

Week 3. Reconnected means the electricity works.

1. After the last couple of years it feels like we have been unplugged. I was thinking the other day as I made a cuppa. "This is taking a long time to boil." Then I looked and it was unplugged, so I reconnected it. OK you can see where this is going can't you. There is no hidden agenda. It is time for us to reconnect, plug back in and get on with it. The it being – Being church, doing church.
2. OK, what is this reconnection thing we need to do. It may be that some have not disconnected. Good, then I am preaching to the converted, excellent. NO, don't nod off to sleep, there maybe something to learn here.

In [John 15:1-10](#), Jesus commanded us to abide, to remain, to dwell in Him that we produce fruits and become clean. But those who do not connect to Him will not bear fruits because it will wither hence it will die soon and be burned. (read John 15:1-10)

John 15:1-10 (ESV)

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every 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. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶If 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. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Oh this is some hard stuff.

. ²Every 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.

Yep, feeling decidedly pruned at the moment.

Notice what it says.

Abide in me

Now, abide isn't a word we use too much so let's unpack it a bit.

The dictionary puts it this way:

Abide = to accept or act in accordance with (a rule, decision, or recommendation).

MM, so to abide in Jesus is to accept His way of things.

The word in the Greek is meno.

Meno = to *stay* (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy): - abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain,

So we have two ways of looking at it. The passage as it was written implies that we are to stay with Jesus. What the word means more now indicates we need to accept Jesus and His way.

I kind of like the two when they blend.

Notice it says:

. ⁴Abide 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.

It spells it out doesn't it. WE really can't reach our potential without that connection with Jesus.

So we need to abide in Jesus is to stay with Jesus, accept His way So that we can reach the potential that He has designed us for.

Now it goes on a bit.

⁵I 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.

MM, there is a big question here. Are we fruitful? Does that assumption then mean if we are not fruitful our abiding is not quite right? Does that mean our connection with God isn't happening?

Now that is a possibility. Let's be realistic, yep is the answer possibly.

How do you feel about that summation?

How do you evaluate fruitfulness. Well in a plant it is easy – if it has fruit on it – its working. And actually it is pretty simple with us to. Are we reproducing – in other words are people coming to know Jesus? Well the answer to that as a church is no.

Are we personally bearing fruit – that would mean growing and sharing Jesus.

Now that is for you to evaluate.

Here is the thing you can grow and not bear fruit. We have trees like that at home. Don't bear fruit. Their a bit useless but look nice. Maybe that's something too. The whole being a Christian looks good. But looking like a Christian isn't doing the abiding thing is it. And it will be noticed we don't bear fruit if we don't abide.,

The next bits not comfortable:

⁶If 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.

So, we have to abide to stay part of it. How would we feel being pruned. Do we sometimes feel that way now. I think this is a good thought process for us personally as well. Are there parts of us that need pruning? Some bits to get rid of, somethings that need to be out of our life so we can be fruitful. Yep, yep yep.

If our abiding diminishes then those unproductive things pop up and yep we need some pruning.

Listen to the next bit though:

⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you

A consequence of abiding is the right to ask for God's blessings. Now the flip side of that is if you aren't abiding you don't have the right to ask -that's probably a simplistic view of things but if you aren't connected to God, do we have the right to ask? Notice the asking will be fulfilled. I think here the thing is asking with right abiding motivation will get the answer required.

⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Now here is something. God is glorified by bearing fruit. It is the ultimate in worship. Sometimes the worship we give is unabided worship, in other words worship attempts by unconnected people. And we expect something from it. We expect God to be happy with our worship because we have done it, but sometimes it's not what He is asking for. Our abiding is what He wants, He wants to see our fruit, He wants us to prove our connection by being fruitful. That is what it says isn't it.

and so prove to be my disciples – Yep

This next verse is interesting.

⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

*It shows the big love Jesus has for us. He loves us like God loves us, that's the ultimate love thing. But notice, **Abide in my love.** We abide not to gain God's love BUT because of God's love.*

And love the practicality of the bible. Next we get a template on how to do that love.

¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Ok, here it is. Do what I say and that shows that you love me. Keep the things I have presented as lifestyle - do it. And here is the standard to aim at. Do it like Jesus!!

Do we notice that last bit.

just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Do the things God says and stay connected just like Jesus does.