



## Want To Go Deeper? - Week 3

### Historical Context

John 15 is part of what is often referred to as the "Farewell Discourse" of Jesus, which spans John chapters 13 to 17. This discourse takes place during the Last Supper, just before Jesus' crucifixion. Here are some important historical and contextual points to consider:

1. **Setting:** The discourse occurs in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, a time when Jews commemorated their liberation from Egypt. This context of liberation and covenant is significant as Jesus speaks about a new covenant through His impending sacrifice.
2. **Audience:** Jesus is speaking to His disciples, those who have followed Him closely throughout His ministry. This intimate setting underscores the personal and relational nature of His teachings.
3. **Cultural Imagery:** Jesus uses the metaphor of the vine and branches, which would have been familiar to His Jewish audience. The vine is a common symbol in the Old Testament, often representing Israel (e.g., Psalm 80:8-16, Isaiah 5:1-7). By calling Himself the "true vine," Jesus is positioning Himself as the fulfillment of Israel's purpose and the source of spiritual life.
4. **Roman Occupation:** The Jewish people were living under Roman rule, which was often oppressive. The longing for a messianic deliverer was strong, and Jesus' teachings about abiding in Him and bearing fruit would have resonated as a call to spiritual resilience and faithfulness amidst external pressures.

5. **Impending Crucifixion:** Jesus is preparing His disciples for His departure. He emphasizes the importance of abiding in Him because He knows they will soon face trials and persecution. His words are meant to provide comfort and guidance for how they should live and continue His mission after His death and resurrection.
6. **Promise of the Holy Spirit:** In the broader context of the Farewell Discourse, Jesus promises the coming of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15). This promise is crucial for understanding how the disciples are to remain connected to Jesus and empowered for their mission.

Understanding these elements helps us grasp the depth of Jesus' message in John 15, emphasizing the necessity of remaining in Him for spiritual vitality and mission effectiveness.

## Word Study

**ekklesia:** Church, assembly, congregation

Original Word: **ἐκκλησία**

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: ekklesia

Pronunciation: ek-klay-see'-ah

Phonetic Spelling: (ek-klay-see'-ah)

KJV: assembly, church

NASB: church, churches, assembly, congregation

Word Origin: [from a compound of ἐκ - among and a derivative of καλέω - called]

1. (properly) a "calling out"
  2. (concretely) a called out assembly of citizens
  3. (specifically, of Christ) the community of the Redeemed of Christ whether being on earth or in heaven or both
- {used only of people, not a location, structure, etc. Of Christ, used only of the Redeemed, not of the unredeemed in their midst}

## Deeper Application

### Abide in Christ.

"Abiding in Christ" as a continuous, communal, and transformative practice. The sermon emphasizes that abiding is not just a personal spiritual discipline but a corporate one that empowers the church to be the Ekklesia—the called-out assembly of believers living on mission.

Here are some ways to apply this concept more deeply:

1. **Continuous Abiding:** Recognize that abiding in Christ is a daily, moment-by-moment commitment. It involves regular engagement with Scripture, prayer, and reliance on the Holy Spirit. This continuous connection is what sustains spiritual vitality and enables believers to bear fruit.
2. **Communal Abiding:** Understand that abiding is not meant to be done in isolation. The sermon highlights the power of community, encouraging believers to engage in authentic relationships

where they can practice vulnerability, accountability, and encouragement. Joining a small group or a community of believers can help facilitate this shared journey of faith.

3. **Transformative Abiding:** Allow the process of abiding to transform your mind and actions. As the sermon suggests, spending time in God's Word helps believers think like God thinks and see like God sees. This transformation leads to living out God's will and making a tangible difference in the world.
4. **Mission-Oriented Abiding:** Embrace the mission of making disciples as an integral part of abiding. The sermon challenges believers to take ownership of Jesus' command to go into the world and make disciples. This involves not only personal spiritual growth but also actively engaging in the mission of the church to connect others to Christ.
5. **Empowered Abiding:** Rely on the Holy Spirit for empowerment. The sermon reminds us that apart from Christ, we can do nothing. Abiding in Him means drawing strength and guidance from the Holy Spirit to live out our identity as children of God and to make a difference in the world.

By focusing on these aspects of abiding, believers can experience a deeper, more impactful relationship with Christ that extends beyond personal spirituality to influence the broader community and advance the Kingdom of God.

## Challenge

### Live as the Ekklesia, the Movement of God

Imagine a world transformed by the love and power of Christ, a world where the church is not just a building or a Sunday gathering, but a vibrant, living movement of people fully committed to Jesus. This is the vision of the Ekklesia—the called-out assembly of believers living on mission.

### Your Challenge:

1. **Abide Daily:** Commit to a daily practice of abiding in Christ. Spend intentional time in Scripture and prayer, allowing God's Word to shape your thoughts and actions. Let this be the source of your strength and the foundation of your life.
2. **Engage in Community:** Join a small group or a community of believers where you can practice vulnerability, accountability, and encouragement. True discipleship happens in relationships, where you can grow together and support one another in your faith journey.
3. **Embrace Your Identity:** Remember that you are a child of God, called to live out your identity in Christ. Let go of past labels and embrace the new creation you are in Him. Allow this identity to guide your decisions and interactions with others.
4. **Make a Difference:** Take ownership of the mission Jesus gave us—to go and make disciples. Look for opportunities to serve, love, and share the gospel with those around you. Be the hands and feet of Jesus in your community, making a tangible impact for His Kingdom.
5. **Stay Connected:** Just as a phone needs to stay connected to a charger, stay connected to the true Vine, Jesus. Without Him, we can do nothing. With Him, we can bear much fruit and shine as a light in the darkness.

The world is waiting for a move of God, and you are part of His plan. Together, as the Ekklesia, we can be the movement that brings hope, healing, and transformation to our world. Let's go make a difference—let's Go MAD (Make A Difference) for Christ.