



Sermon Discussion Guide

March 22nd, 2026 | John 15:1-12 | Pastor Hardy Reynolds

Series // The Gospel of John: Taste and See Who I Am

Summary

In John 15:1–12, Jesus teaches that He alone is the true source of a meaningful and fruitful life. Using the metaphor of a vine and branches, Jesus explains that He is the “true vine” and His followers are the branches who depend entirely on Him for life. This contrasts with the Old Testament image of Israel as a vineyard that failed to produce fruit like justice, righteousness, and love. Jesus teaches that a **fruitful life comes first through abiding in Him**. Abiding means recognizing our dependence on Jesus and remaining closely connected to Him, since we cannot produce true heart change on our own. While habits and discipline can change behavior, only Jesus can transform the heart. **Fruitfulness also comes through pruning**. God removes what hinders growth, sometimes through difficult circumstances, to produce more fruit in us. Branches that bear no fruit reveal they were never truly connected, while genuine believers experience pruning as a means of growth. Even when it feels painful or distant, God is near and lovingly shaping us. Finally, **fruit comes through love**. Jesus reveals that we are loved by the Father in the same way the Father loves Him, and He invites us to rest in that love. This love is secure and not based on our performance. Jesus was “cut off” so that we could remain in Him forever, making true transformation possible. A changed life flows not from self-improvement but from embracing this truth and loving others as Jesus has loved us. Ultimately, Jesus promises that abiding in Him leads to real joy, and that His followers bring Him joy as they live in His love and obedience.

Discussion Questions (Read John 15:1-12):

- **Icebreaker Question:** When have you worked hard toward something you thought would satisfy you, but it didn't? What did that feel like?

Through Abiding

- In the metaphor, who are the branches? What does that say about our role?
- What are some things that tend to pull you away from abiding in Him?
- In what areas of your life are you trying to produce change on your own instead of depending on Jesus?

Through Pruning

- What is the difference between a branch being pruned and a branch being cut off?
- How should we respond when we notice areas in our life where we struggle to love others?
- What might God be trying to grow in you through your current circumstances?

Through Love

- According to verse 12, what is the primary “fruit” of a life connected to Jesus?
- Why do we often struggle to believe that we are fully loved and accepted by God?
- Where do you tend to try to “earn” God’s love instead of resting in it?
- How would your relationships change if you truly believed you are deeply loved by God?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

- Jesus says that abiding in Him leads to joy (v.11). What do you think it looks like to experience that joy in real life?

Thank Jesus for being cut off in our place so that we could abide in his love, ask the Holy Spirit to help you move in love towards someone in your life this week.