

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

GOD BECAME MAN

WEEK 25

March 21 & 22

The Branches and the Vine

This sermon study is designed to be used the week after the sermon it supplements. Before using the study in your life group, it might be helpful to work through the questions on your own before your group meets. The purpose of this guide is to help facilitate discussion and to help your group, collectively and individually, grow closer to Jesus.

SERIES RECAP

Back in August, we started going through the gospel of John and left off in chapter 9. John's gospel is unique from Matthew, Mark and Luke in that John was one of Jesus' first followers and closest friends, and was written around A.D. 85. In his writing, John's primary aim is to persuade skeptics that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God (20:30-31).

SERMON SUMMARY

For the past couple of weeks, we've been in a section of John's gospel where Jesus is saying goodbye to His disciples. Here in John 15, Jesus is preparing them for what's coming next. He encourages and challenges them by comparing the disciples (and us) to branches and Himself as the Vine, and says, "Apart from Me, you can do nothing." If we forget to remain in Jesus (the Vine), life will wear us down and burn us out.

MAIN TEXT

John 15:1-17

GETTING STARTED

What was your favorite type of fruit as a little kid? What is your favorite type of fruit now?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read John 15:1-17 out loud as a group. In this passage, Jesus says that we will bear fruit if we abide in Him. What does it mean to abide? What are some examples of the fruit that He referenced?
2. As we read in this passage, a branch is nothing without the vine. How can we (as branches)

practically stay connected to Jesus (the Vine)? Have you experienced seasons in your life when you felt disconnected from the Vine? If so, how did you reconnect?

3. This weekend, we learned that our spiritual character cannot progress if we don't take intentional steps toward growth. What step(s) are you taking to improve your spiritual character? Are there any other steps that you can take but haven't?
4. Read Galatians 5:22-25 out loud as a group. Of the qualities listed in this passage, which one do you feel like is your strongest? Which one is your weakest?
5. Think back to a time when you pursued a relationship with someone, either a friend or a significant other. What things were necessary in order for you to grow closer to him or her? In what way(s) does that compare to your walk with Christ?
6. A critical aspect of our character is our love for other people. Do you love people as Jesus loves them? Have you given up on anyone, thinking that Christ cannot reach him or her? If so, what can you do this week to encourage him or her?

NEXT STEPS

As followers of Jesus, we are saved by grace through faith. However, that should not cause us to be idle or apathetic in our walks with Christ. Instead, that should light a fire under us and cause us to roll up our sleeves, press in, and break a sweat to become more like Him.

Would you say that the word "movement" accurately describes your walk with Christ? What are you reading, watching, thinking, doing, and chasing after right now?

Pray together that God would increase your group's appetite to be more like Him.