



TITLE: *Fruit That Lasts*

 **OPENING QUESTION:** What's something you've learned recently—big or small—that surprised you?

John 15:1–5—“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 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. Already, you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 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. 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.”

QUESTION: What does it look like in daily life to “abide in the vine”?

1. Rooted in the Word

Psalms 1:1–3—“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law (word) of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

QUESTION: Psalm 1 describes a tree “planted by streams of water.” What kinds of habits or rhythms help keep your spiritual roots in that living water?

“If you keep your relationship right with Him, then regardless of your circumstances or whoever you encounter every day, He will continue to pour ‘Rivers of living water’ through you.” - Oswald Chambers

John 15:2–3—“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.”

QUESTION: Have you ever noticed a difference in your spiritual “fruit” when you're consistently in the Word versus when you're not?

2. Pruned to Produce



QUESTION: What's your first reaction when you hear the word "pruning"? Why do you think it's such a challenging concept?

Psalms 119:67-71- "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep your word. . . It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes."

QUESTION: Can you recall a time when God "pruned" something from your life? What did that season teach you?

"God's hand is never closer than when he prunes the vine. During those times of severest cutting when, to us, he may seem to have departed, he is the closest. His pruning may pain us, but it will never harm us. When the gardener does his pruning well, he leaves little more than the vine. Similarly, the more we are pruned, the more of Christ there is in our lives!" It will be natural to run from the pruning, to avoid it, but he is close in the pruning. While the pain may temporarily be there, but we are being pruned in order to produce lasting fruit."

- Kent Hughes

3. Remain in His Love

John 15:9-11- "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 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. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

QUESTION: Jesus links abiding in His love with keeping His commandments. Why do you think obedience is such a key part of love?

QUESTION: John 15:11 says His goal is that "your joy may be full." What's one thing that robs your joy—and one thing that restores it?

1 John 2:5-6- "Whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

QUESTION: What are some practical ways you "remain in His love" when life gets busy or hard?



CLOSING QUESTIONS:

QUESTION: What is one area in your life where God may be inviting you to "abide" more deeply right now?

QUESTION: Is there a "pruning" process happening in your life today? How can we pray for you as you walk through it?