

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY

"The Gospel of John"

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Lesson 57: John 15:12-16:4

⁴ **(H)**Abide ^(D)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; ^(J)you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that ^(K)bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me ^(L)he is thrown away like a branch and withers; ^(M)and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If ^(N)you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ^(O)ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ **(P)**By this my Father is glorified, that you ^(Q)bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ **(R)**As the Father has loved me, ^(S)so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ **(T)**If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as ^(U)I have kept ^(V)my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, ^(W)that my joy may be in you, and that ^(X)your joy may be full.

- a. "Abide in Me, and I in you." – "Remain in the graft." The strength of the graft is in the cut, which the vinedresser cut into the vine and inserted the branch. Over time, the cut is sealed and scarred creating a seamless connection between the two.
- b. "branch...vine/you...Me" – Jesus draws the analogy to describe a relationship of dependency: the branch is dependent on the vine for its life; as believers are to Jesus!
- c. "apart from Me you can do nothing." – the branch, by itself, dies because it has no connection to the vine. Unbelievers, while they may be able to do good works in a civic sense (in the world); without faith in Jesus, their works do "nothing" in God's eyes.
 - a. Hebrews 11:6. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists.
 - b. Isaiah 64:5-8. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, you were angry. How then can we be saved? ⁶ All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away ⁷ No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and have given us over to^[b] our sins. ⁸ Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.
 - i. "all our righteous acts" – sinful people are capable of exercising a kind of 'common grace,' which is extended to all creation, and which empowers people to do civic good: acts of charity, philanthropy, service organizations, etc.

ii. “are like *filthy rags*” – lest we think that acts of common grace count the same as ‘saving grace,’ God reminds us that He is not impressed with our attempts to appease Him or earn His favor.

1. 1. Civic good, alone, does not create a love for God, nor can it overcome the corruptive power of our sinful nature (bequeathed to us through ‘original sin.’)
2. Remember the three spiritual affects of being ‘born in (the condition of SIN):

a. **2 Corinthians 4:1-4.** *Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.*

² Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

b. **Ephesians 2:1-5.** *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh^[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

c. **Romans 5:6-10.** *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*

- iii. “*like the wind, our sins sweep us away.*” – the presence of sin continues to separate us from God, no matter how “good” our works are, because they are corrupted by sin.
- iv. “*Yet you, Lord, are our Father.*” – the good news is that God, our Father, seeks to draw us to Himself in love. He does so, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus – who, through faith, covers us in His earning forgiveness for us.

- d. “**gathered, thrown into the fire**” – branches, which have died, are gathered and used for kindling or simply burned as waste. They cannot bear fruit!
- e. “**ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.**” – contextually, the believer asks according to the will of God, because he/she are seamlessly connected to God. “Thy will be done (what, when, & how)!”
- f. “**bear much fruit and so prove**” – What is the “fruit?”
 - c. *Isaiah 11:1.* *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*
 - d. *Matthew 3:8.* *Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.*
 - e. *Galatians 5:22-23.* But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- g. “**that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.**” – Joy is the by-product of a forgiven life in Christ, irrespective of the conditions of that life.
 - a. Joy doesn’t originate with you, nor is it fueled by you.
 - b. Jesus is the source of Joy.
 - c. You have it even if you don’t feel it.