our life must be evident in the fruit of the Spirit. Matthew 7:16-20 says, "Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit". And in Genesis 1:28: God commanded man to be fruitful, multiply, replenish the earth, subdue it: and have dominion over every living thing upon the earth".

What Does It Mean To Be A Fruitful Christian?

The Bible often uses the metaphor of fruit to describe the produce of our lives. Fruit can be either good or bad. Romans 7:5 says, "For when we were in the realm of the flesh . . . we bear the fruit for death." A fruitful Christian will produce better results: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (Proverbs 11:30). Fruit is the direct result of whatever controls our hearts.

The fruit of a life not surrendered to Jesus includes "sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage," and many more evil acts (Galatians 5:19-20). In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit of God is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).

God the Father is the gardener (John 15:1), and He desires us to be fruitful. Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). As branches cling to the vine, we cling to Christ,

drawing our very life from Him. The goal is “much fruit,” as Christ uses us to bring about blessed, celestial results in a broken, fallen world.

When we have committed ourselves to Christ and live to please Him, the natural result is behavioral choices that look like His. He was clear that true followers of Christ will be recognizable by their fruit: “Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:16–20).

There are many ways Christians can be fruitful. True fruitfulness begins in the heart with the fruit of the Spirit. That inner fruit affects outward actions; our words and our activities will glorify the Lord, and God’s will, is accomplished. God’s desire is to transform us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) and make us as fruitful as He was. In our allegiance to Him, we want to be characterized by good works (Ephesians 2:10), humility (Ephesians 4:2; Titus 3:2), and forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32). We want to always be ready to “give an account for the hope that is within us” (1 Peter 3:15). We desire to be the “good soil” Jesus spoke of in the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:3–9. The result of spiritual fruitfulness is that God is glorified, we grow, and others come to know Christ—this is the ultimate fruitfulness for a child of God (Matthew 5:16; Acts 20:26–27; Mark 16:15).

In conclusion, a fruitful life is evident

- When we **abide** in the true vine which is Christ
- When we **surrender** to the will of the vine which is Christ
- When we **desire** to become more like Him – A Christ-like-life
- When we **align** our will with God’s will
- When we **seek** for God to be glorified
- When we **love** God passionately and love others as ourselves

RESPONSE

Personal Reflection

A FRUITFUL LIFE IS EVIDENT

- When we abide in the true Vine which is Christ

- When we surrender to the will of the Vine which is Christ

- When we desire to become more like Him – A Christ-like-life

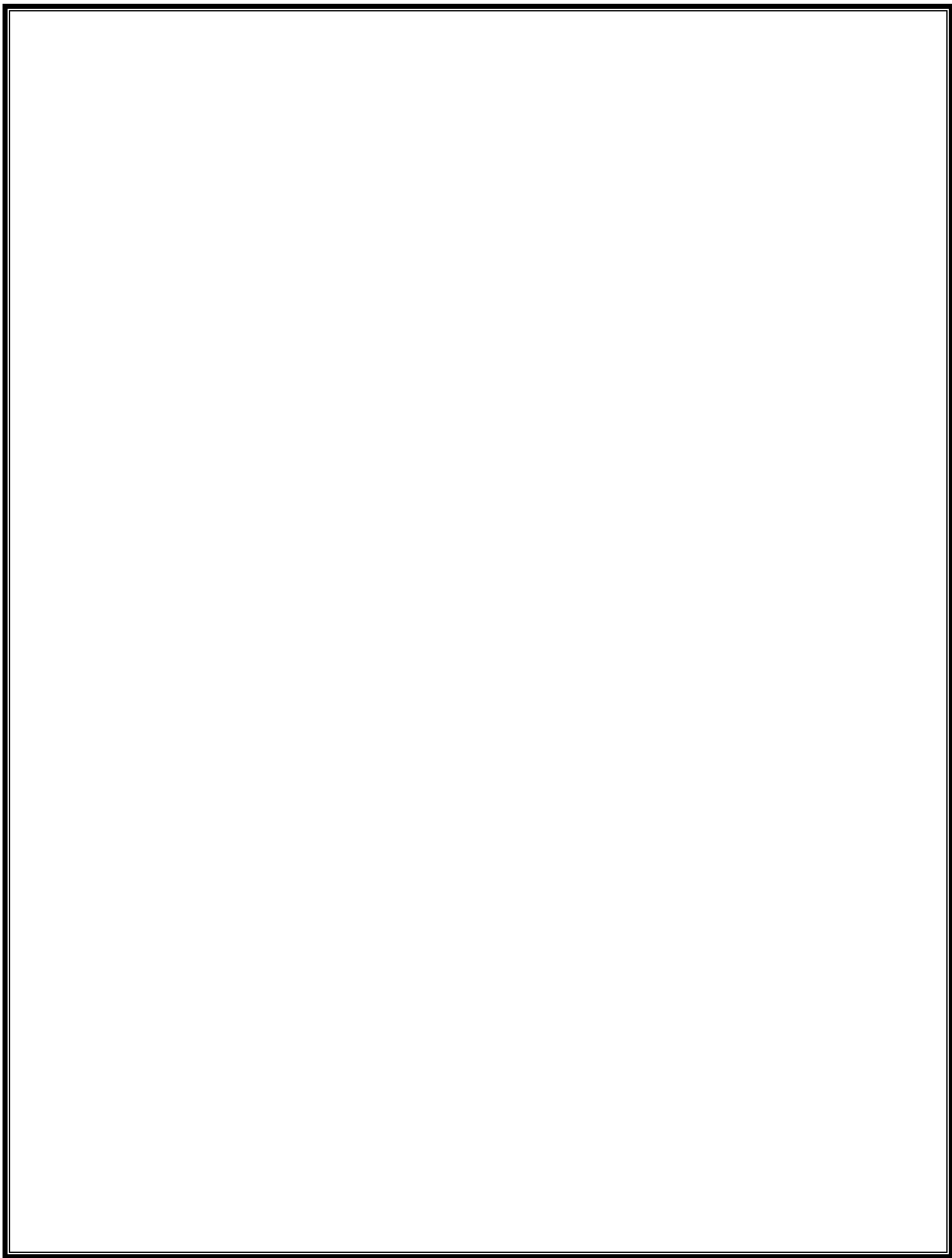
- When we align our will with God's will

- When we seek for God to be glorified

- When we love God passionately and love others as ourselves

Reflect On This Statement

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THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL

WEEK FIVE

DAY THREE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VINE & BRANCH & FRUIT

SERIES: 8 WEEK ABIDING CHALLENGE

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 15:5 AMP

READING: Galatians 5:17–25; Matthew 7:16; Romans 6:22; Romans 15:28

CHAPTER ONE: FRUIT

INTRODUCTION

I am the true Vine; you are the branches. The one who abides, remains in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for [otherwise] apart from Me [that is, cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing. John 15:5 AMP



Today, I want us to look at the relationship between Vine, Branches and Fruit. The relationship between the vine, branch, and fruit in John 15 is a metaphor for the relationship between Jesus and His followers, or disciples: and the fruit that is born through us abiding in Him. Jesus said in Matthew 7:16 that we shall be known or distinguished or recognized by our fruits. And so, we need to bear fruit that reflects our abiding relationship with the Vine. Christlike Fruit! The branch is helplessly dependent on the vine to be fruitful. The fruit of abiding in Christ is the spiritual fruit that results from a believer's connection to Jesus and is evidence of the Lord's presence.

The Vine: Represents Jesus, the source of life and sustenance for the branches which is us.

The Branches: Represent us His disciples, who must remain in the vine to live and bear fruit.

The Fruit: Represents the fruit we bear within, which includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The fruit we bear in our service to each other and the fruit we bear within our sphere of influence.

The vine provides sap to the branches, which allows them to remain productive and bear fruit. The fruit that the branches bear comes from the Vine, not from the branches themselves. The metaphor of the vine and branches is used in the Gospel reading of John 15:1-8. Some say that branches that bear fruit represent true Christians, while barren branches represent Christians who bear no spiritual fruit or non-Christians. However, in the New Testament, God applied the idea of fruit to many kinds of behavior:

- Christ-like character (Galatians 5:17–25; Ephesians 5:8–13; James 3:17–18; 2 Peter 1:3-11)
- Holiness (Romans 6:22)
- Praise to God (Hebrews 13:15)
- The results of giving to God's work (Philippians 4:17; Romans 15:28)
- Converts through our gospel witness (John 4:35–36; 1 Corinthians 16:15; Romans 1:13)
- General good works and service to God (Colossians 1:10; 1 Timothy 5:9–10)

To summarize, fruit is the result of Christ in a believer, a changed life that God can use to influence others.

RESPONSE

Can you identify fruit in your life since you gave your life to Christ?
[Is your fruit obvious?]

Can people see God's work in you?

Does the fruit of your changed life bring glory to the One who transformed you?

Are you unmistakably Jesus' disciple? – Is Christ the true vine working in your life?

What does this scripture mean to you: Colossians 1:27 - “.....*Christ in and abiding among you, is the hope and guarantee of [realizing the] glory*”.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Meditate on the scriptures below and let the Lord speak to your heart.

- **Christ-like character** [Fruit]

(Galatians 5:17–25; Ephesians 5:8–13; James 3:17–18; 2 Peter 1:3-11)

- **Holiness** [Fruit]

(Romans 6:22)

- **Praise to God** [Fruit]

(Hebrews 13:15)

- **The results of giving to God's work** [Fruit]

(Philippians 4:17; Romans 15:28)

- **Converts through our gospel witness** [Fruit]

(John 4:35–36; 1 Corinthians 16:15; Romans 1:13)

- **General good works and service to God** [Fruit]

(Colossians 1:10; 1 Timothy 5:9–10)



THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL

WEEK FIVE

DAY FOUR

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GARDENER & BRANCH & FRUIT

SERIES: 8 WEEK ABIDING CHALLENGE

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 15:1-2

READING: John 6:37; John 15:2; Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11

CHAPTER ONE: FRUIT

INTRODUCTION

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. Every branch which is part of Me, but fails to bear fruit, He cuts off; and every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes, so that it may bear more fruit. John 15:1-2



Let start our study this morning with a scripture in John 6:37. It reads; *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never cast out.*

In the parable of the vineyard, we read in different translations that the Father our Master Gardener “Cuts off” every branch that does not bear fruit. The Greek word that is translated “**cuts off**” is the word, (airo) and it means, “to raise up, elevate, lift up, to take away, or to remove.” And in the passion translation bible, the phrase “**He cuts off**” simply means “He cares for the branches connected to Me by lifting and propping up the fruitless branches and pruning every fruitful branch to yield a greater harvest. [More Fruit] And in verse 8 we read; “This is how My Father is glorified — in you bearing much

fruit; this is how you will prove to be My disciple. So, the Master Gardener requires the branches to bear fruit and not just fruit but rather than much fruit and for our fruit to remain. His role in the fruit bearing process is:

- **He cares**
- **He lifts and props up**
- **He prunes**
- **He waters and fertilizes**

John 15 describes God as the Gardener in a vineyard, with Jesus as the vine and believers as the branches: **Caring for the vine and branches**; God tends to the vine, watering it and removing negative things from believers' lives. **Pruning**: God prunes branches to correct believers and encourage growth. This includes lifting and propping up the fruitless branches that are unproductive so they can be fruitful. **Goal**: The Gardener's goal is to ensure that every branch produces lots of fruit. **Connection to God**: Jesus explains the importance of the connection between believers and God, and how that connection produces honor for God. When it comes to our lives, God wants us to be fruitful and effective. God the Father is the Gardener taking care of keeping the vine and the branches healthy and producing.

He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. John 15:2 NLT

God the "Gardener," through Jesus, "the Vine," is pouring life into us, "the branches," for great fruitfulness. When God sees branches that are sucking God's life away from the vine, God cuts them off, as it is taking away from the fruitfulness God intends in our lives as we are firmly connected to Jesus. The job of the Gardener or Vinedresser is to care for the vine and branches by watering, fertilizing, and above all... pruning. Without pruning, a rich crop cannot come forth.

And after all, the vineyard owner's reputation is at stake! If someone sees a barren vineyard, no one shames the branches or even the vine, but rather the owner/vinedresser. That's because whoever does the work gets the credit or the blame! So, it's His job to do whatever is necessary to ensure an abundant crop of grapes. Even the good, new growth gets cut back so as to bring forth an abundance of fruit. Romans 8:28 says; *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”*.

RESPONSE

Reflections & Encouragement

"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him Who works all things according to the counsel of His will". Ephesians 1:11

When God is cutting dead branches out of our lives, it is for the best. Trust Him to work on your life. He absolutely knows what He is doing.

List three dead limbs that the Master Gardener cut out of your life.

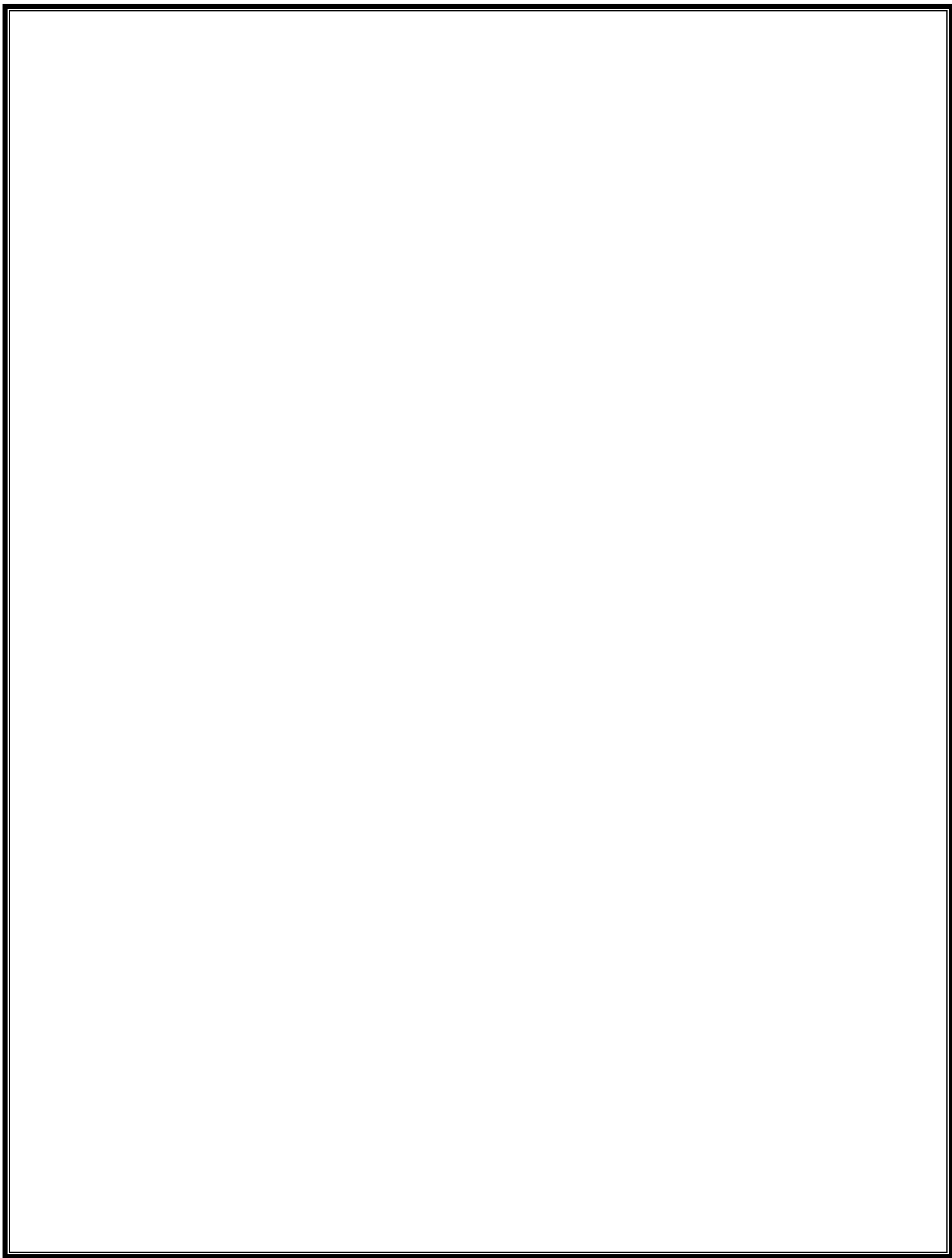
PRAYER: Dear Father, my Master Gardener, thank You for working on my life to be more fruitful for Your kingdom. Thank You for keeping me connected to Jesus, the vine. I don't always like pruning, but I know it is best and I trust You. Make me more like You!
In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Meditate on this scripture and let the Lord speak to your heart.

He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. John 15:2 NLT

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THE ABIDING CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL
WEEK FIVE
DAY FIVE
THE PRUNING OF THE MASTER GARDENER

SERIES: 8 WEEK ABIDING CHALLENGE

KEY SCRIPTURE: John 15:2

READING: Romans 5:3-4; Proverbs 3:12; Proverbs 3:12; 1 Cor. 10:23

CHAPTER ONE: FRUIT

INTRODUCTION

Jesus says, every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He lifts and props up; and every branch that continues to bear fruit, He [repeatedly] prunes, so that it will bear more fruit [even richer and finer fruit]. John 15:2

Pruning is vitally important for us to grow in our walk with God. I've found it's helpful to evaluate my life periodically and ask God to show me if there are things that need to be cut off because they are hindering my relationship with Him. Ask yourself: Am I dragging around "dead branches" in my life? Maybe it's a bad relationship, an old wound from your past, a negative attitude that keeps you from enjoying life to the fullest or anything you look to for a sense of security other than God Himself. It would be nice if we could see what God sees and say, "Yes, God, let's get rid of that dead branch." But many times, we're too afraid to give up what we know, what's familiar, for something new that we just can't see or understand. The truth is you can be miserable dragging those dead things around or you can go through the pain of letting God "prune" them away. Even though it's uncomfortable, the best thing you can do is let God prune you, because after the hard part is over, you will see some amazing results!

God prunes us to produce spiritual growth that strengthens our character (to be more like Him) and our faith. “We can rejoice too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope. Knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” Romans 5:3-4

What Does Pruning Mean Spiritually?

The biblical definition for pruning outlines it as a method for removing what is not necessary. This means there are things that can be attached to our lives that are not beneficial. Some examples of these could include sin, bad habits, and negative relationships which can hinder our personal and spiritual growth. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:23 that; *All things are lawful [that is, morally legitimate, permissible], but not all things are beneficial or advantageous. All things are lawful, but not all things are constructive [to character] and edifying [to spiritual life].*

God Prunes Us

God acts out of love for us. His acts of spiritual pruning are done with love, to help us grow into someone who reflects His character, and live fruitful lives. It is a necessary part of the Christian life. “*The Lord corrects those He loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom He delights.*” Proverbs 3:12.

Why Does The Father Prune Us?

So that you might “be even more fruitful” (John 15:2 NIV). Pruning will lead to greater growth in the fruit of God’s Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The season shortly after being pruned requires patience to wait on the growth that will come. But the Father knows that the painful cut and patiently waiting are necessary for increased fruitfulness. In fact, for a plant to keep producing, you must prune it. I have heard it said that God has no friends He has not wounded (Proverbs 27:6).

Remember that God only prunes those He loves, who already know Him and live fruitful lives. And remember also that God has plans to prosper you spiritually (James 1:2-4). He only prunes so that after a patient waits, you might produce more spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-23). He has pruned you for your long-term joy and for His glory.

Here are five other truths about the pruning process:

- **Pruning is done by God.** Even the person that is in close relationship with Christ must be pruned. Pruning is not limited to just our lives, but also the lives of others. When we are pruned by God it should result in humility and gratitude that God is making us better.
- **Pruning is necessary to produce good fruit.** John 15:1-8 outlines that Jesus is the "True Vine". As believers we are to be in a relationship with Him at a level that bears fruit. If we don't, God cuts off that branch.
- **Pruning can come in the form of discipline.** Hebrews 12:6 says that God corrects everyone that He loves. In those times He may cut away the things that do not benefit us that we already had a chance to remove ourselves.
- **Pruning is a part of spiritual growth.** It is something that should cause us to depend on God more, not less.
- **Pruning can be painful.** Just as a physical branch may be cut and bleed, so too our emotions may be affected when we go through the pruning process.

RESPONSE

- Why Does our Heavenly Father Prune Us?

- What Does Pruning Mean Spiritually?

- Pruning is done by God.

- Pruning is necessary to produce good fruit.. John 15:1-8

- Pruning can come in the form of discipline. Hebrews 12:6

- Pruning is a part of spiritual growth.

- Pruning is necessary but can be painful.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Pruning is a part of our Christian journey. It's an opportunity to remove the things that don't serve us and start anew. Are there areas in your life where you need some pruning? Are you holding onto something because it makes you feel safe or secure rather than letting go so God can bless your new growth? As we look at how Jesus cultivated relationships with people He met throughout His ministry, let's remember that what really matters most is being in relationship with Christ and continuing to grow spiritually.

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are my Father and I am Your child. You are my potter; and I am the clay in Your Hand. Isaiah 64:8. You created me for Your pleasure, and I know You are working Your purposes in my life. As Master Gardener You tend the soil of my life and every branch that is abiding in the Vine. I know that Your pruning removes things that inhibit my spiritual growth, such as bad relationships, negative attitudes, or old wounds. It also helps me grow in my walk with You and my maturity in Christ. I submit to Your pruning and ask for You to search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. I know You love me and prunes those You love! Make me into the Image of Your Son JESUS.

Amen.