

## Week 4: Abide in Christ

**Message Overview:** Abiding in Christ brings strength, joy, and fruitfulness, while independence leads to spiritual emptiness.

**Key Scripture:** Proverbs 18:10, 24; John 15:1–8

### Key points:

- Introduction
  - Illustration: show a dead phone with a charging cable nearby. “How long will this phone last if it’s not connected to the charger?”
    - Just like a phone, we need to stay plugged into our power source – Jesus. Without Him, we run spiritually empty.
  - We live in a culture that glorifies independence, self-sufficiency, and “hustle”
  - While hard work is good (last week’s message), true strength doesn’t come from ourselves but from staying connected to Jesus.
  - Many people think they can be good enough on their own. But the Bible tells us that apart from Christ, we can do nothing (John 15:5).
    - A vine without connection to its roots withers and dies
  - “That guy” takes no pleasure in being with Jesus.
- The fool’s independence
  - Proverbs 18:10
    - A strong tower – a place of security and refuge
    - The fool refuses to seek shelter and relies on their own strength.
  - Proverbs 18:24
    - You can be surrounded by people and still feel **spiritually disconnected**.
    - Jesus is the **true friend** who is always present when we abide in Him.
  - Illustration: compare a lone wolf to a thriving pack
    - Lone wolves struggle to survive, while a pack protects, hunts, and thrives together.
    - **Who do we abide with?** Are we isolating ourselves spiritually, or are we sticking close to Christ and Christian community?
- Abide in the vine
  - John 15:1-8: staying connected to Jesus produces fruit; without Him, we can do nothing
    - A branch cannot survive apart from the vine
    - To abide means to remain, stay, dwell, endure, persist, not leave
      - It’s not a one time decision – it’s a daily connection
      - Just as a branch depends on the vine for nutrients, stability, and life, we need to depend on Jesus for spiritual strength.
  - Illustration: A vine that gets cut off from its root will **shrivel up and die**.
    - Have you ever seen a dead, brittle branch? That’s what happens when we try to live life apart from Jesus.
- Application: how can we abide in Christ daily?
  - Stay connected through prayer
    - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17
      - Prayer is not just a task – it’s an ongoing conversation with Jesus
  - Stay nourished by God’s word

- Matthew 4:4
  - Reading the Bible isn't about checking off a box – it's about feeding your soul
    - Imagine eating food only once a week – you'd be starving!
  - Remain in Jesus through prayer, Scripture, and community
- Stay in Christian community
  - Hebrews 10:24-25
  - Christianity is not meant to be a solo journey
  - Surrounding yourself with godly friends and mentors helps keep you strong
  - Example: A single piece of charcoal will quickly go out, but a group of coals **burns hotter together**.
- Stay focused on obedience and bearing fruit
  - John 15:8
    - Abiding in Jesus **naturally leads to bearing fruit**—our lives start to look more like Him.
    - What does “fruit” look like?
      - Love, kindness, patience (Galatians 5:22-23).
      - Serving others with humility.
      - Sharing Jesus with friends.
- Wrap up
  - Some people view Christianity as a **list of rules**—a checklist of things to do to be a “good person.”
    - But Jesus invites us into a **relationship, not just religious activity**.
  - Abiding in Christ isn't about **working harder**—it's about **staying close**.
  - **Illustration:** Imagine a best friend who never talks to you or spends time with you. That relationship would fall apart.
  - **Don't be that guy** who think they can do life alone. Stay close to Jesus, and He will produce fruit in your life.
- **Gospel Proclamation:** We can't abide in Christ on our own. Sin separates us from God, but Jesus came to restore that connection. Through His death and resurrection, we can have a real, relationship with God. Jesus isn't just an option – He's the only source of life. We can follow Him and experience true life.

**Key question/application:** Are you staying connected to Jesus, or are you trying to do life on your own? What is one step you can take to abide in Christ more consistently this week?

#### **Community Group Questions:**

- What does abiding in Jesus look like in your life?
- How can you tell when you are staying connected to Jesus vs. trying to do life on your own?
- What distractions or habits pull you away from remaining close to Him?
- How can abiding in Jesus change your relationships with others?
- What is one **practical step** you can take this week to stay connected to Christ (prayer, reading Scripture, being in community, etc.)?