

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, July 23, 2017

**Abiding in Christ
A Study of John 15:1-11**

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Read John 15:1-2: (Then choose one or do both!)

Gardening Rule: When weeding your garden, the way to tell a valuable plant from a weed is to gently pull on it. If it comes up easily, it is a valuable plant!

How does the gardening rule apply to changes the Holy Spirit challenges Jesus followers to consider?

Grafting Basics: When a Farmer wants to graft a valuable variety of tree like a fruit or nut tree onto a common yet healthy tree, he or she takes a green branch of the valuable tree and places it into a slot cut into a branch of the common tree. The graft is then covered with wax and wrapping to protect it from the harmful effects of the elements and of insects or disease. The graft must abide inside this protection until it fuses together with the host branch and flourishes, then the common branch is cut away and new branch will produce the valuable fruit or nut the farmer desires.

Why do you think a Christian needs to abide in Christ in order to grow and produce fruit? What protects the grafted follower of Christ from the elements?

Discuss the “how to’s” and the benefits of “Abiding in Christ.”

The word translated “abide” appears 40 times in John as opposed to 12 times in the other Gospels. It means to stay, live, dwell, persist, remain, or await. John explains both how to abide and the benefits of abiding in Christ.

The “How-to’s” of Abiding

Read John 15:3

- Who are the people John calls “already clean”? For a non-believer, what is the first step to abiding in Christ?

Read John 15:7-10

- What does it mean for His words to abide in you? How does that happen?
- According to John 15:10, what can a follower of Christ do to “abide in His love”?
- What do you think of when you think of keeping God’s commandments?
- Why do you think Jesus gave His followers the Greatest Commandment, (Matthew 22:36-39), and the Great Commandment, (John 13:34-35)

Read John 15:12

- How does this command line up with the one in Matthew 22:39?
- What does a person who is truly abiding in Christ look like, or act like?

The Benefits of Abiding

Read John 15:3-5

- One of the benefits of abiding in Christ is spiritual health. Pruning is necessary for fruit bearing. Give examples of “spiritual pruning” you may have witnessed or experienced personally
- Give examples of “fruit” from healthy Christians.
- What are some effects of not abiding in Christ and in His love?

Read John 15:6-7

- What two benefits of abiding are described in these two verses?

Read John 15:11

- What is another benefit of abiding?
- How would you describe Christian joy?

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- How has the Holy Spirit challenged you today?
- How is your “abiding” going? Are you loving God and loving His people? As a grafted branch, do you feel the protection of God’s love and God’s people, or do you feel exposed to the elements?
- Are you learning and keeping His commands?
- Are your responses to God always “Yes, Lord” or are you throwing a few “no’s” in there?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests