

LIGHTHOUSE GROUP CURRICULUM

John 15:1-11

LEADER'S STUDY

Abiding in Christ:

There's something so delightful about the taste of a perfectly ripened fruit plucked freshly from a branch. Walking through an orchard, one could listen with all their might but never hear the branches groaning. Nor would you see them straining or grunting to produce the fruit. The branches yield a crop because they are attached to a source.

When we "abide in Christ", we are "attached" to our Source. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, supplies our every need to accomplish His will for His glory. 1 Peter 4:10-11 calls us to use the gifts we have received to serve others, to the praise of God. That process happens when we abide in Christ! We are a channel through which the love of God flows, and as we simply remain in Him, fruit is born. Abiding in Christ is not something we work to achieve; rather, it is our position as a Christian. Our responsibility is only to continue in Him, walking humbly with Him. When we yield to the Holy Spirit's work in us, we will begin to see fruit manifest itself. When we submit ourselves to God He uses the gifts He has given us to draw other people to himself. This brings God the glory and the gospel to the forefront!

God is calling all of us to stay close, to remain connected to Him, so that He can freely flow through us. He wants to change our hearts and minds to be more like Jesus. As we allow Him to purify us from the dross of selfishness and pride, we will emerge in humility and grace. That kind of transformation brings praise to God!

As you prepare for this week ask yourself these questions. What does being a "branch" indicate about my participation in fruit bearing? How do I abide in Christ? Do I fully rely on Christ? Do I try to be self-sufficient? What actions in my life hinder fruitfulness? How is God revealing Himself and his character through this scripture? How is God changing my thinking? How do I view others, and myself, differently because of the gospel? Be willing to share areas that He is calling you to "follow Him" and make clear "I" statements about how you are going to align with Him.

Some helpful scripture: Colossians 1:10-11, 2:6, Gal 5:22-23, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Micah 6:8

What other places in scripture speak this same truth?

How is God calling you to think and to live differently? How does this change your perspective today?

PREPARING BEFORE GROUP

PURPOSE: Life transformation through the Holy Spirit. He uses scripture and prayer to renew our minds and transform our lives!

PRAY: Pray for the people in your groups by name. Spend time asking the Holy Spirit to help you lead well as you meditate on key passages and seek to know God's heart.

PLAN: Don't be afraid to ask your group what their hopes and expectations are for this semester. This could really help you to know more about the people you are with.

This is a great time to build vision for your group. Talk about what the goals and outcomes of this group could be. Help people know what to expect and get excited about what God does when we seek Him in His word together.

This week it might be good to spend some time getting to know each other. Building unity in your groups only comes when there is a level of trust. One of the best ways to build trust is by sharing your stories of How God is working in your lives. Don't force anyone to share but maybe consider going first and sharing some of your story. Someone has to lead the way and be vulnerable first. This is a way you can actively serve your group.

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INTENTIONAL BIBLE READING

READ John 15:1-11

And meditate on it.

Read in the ESV or similar word-for-word translation.

Read it again in the NLT to get a thought-for-thought perspective.

Consider reading the whole chapter or even the whole letter before your meeting to help you understand the context.

Try to summarize the passage in your own words.

POTENTIAL STUDY QUESTIONS

These are just questions you might ask to help your group discussion. Don't feel like you need to answer all of these as a group

What is significant, surprising or confusing from these verses?

What seems to be the main point of these verses?

What did you discover or learn about God and His character from this passage?

How does this portion of scripture point to Jesus and the gospel?

Look at one or two key words and define them really clearly, then look at them in context with that definition. Does this change your understanding?

Why did God bring me to this scripture today?

What parts of this passage are challenging to your current way of thinking?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

How are you going to obey this passage?

What is your "I will" statement?
(Encourage everyone to steer clear of "we" or "us" or "Christians" statements)

With whom are you going to share what you have learned?
(This is a critical part of growth that is often overlooked. If we can share it with someone else it means we really understand it, it cements it in our own minds, it makes us accountable to the truth and it blesses the one who hears the it. Rom 10:17)

Based on this passage, what can we pray about and how should we pray?