

The Practice of Abiding

(John 15:1-17)

Yearly Theme: “Patience is...”

Series Title: “The Practice of Patience”

July 24th, 2022

Something to think about:

Today, we come to a passage in the Gospel of John in the New Testament that has a whole lot of talk about gardening, pruning, and abiding. Let’s take a look at the words of Jesus in John 15:

John 15:1-17 (ESV),

¹⁵ “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. ¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”¹

According to J.I. Packer and Carolyn Nystrom, the word...

“Abide is an old English word for ‘remain,’ ‘stay steady’ and ‘keep your position.’ What it means to abide in Christ—that is, always to be resting on him, anchored to him, fixed in him, drawing from him, continually connected and in touch with him—is a pervasive theme in chapters 14—17. There is no more precious lesson to learn, no more enriching link and bond to cherish, no more vital connection to keep snug and tight, so that it never loosens, than this. Abiding in Christ brings peace, joy and love, answers to prayer, and fruitfulness in service. The abiding life is the abundant life.”²

Here’s the takeaway this morning:

Key Point: “The practice of patience requires abiding in Christ and loving one another.”

So, what does *abiding* in Christ require? Let’s take a closer look...

- Abiding requires connecting.

John 15:2, 6 (ESV), ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ... ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

- Abiding requires producing.

John 15:4-5, 8 (ESV), ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ... ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

- Abiding requires loving.

John 15:9-14 (ESV), ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you.

Something to take home:

Are you connected to Christ, producing the fruit of the Spirit, and loving the way GOD first loved you? Are you working in your own strength to do what only GOD can do through you? Are you dead on the vine? Or are you hanging on for dear life, not producing anything, but staying just connected enough so as not to die?

Jesus is the Vine, and our connection to Him as branches requires something of us. We cannot be connected to Him and not produce the fruit of the benefit of that relationship. Our connection to Him should drive us to do what’s right and produce what is good in our lives. We must also be willing to be pruned by Him, even though it’s painful, so that we can mature and produce even more from a life that is abundantly full of His grace, mercy, and love.

Are you abiding in Him? It takes time and it takes patience.

Key Point: “The practice of patience requires abiding in Christ and loving one another.”

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 15:1–17.

² J.I. Packer & Carolyn Nystrom, *Abiding in Christ* (Life Guide Bible Studies), InterVarsity Press.