



# *I am... the true vine*

As we journey through the "I am" series over the next few weeks and we discover more about Jesus, He extends an invitation to us to go deeper with Him. This pamphlet is designed to help you think more deeply and reflect, in different ways, on the sermon topics. It is filled with suggestions of things to read, watch and listen to and we hope it encourages you to go deeper during the week and connect with God in meaningful ways. Our prayer is that, as we behold Jesus over the coming weeks, our eyes would be opened and our hearts would be changed. May His love and wonder delight and encourage you.

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He 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." - John 15:1-2*



## **Suggestion 1: Spend some time reading John 15 and these other Scriptures about fruitfulness and being connected to God.**

- John 15
  - Psalm 80:8-19
  - Psalm 92:12-15
  - Isaiah 5:1-17
  - Matthew 5:14-16
  - Galatians 5
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- Jesus says that apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). In what ways have you been trying to do things apart from God?
  - How connected to Christ do you feel at the moment? Why?
  - What practical things can you do to ensure that you stay more connected to Jesus?
  - What are the things that have, in the past, helped you to connect with God in the most significant ways?
  - Why do you think it's so important to Jesus that we bear fruit, or live fruitful lives?
  - What do you think true fruitfulness looks like?

*“The branch of the vine does not worry, and toil, and rush here to seek for sunshine, and there to find rain. No; it rests in union and communion with the vine; and at the right time, and in the right way, is the right fruit found on it. Let us so abide in the Lord Jesus.” - Hudson Taylor*



## **Suggestion 2: Watch / listen to / read some further resources about abiding in Christ / fruitfulness**

- A sermon by Francis Chan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liXVo-GXfdg>
- An explanation of John 15 by Joseph Prince: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykK70mNBGfA>
- A short clip by Bruce Wilkenson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHPSoJzPLSs>
- A study by Bob Definbaugh: <https://bible.org/seriespage/33-abiding-christ-john-15>



## **Suggestion 3: Spend some time prayerfully assessing where you stand in terms of the fruit of the Spirit**

Galatians 5 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Spend some time thinking about how fruitful your life is in terms of these things and in terms of accomplishing God's will and purposes in the world. Do you feel like you are being fruitful?

How would you rate yourself on each of the attributes Galatians 5 mentions? Which one do you think you need to work on most right now?

LOVE

PATIENCE

FAITHFULNESS

JOY

KINDNESS

GENTLENESS

PEACE

GOODNESS

SELF-CONTROL



## Suggestion 4: Pray about cultivating greater fruitfulness in your life

Ask God to help you identify ways in which you are not remaining connected to Him and ways in which you are failing to bear fruit.

Ask Him to help you become more fruitful, through His loving (though sometimes painful) pruning, and by allowing His life and love to change your heart more fully. Below is an example of a prayer you can pray.

*Thank You, Father that I can come at any possible moment and humbly bow before Your throne of Grace, where I can obtain mercy. Thank You that Jesus is at Your right hand, interceding on my behalf. Lord, You are an all-powerful and all-knowing God and I trust You for my daily provision. I trust in Your promise, Father God, that my needs would be met. I will wait patiently oh Lord, and will not be anxious about what is in store for me; I place my complete confidence in You.*

*Father, You are a God of Increase and today, I ask for an increase in the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Give me the desire to accept the fruit Father and may I receive with humility.*



Amen

*"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." - John 15:8*