



Transform Notes

John 15:1-8

Bearing Fruit and Leaving Traces of Discipleship

Reflect: (Spend time with God thinking about these statements or questions)

- ❖ Take some time to read and meditate on John 15:1-8. Try reading the passage in multiple versions, translations, and paraphrases.

Interact: (Discuss the following questions with your group, some friends, or just you and God)

- ❖ Read John 15:1-8. Give your initial thoughts on this passage. How does it make you feel? Scared, excited, worried, etc..? Explain.
- ❖ Different versions of this passage use different words, like *remain*, *abide*, and *live*. What is your understanding of these words in the context of this passage and in your journey with God up until this point?
- ❖ Discuss your definition of a disciple.
- ❖ Discuss what you think Jesus means by “*bearing fruit*”?
- ❖ Do you feel the fruit you bear is a result of your abiding in God? Or, do you feel you bear fruit on your own?
- ❖ What kind of practices are a regular part of your “abiding” with God? Does your abiding time draw you to others and bear fruit? Can others experience the result of your abiding time?
- ❖ What is the ratio of how much time you spend “abiding” vs., how much time you spend trying to “bear fruit”? Is there a balance, are both things lacking? Explain.
- ❖ This passage speaks of “pruning”, how do this concept feel to you? What is the purpose of pruning? Have you experienced pruning and has it lead to times of bearing fruit?
- ❖ Are tendency in this culture is to continually “press forward”, “take advantage of momentum”, and “burn-out instead of fading away”. How do these ideas differ from the passage?
- ❖ Have you experienced a season of pruning, what was the experience like and how did you change? What sort of posture or attitude is required in a time of pruning?

- ❖ What are some of your biggest questions regarding your relationship with God?
- ❖ So you tend to view “abiding” as a task or a relationship? Explain. Is it more important to view abiding as a relationship or a task? Why?
- ❖ Abiding takes time. What kind of time are you presently spending abiding? Are there any ways you would like to see this change? (Michael Bischof, *Journey in Community* pg 7 Abiding)
- ❖ What are some things that make it difficult for you to abide? What sort of changes do you need to make to nurture and protect your abiding time?
- ❖ How can you, as a group, cultivate and create space for abiding as a community? How can you encourage each other in your efforts?

Apply: (Look for ways to apply at least one concept to your life)

- ❖ Abiding takes time and space. Take some time and sit down with your daily calendar or a piece of paper. Reflect on a normal day. Where are there moments to take a minute or more and give them to God. When are there extended times for silent prayer, scripture study, or meditation. Begin to plan your daily schedule with abiding involved.
- ❖ Scripture memorization can be a great opportunity for abiding that becomes very formative, and can bear fruit. Start with something small and that you are already familiar with and you enjoy. Write it on a piece of paper or a 3X5 card. Carry it with you and whenever you get a chance try and learn it. And once you have it memorized take every moment to recite it and dialogue with God over it. At a stop light, waiting in line at the store, during a break, etc..
- ❖ After you have been practicing abiding, begin to pay attention to the results. Take time each day to be reflective. Reflect on the fruit of your time with God. The fruit may not always be present in the moment, so begin to ask yourself: Where was God revealing himself to me during the day? Where was He absent? Did God reveal Himself to others through me today? Was available to God to use? Did I have anything, spiritually or emotionally to give away to others? Pay attention to the life you lived that day and the movements of God in the midst of the everyday.