

Sermon-Based Discussion Guide

Date 7/12/26 Aaron Brown

Watch the sermon at manheimbic.org/sermon.



BIBLE PASSAGES

John 15:1-17 ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

⁹"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

Other Passages: Mark 8:36; John 14:10; James 1:2-4

Connect:

Get to know each other. Connect, warm up to each other, and take time to fellowship.

Care:

Carry each other's burdens. Share life's challenges and practice Soul Care. Pray together.

Challenge:

1. When you hear the question, "How is your soul?" instead of "How are ya?" - what's your honest, gut reaction? Is that a question you find easy to answer, why or why not?
2. Read John 5:1-5 together again as a group. Jesus says a branch "can do nothing" apart from Him. Now look at Jeremiah 17:5-8, which uses similar imagery of a tree planted by water bearing fruit in season. Both talk about being rooted and connected to God. How does the passage in Jeremiah add to our understanding of abiding?
3. John 15:9-10 connects the idea of "abiding" to "obedience." Talk about the relationship between these two important ideas. How do they relate? Does one come first?
4. Aaron said, "Abiding isn't a program. It's a posture." How does understanding abiding as our orientation and connection to Jesus practically change what we do? How can we embrace abiding and avoid the performance trap?
5. God prunes what isn't fruitful, and He often does so through trials, loss, or the removal of things from our lives. Is there something being pruned in your life right now? How might reframing it as pruning rather than punishment change the way you're carrying it — and how can this group support you in it?

Clarify:

Does anyone need clarity on something? Are there any big God questions you are wrestling with?

Celebrate:

Celebrate life's successes and God's provision. Worship God's presence. Time to brag about God.

KEY TAKEAWAYS