

Know God Deeply_Season 5_Episode 06_I Am the Vine

[00:00:00] **Adam:** Welcome to Know God Deeply with Precept, where we discuss how to dig deeper into the Bible and discover God's truth for ourselves. Because when we know God more deeply through His Word, we live differently. Let's dig deep.

You are listening to the Know God Deeply podcast. It's Adam here. Today I have with me Corina, David, and Christina. Hey, friends.

[00:00:34] **Corina:** Hey, hey. Hey, Adam.

[00:00:35] **Adam:** What's up? So, we are friends. We're gonna talk today about friends. We're gonna talk about fruit. So I thought, what better way to kick us off today than to ask my friends about fruit?

And so rather than just ask you what your favorite fruit is, 'cause that would probably be boring, we're gonna do a very quick fruit draft. And so- Whoa ... we're gonna start with [00:01:00] Christina. Here's our order for the first round. Christina, Corina, me, David, and then we'll do a second round where it'll reverse. So it'll be David, me, Corina, Christina.

So David will get two picks in a row. The idea is you can't say a fruit that, that any other person has said. You're trying to get the two best fruit in your draft. Does that make sense?

[00:01:21] **Corina:** This, this is... No, but I'll try my best.

[00:01:24] **Adam:** Okay. We'll, we'll, we'll go with- Is this related to

[00:01:25] **Corina:** sports? So

[00:01:26] **Adam:** wh- whatever- Drafting

yeah, it's kinda like a fantasy draft kinda thing. We're gonna do a- Yeah ... snake draft of best fruit. So once a fruit's off the board, you can't pick it.

[00:01:34] **Christina:** Oh. Oh, this is a lot of pressure. Okay.

[00:01:36] **Adam:** All right, Christina, your number one fruit.

[00:01:39] **Christina:** Mango.

[00:01:40] **Adam:** Mango. All right. Corina?

[00:01:42] **Christina:** Apples.

[00:01:44] **Adam:** Apples. All right. I'm gonna go with...

Ooh, there's so many good options on the board now. This is hard. Let's go with grapes.

[00:01:53] **Christina:** That was a good one.

[00:01:55] **David:** Banana.

[00:01:56] **Adam:** Banana. All right, David, gets two in a row. What's your next one? [00:02:00] Orange. Orange. Okay. I'm going peaches.

[00:02:04] **Christina:** That was a good one.

[00:02:06] **Adam:** And now it's, uh- Corina ... Corina's turn. Oh, sorry.

[00:02:08] **Christina:** Pineapple.

[00:02:09] **Adam:** Pineapple. Oh, does Christina

[00:02:10] **Christina:** go?

[00:02:11] **Adam:** Christina.

[00:02:12] **Christina:** Okay. Dragon fruit.

[00:02:14] **Adam:** And dragon fruit. Well, I think- Got

[00:02:16] **Christina:** my two favorites ...

[00:02:17] **Adam:** Christina wins for the most unique fruits there with mango and dragon fruit. True. Asian, aren't they? Very, very nice. Listeners will have

to let us know w- who they think won the fruit draft. David's the very traditional, bananas, oranges.

I don't know if that says something about him. Grapes, peaches, those are kinda traditional as well. Carina, what was your first one again? Apples? Apples. Apples and pineapple. That's your, yeah. All

[00:02:43] **Christina:** right, boring everyone. Consistency.

[00:02:46] **Adam:** It's like, if you just think of a fruit. All right, well, we are gonna be talking about some spiritual fruit today, how we produce it what our source is when we're talking about spiritual fruit.

So we're gonna be in [00:03:00] John chapter 15. Christina's gonna read for us today verses one through 17. So Christina, take it away.

[00:03:08] **Christina:** I'd love to. All right, here's John 15. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.

For apart from me, you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers. And the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me and my [00:04:00] words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friend. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I ca- but I

have called you friends. For all that I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you.

You did not choose me, but [00:05:00] I chose you, and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give to you. He may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another." All

[00:05:16] **Adam:** right, so a great way to try and understand any biblical text is to summarize it.

So how would you summarize Jesus' words in this passage?

[00:05:27] **David:** Stick with Jesus. I mean, it's, it's all about the imagery is a vine on a branch and the branches are worthless if they're not connected to the vine. But when they're connected to the vine, great things happen. So stick with Jesus. Stick on Jesus.

Mm. Stick to Jesus.

[00:05:44] **Christina:** Yeah. It's clear that abide is, is a key word in this passage here. And so yeah, abide in Jesus. Apart from Jesus, we will not produce lasting fruit. That's my summary.

[00:05:54] **Corina:** I like it. I won't perfect what's already perfect.

[00:05:57] **Adam:** Are

[00:05:58] **David:** you talking about mine or hers? Which?

[00:05:59] **Adam:** [00:06:00] Oh, I'll never tell. Probably Nick's.

Oh, I like it. Ooh. Thanks to

[00:06:09] **Corina:** Adam.

[00:06:10] **Adam:** It's even better now. Oh,

[00:06:15] **Corina:** okay.

[00:06:15] **Adam:** Yeah.

[00:06:17] **Corina:** Very good. All

[00:06:19] **Adam:** right. So in the, the Precept Bible study method, we like to answer what we call the five W's and H questions of observation, and so one of those W's is why, and sometimes it's the hardest one to answer. So why did Jesus say that he spoke these things?

And this one is not too hard to answer. It's pretty straightforward.

[00:06:40] **Corina:** Oh, verse 11, he says that, so that is often a clue that you're seeing a why in a passage. He says, "That my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full." Yeah, so it's interesting that it's Jesus' joy. I was trying to think through what does that mean that Jesus's joy is in us?

[00:07:00] And the best I could come up with, and I, I did not get to commentary work on this, so you guys can correct me. The best I could come up with is if it's Jesus' joy, then I should think about what makes Jesus happy. And if you just drop up to the or, or go up to the, the passage, the verse before it, it says, "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I've kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love."

And there isn't a reference to joy there, but it seems like Jesus enjoys doing the Father's will. Jesus loves to do what the Father is doing and to be with the Father and abiding in His love. And so maybe, maybe His joy is related to obedience. Maybe His joy is related to loving others, as we'll see in the next verse.

Those were just kind of some of my thoughts as I was thinking through it.

[00:07:46] **David:** Sure. And it, I mean, can't, it can't be better, right? It can't be a better joy than the joy of the second person of the Trinity. So yeah. It's not like your joy. Hope you have joy. I hope you get some, find some joy in this. In other words, like, I want my [00:08:00] joy to be in you, and I want it to be full
Mm-hmm

uh, maxed out.

[00:08:04] **Adam:** Yeah. The generosity of Jesus is just really on display there. And, and it reminds me quite a bit of when we studied 1 John, and his reason for writing that he mentions in chapter one of 1 John is that, is sharing that joy with one another, his joy in the Lord, the... And we can share that in community together.

So s- there's that sense of togetherness, community, a sh- a generosity of joy.

[00:08:32] **Christina:** Yeah. Yeah. Well, there's also that why in verse 17, right? "These things I command you so that you will love one another."

That's good, Adam.

[00:08:39] **Adam:** So yeah, there's a purpose behind the joy, yeah, as well. So let's talk about how we've experienced the fullness of Jesus's joy.

What can you share about that? When you have been abiding in him, how have you experienced the joy of Jesus?

[00:08:55] **Corina:** Hmm. I was thinking about this, and before I had my [00:09:00] son a lot of people said on social media and said to me personally, "You know, when you get about six months out, you'll feel more like your, yourself."

And when I had him, you know, those hormones are just incredible. You know, shout out to God. The brain. But you're kinda like, "Yeah, I feel great. They, they literally ripped me in half, and you know, this child is eating all the time, but I feel awesome." And so maybe two months in, I started to say like, "You know, I don't know what those people were talking about.

Maybe I'm just an exception. I feel fine. I feel good." And then, like, four months out, I was like, "I feel, yeah, I feel good, better, better than two months ago." Eight months in is when I said, "Oh, yeah, I was not doing so well at all." Thank God for the contentment and the joy He provided, but I was not doing so well.

And so now that my son is almost two years old, I think about, like, I, I actually feel more myself now in this present season than I have in years and years, and feel more joy than I have in years and years. And I [00:10:00] think it's very tied to you have a child, and you learn very quickly, like, this is all about them now.

A lot of my life was all about me before, but now this is all about him. Yeah. And so that loving, that selfless service, and that love that I have to show my son day in and day out, that I get to show him, has really opened up joy for me and provided just such a different dimension of joy even than I, I think I had experienced before, and it was found in loving service.

And so I think there is a, a, a lot to what Jesus is saying here that, "My joy is gonna be in you when you're keeping my commands. What is my command?" Verse 17, "That you love one another." It's, it's a recipe that is, that is, you know, makes, makes good cookies every time. It, it, it doesn't fail. Like, if you do this, you will have my joy, and I think I've seen it most recently, yeah, with, with just becoming a mother and taking care of my son.

[00:10:53] **Christina:** Well, I'm praying for Corina's postpartum experience next time. Mine was a mess. [00:11:00] That's so good, Corina. Yeah, I-- you mentioned contentment. That is the word that comes to mind. I th- it is so... I don't know. We have been saying that Jesus is so clear in these I Am passages, and He, and He is so clear here. "If you want joy, it is found in abiding in me."

It, it's right there. But that is just never the place. That's just not the first place I go to look for joy. Yeah, I've worked w- in high school ministry for the past 10-plus years. I love my teenagers, and, and we all struggle with this, but they are open and honest about it, where they are looking for, for joy and happiness in the world.

And, and yeah, there are so many places where we reach for it, and it's interesting 'cause we'll-- maybe we'll get a glimpse of it, or we'll find it for a second, or, or we get the, the counterfeit thing, the fake thing, but it doesn't last. And, and Jesus is so clear here that, "Only in abiding in me, that is where deep joy is found.

I know [00:12:00] you want this. I know you need this. I have this for you." And so yeah, I think in the seasons where I Get that, it's not super often, to be honest. But in the seasons where I get that, where I know that Jesus is where it's found, it, it's contentment. It's, it, it doesn't matter what my circumstance is, it doesn't matter who is doing what around me.

I'm not comparing myself. There is just a peace and a groundedness and a contentment, and, and Jesus is offering that to us every day, I think. I am just not grabbing it nearly enough.

[00:12:32] **David:** Yeah, I love that. That's great. Contentment is a, is a, is a such a gift.

Right? It's not something we build or design or develop.

It really is something that He offers us. I think for me, the the fun times of joy is gonna be unexpected joy. So there's you know, whether it be in a, in a tough

circumstance, and then I'm just like, "Why do I have joy? This doesn't make any sense." Or it could be something as simple as [00:13:00] seeing a sunrise you know, or hearing a lyric out of a song, and it just hits me and overwhelms me and stops me in my tracks and reminds me of the joy that I have.

So yeah, I think that's, it's that connection to Him makes all the difference. It's one thing to know about Jesus and, and to know, and to be able to teach and write and talk about Him. It's a whole nother thing to know Him and to know that I'm connected to Him. And that's, yeah, that's a good joy.

I love it.

[00:13:31] **Adam:** Yeah. That's a similar experience for me, David. It's, it's almost like a surprise sometimes, and it reminds me of C.S. Lewis wrote a book- ... Surprised by Joy. By the joy. Yeah. Yeah. Talking about his early life and- ... and that seems to be the case for me. It's like this halting experience.

It's like, oh, wait a minute. I, I am seeing now with clarity just how good You are, and seeing that in my life and in the lives of those around me. And, and one thing that C.S. [00:14:00] Lewis says in, in that book, Surprised by Joy, is when he's talking about the pleasures of this life, that they're, it seems like they're all substitutes for what true joy- Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah ... really is. And like Christina was saying, people are searching for ways to be happy, ways to, to have that experience that can, in this world, seem so fleeting of like, oh- ... this is what true joy is. And here, here is Jesus saying, "That's what I want to share with you."

[00:14:26] **Corina:** Yeah, I think, Christina, I do appreciate, I appreciate what both you and David have drawn out which is just honest, and it's vulnerable, and it's true to life that first joy is elusive a lot of the times, right?

It feels like we are trying to grab it and can't- Can't quite get our hands around it, and it shocks us a lot of the time, surprise us, surprises us as David and Adam said. And yeah, I wonder whether there's not something to the fact that it's Jesus' joy that's in us [00:15:00] and that our joy may be full. You think about and, and go with me here.

Jonathan Edwards has a famous quote where he basically says, you know, "God didn't need us. It's not why He created us. It's not any fault with a f- with a fountain. There's no deficiency in a fountain if it overflows, if it spills onto other people." And so there was no need in God that caused Him to create.

It was rather an overflowing of His goodness and His just boundless grace. And I think for if we have Jesus' joy in us, Jesus and God are boundless. They, they have this deep, deep, deep, deep well. There is no bottom to the love of God- Yeah ... and the grace of God and the joy of God. And so I wonder whether some of this elusiveness, some of this like, man, I'm surprised by that showing up right now, isn't due to the fact that it's, it's a partaking in something divine, something very beyond us.

And so there's kind of hope in that too. Like, yeah, maybe we don't experience it all the time. Maybe sometimes it surprises us, and it's not [00:16:00] really, I would've rather had joy when I was having a good day, not, you know, when this terrible news hit me. But maybe it just says something about how otherworldly it is, how divine it is, how supernatural it is that it, it is Jesus' joy.

And it's, it's bottomless. It's, so if we feel it's not full, there's still more to draw from. There's, there's more there. We haven't reached the bottom of it and, and uh-oh, it's, it's run out. And so, I don't know, it's an encouragement and a hope to me that i- if I'm not experiencing full joy all the time, there's, there's more of that to be found.

Like you said, Christina, God is offering it to us. It's, it's as deep as He is. So I can just keep returning to Him and to relationship with Him to, to seek that joy, and I think He's pleased by that. And so I, yeah, I just appreciate you guys' honesty in drawing that out, that joy is, joy is finicky and, and it can feel very, yeah, hard to grasp.

[00:16:55] **Adam:** Yeah, I love that imagery of the fountain, that there's no, there's no [00:17:00] regulator, no governor on it. It is overflowing and and everlasting, so, exciting that we have access to that. So let's, let's talk a little bit about fruit now. What do you think the term bearing fruit implies in this passage?

[00:17:18] **Corina:** This was a, a tough one to think about because it's kind of a given when you've grown up in church.

You've, you've heard this so much that you're like, "Bear fruit. Of course I know what that means." But I like how you added that there, Adam, in this passage. When I was looking at it and I marked fruit in verse 16 twice, I marked it in verse eight, It's a couple times in verses one through six. I, I see fruit being connected to loving others.

That, that's where I see the most clear definition of what the fruit is, right? We see that the f- the fruit is a natural byproduct of abiding in, in the b- vine. It's part of being a branch, that you will bear fruit, right? So, it, [00:18:00] it essentially, we talked about fruit at the beginning, and I'll bring up apples again, as boring as they are.

But apple trees, I'm told, bear apples, right? Oh, yeah. You know it's an apple tree. You

[00:18:12] **Adam:** know- Drop, dropping some nuggets of wisdom on us here. Wow. Listen, I'm

[00:18:16] **Corina:** on fire today. You're welcome, everyone. But apple trees, you know it's an apple tree because of the fruit that it bears. And so I think when Jesus says, "If you abide in me as a branch, you're gonna bear fruit," it means you're going to show people what kind of tree this is.

You're gonna show everybody what I'm like. You're going to reflect my glory to the world. And the next place He goes when He brings up fruit in verse 16 is verse 17 rather, is loving one another. I'm commanding you to bear fruit. I'm commanding you that your fruit would abide, would last, would not spoil.

And, and this is how you're gonna do it. You love one another. And so- Mm. Yeah, you think about what shows who, who God is and what, what Jesus is like. Love, right? God is love in [00:19:00] 1 John, and Jesus laying down his life for the sheep is out of love. Greater love has no one than this. He lays his life down.

And so yeah, you wanna know whether it's an apple tree, you know, check whether you're bearing apples. And so I think if we're loving, we are, we are showing that we're part of, we're part of this relationship between Jesus and the Father.

[00:19:20] **David:** It, yeah, I mean, verse eight, it, that's what proves you're a disciple.

You know, is, is the fruit. So the fruit is to, to go with a rhyming the fruit shows you where at the root, right? It, it, this, it is, an apple tree does that. And then I think about Jesus back in Matthew 7 talking about this is how you'll know them by their fruits, false teachers, good teachers.

Or in Galatians, Paul will talk about the fruit of the spirit, and then comes that great, you know, wonderful list in Galatians 5. But the fruit is basically an indicator that you're, of your connection how do I know I'm connected to Jesus? It's not because I say I am. It's not because I feel I am.

It's because of what [00:20:00] happens because I'm connected to him. So you think about just the agriculture, a branch can't produce its own fruit, right? It can't make fruit on its... It's only a device, a channel from the actual source itself, the vine, to bring the vine's fruit to bear. So it's, you know... But I love that you, that you picked up on love because I think you're right.

That's the only indicator here in this text in John 15. But I think, you know, in a broader sense, fruit is gonna tell you is gonna show who you're connected to. Yeah. Yeah, so that's good.

[00:20:32] **Adam:** I love that. And it it's funny 'cause you doing the, like, grunting the, of the branch trying to produce the fruit is actual- the same imagery that I had in my mind as I was studying this.

I'm like, yeah, there is energy required there. There are things that fuel this producing of fruit, but it's not our own just determination. It's if we are attached, if the branch is attached to the vine, that's where the nutrients and the energy come from to produce. [00:21:00]

[00:21:00] **David:** Yeah. I mean, the instruction is abide.

It's not bear fruit. Right. Bear fruit is a consequence of abiding.

[00:21:05] **Adam:** Mm. Yeah. Right? Yeah. That's good.

[00:21:08] **Corina:** We should say that again. That was good. Yeah. I agree with that. So I mean, obviously I agree, but I just think that's such a good point to draw out is that it's a byproduct. It's a natural flow. And it's so interesting in Galatians 5 that the contrast Paul makes between the fruit of the spirit is with the works of the flesh.

And so there is even there, this almost implication that it's not, it's not about you being determined, like you said, Adam. It's about you being connected.

[00:21:35] **Christina:** And what an encouragement, 'cause how often do we pray, like, "God, make me more patient. God, make me more loving. God, you know, do all these things for me" And He's like, "I told you," you know?

"Come to me. Abide." And-

...

[00:21:46] **Christina:** Yeah, it is the most constant reminder that I need in my life, which is why it's on my board right there for anyone watching. Oh. Been there all along. Yes. Yeah.

[00:21:55] **David:** Yeah. Very good. Yeah. And don't you love how He says, it, it it, [00:22:00] several times He talks about bearing more fruit. So I'm looking at the end of verse 2.

I'm looking at verse 5. You know, it's not just a fruit, just a, oh, you're an apple. It's like a bunch of apples. Like-

...

[00:22:13] **David:** When we're connected to Him, we should expect a lot of Him to come through us to others.

Yeah. So, you know, think about my role my role as an ambassador of Christ, right?

My role as an ambassador means I am to represent- my master. I'm represent Jesus to the world. Or to think of our role as image bearers. Go all the way back to, to Genesis. We, we are to reflect the creator, right? We are to reflect that to the world. ... You know? Or you know, to pick up in Paul's language in Peter, we are a royal priesthood, a representative, you know?

And I think all that's because we're connected to the vine, and that, that God flows through that. But that doesn't mean it's just some kind of woo woo, all I gotta say is I'm [00:23:00] connected. No, we've got to live, dwell. Menó in the, in the Greek here has this idea of perseverance as well. It's an endurance.

It's a, it's an ongoing connection. It's not a tap in on Sunday mornings from, you know, 9:30 to 10:30. It is a 24/7 every day I gotta go back to the vine. I gotta, you know, latch on. And that comes through word, and it comes through prayer, it comes through meditation, right? And it comes through yielding.

All kinds of aspects would, would be that practical way of abiding, I think.

[00:23:32] **Christina:** Yeah. Which makes sense, right? Like, we start to look and act and speak like the people who we spend the most time with, where we fix our gaze the most. Like, think about all the mannerisms that I've picked up from my husband or, you know, the, the different jokes that I'll say just from spending so much time with him, and that, that's true of Jesus, too.

Yeah, I also just wanna call out verse 2 for a second. Maybe we can talk about it for a second. But also that when we bear fruit, sometimes there are seasons of [00:24:00] pruning so we can bear more fruit. That reminds me of, you know, Peter's language of going through the fire so that our, our faith can be proven genuine.

And, and so, just a reminder, I think, for, for myself that just because there's a season of pruning does not mean that we're not abiding, does not mean that fruit isn't being produced. But God is working on us to produce- Uh-huh ... even more fruit.

[00:24:22] **David:** Uh-huh.

[00:24:23] **Corina:** Yeah. It reminds me of Hebrews as well. It, it seems for the moment to be sorrowful when you- Yeah

experience God's discipline. Yeah. Uh-huh. But it's actually God's love to discipline us to make us look more like His Son and lean more into Him, and it produces the fruit of righteousness, I think he says there.

[00:24:43] **Adam:** And so yeah, I like that we've kinda hit this from multiple angles of, of what it means to bear fruit, and we've talked a little about how bearing fruit is to the benefit of others.

... And I'm [00:25:00] reminded of my dad recently moved, and the property he purchased has 100 blueberry bushes on

[00:25:07] **David:** it. Ooh.

[00:25:07] **Adam:** And they, it's winter time so they've not produced anything. There's not even a single leaf on them right now, I don't believe. But anyway he already, as he was moving in, a neighbor had already stopped by and letting him know that the previous owner of your property supplied me with blueberries."

And, you know, she, she wasn't directly asking, but kind of hinting like, "I would love to have blueberries when they're in season." And I think we need to

be aware of the needs around us in that same way that- ... as we produce fruit, there are needs- Mm ... for that fruit. And so that can help us to be diligent in abiding in Him so that we are producing the fruit, the benefits, th- our community.

[00:25:49] **David:** Yeah.

[00:25:49] **Corina:** The fruit, fruit is not for you.

[00:25:51] **Adam:** Mm. You know,

[00:25:51] **Corina:** the branch is not eating the fruit ever, right? Good point. It's for other people. Yeah. Yeah. And so even in verse 8 it says, [00:26:00] "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples." So I love that. I mean, just the, the depth here and the, the clarity as we've been saying, lest we think that the Father is glorified just by us bearing fruit, that's still not, that's still not the whole picture.

It's, "That you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples." And you look at, again, at Galatians 5, and right before Paul gets into the works of the flesh versus the fruit of the Spirit, he says, "I want you to stop. Don't bite and devour one another." Uh-huh. Right? "Don't compete with each other, but through love, serve one another."

[00:26:36] **Adam:** Uh-huh.

[00:26:37] **Corina:** And then he gets into the fruit and says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love." Yeah. It's, it's alm- I mean, he's following the same thread of Jesus going, "Hey, this is what it looks like to bear fruit and be a follower of Jesus."

[00:26:47] **Adam:** Yeah.

[00:26:47] **Corina:** You've gotta love. Right. And that glorifies the Father because people see that Jesus loved us- and loves them and that blesses them

[00:26:55] **Adam:** All right, so on this theme of blessing others, of being [00:27:00] in community John 15 teaches us that following Jesus is deeply relational. It's not just religious. So what is one thing that you can do this week to shift your focus from doing things for God to being with God?

[00:27:16] **David:** Yeah, just those are subtle differences, but they are huge, hugely different. At any time in my life where I say, "I've got to do something for God so that my standing with him increases or so that I feel better about myself," it's if the so that has anything other than to glorify and honor him, I know I'm in trouble.

And so yeah, so I think that a, a real practical way this week could be to think and pray before acting. And so I'm, in my role, I make decisions every day, lots of, lots of decisions that affect a lot of people and a lot of things, and I need to, this week, I need to stop and [00:28:00] go to the vine and get what I need.

So because he made it very clear in verse five, "Apart from me, you can do nothing." And just like an old dried up, you know, branch it's, it's only good for fire. All right? It's only good to be, to be burned. And I read the reason why they burn them is because bugs would move in to these dead branches, and then of course the- they're living in the condominium of the dead branch, and they're moving in every day to eat the living part of the vine.

[00:28:29] **Christina:** Hmm.

[00:28:29] **David:** You know, so you gotta lop those off and burn them. And so I think that's such a drastic statement to think about, of if I'm trying to make decisions on my own, if I'm trying to bring about God's kingdom on my own effort, I'm no good, no good. I'm like a, like, I'm like a bug-infested, old crusty branch-

that needs to be getting rid of. But if I'm connected, I should expect much fruit.

[00:29:00] Much fruit. Not a little fruit. I should expect. And so I think a real tangible thing for me this week is, and I'm making big decisions always seems like, but making big decisions, I need to go m- make sure I'm connected to the vine- Mm-hmm

uh, before I run ahead and disconnect

You know? Yeah. Yeah, that'd be- ... a practical one for me.

[00:29:19] **Christina:** That's such a helpful reminder, David. As I'm thinking about what you're saying, I think even for me, you know, you're, you're taking it before your decisions pray. I'm looking at even when I pray sometimes, like I feel like I'm trying to be productive-

[00:29:33] **Adam:** Mm.

Hmm ...

[00:29:33] **Christina:** when I feel I'm speaking to God. Like, I am trying to... Adam, I think you said this to me recently, so I might be stealing something that you're

[00:29:40] **Adam:** saying back.

[00:29:41] **Christina:** Oh, no, you're good. Yeah. I am trying to talk to God about all the decisions I'm trying to make. I'm trying to make sure I tick all those boxes.

I'm trying to think, who did I promise to pray for this week? Let me make sure I'm praying for them. I'm thinking about all those things. And so a practice that has been really important to me recently has [00:30:00] been before I say a word to God, I just wanna sit and gaze at the Father, and I wanna let the Father gaze at me, and, and I want to remember that I'm loved, and I wanna- Mm

remember how much I love God and to just let that exchange happen and just rest in Him, abide in Him, dwell with Him, just like He's asking us to do before, before we even say a word. And sometimes that's all the time I get before one of my kids wakes up and, and I've learned that that's enough.

[00:30:30] **David:** I mean, Jesus models that for us in His prayer. He, He doesn't start with, "Your kingdom come, your will be done." You know, like, "Give us bread." He, He starts off with, "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name."

You know? And and just let it sit.

[00:30:45] **Corina:** Yeah.

[00:30:46] **David:** And then, and wait, and then jump into your work, you know, your requests.

But He talks about asking here, right? In verse 7 and in verse 16. If we're abiding, He says, "Ask and I'll [00:31:00] give it to you." I mean, I love that. It's just... But that abiding is that connection. That, that let the Father gaze upon me, let me gaze upon the Father. That connection is where the power comes to ask.

[00:31:12] **Christina:** Yeah.

[00:31:12] **David:** Yeah. That's good. Hmm. I like that.

[00:31:14] **Adam:** Yeah. F- when we're talking about what do we do beforehand, so, you know, the question is shifting our focus to doing, from doing things f- for God to being with God. So before I ever do the thing, what, how am I preparing my mind? And so I have, I've set a reminder on my phone for, for early in the morning to pray and specifically to pray like Paul prayed for the Ephesians- Hmm

to be filled with all the fullness of God.

I... That even blows my mind to try to comprehend what that even means. I think part of it is what we've talked about here today. It's having the joy of Jesus, being filled with that. But if, if I can have that mindse before I attempt [00:32:00] anything for him, then I'm, I'm on the right track.

Mm. Mm. I'm, I'm abiding in him and saying, "You are my source of power, of energy, of joy, of hope," all of those things, and that's gonna fuel anything that I do going forward, so.

[00:32:17] **Corina:** Yeah, I think, I mean, so much of what you're saying is related to what Christina was saying. I, I read somewhere or heard somewhere, that filled to all the fullness of God is like a thimble in an ocean.

You're, you're full. There's a lot more. Like we said, it's overflowing, it's bottomless, but- ... it's possible. And, and I think about what you were saying, Christina, that and now I forgot what you were saying, Christina. It was so good that I forgot it promptly.

[00:32:46] **Christina:** It was good. Gazing

[00:32:47] **Corina:** at God- Oh, being loved.

Yeah, that passage is so... I, I've, I've wrestled with that passage back and forth. I can't decide which interpretation I like, but he says that you ma- being rooted and grounded in love may [00:33:00] comprehend what is the love of Christ, its height and its depth and its length and its breadth. A- are you rooted and grounded in the love of God for you?

Are you rooted and grounded in, in your love for others that helps you de- more deeply understand God's love? I don't know, but I mean, I think we're back to love again- Mm ... even when we're looking at how do I abide in Christ. I think you, you hit the nail on the head, Christina and Adam, of it's, it's knowing that we are loved and sitting in that love.

For me, I grew up on, and, and I don't know that it was what was, you know, shoved at me as much as just what I latched onto because of my makeup and what's important to me, but I latched onto that quote, it might be Hudson Taylor or one of those great missionaries, but "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God."

You know, I was, I just ate all of that up as a young person and continue to. I think the order's so important. Expect great things from God, right? We're asking, we're receiving. And then attempt great things for God. But I get those backwards all- ... of the time. [00:34:00] And I, I think that there is just so much to be said for G- God does expect you to bear much fruit, like you're saying, David.

You know, Matthew those, the parable of the soils. You, you might bear 30-fold- Uh-huh ... you might bear 100-fold- Uh-huh ... 60-fold, but you're gonna bear fruit. But it's not the point of everything. The point is to be with him. It's, it is a natural byproduct, but the point is to be, to be with God. So yeah, I, I agree

[00:34:26] **David:** If you think about it just logically, you can't separate those two loves.

So they're... Describe to me a deep-rooted love in God that has no love for others.

[00:34:36] **Corina:** Yeah. That's right.

[00:34:37] **David:** It doesn't exist. And describe for me a deep-rooted love for others that has no connection to God.

You know, and I'm talking about a, a, a, a divine love, not just to being nice to people. But I think, I think those two things go together, just like the branch goes onto the vine f- so that the fruit, the fruit is connected to the vine through the branch.

And so if we're connected to the vine, there's gonna [00:35:00] be fruit. If we have fruit, we're connected to the vine. Those, they can't be separated. And so, yeah, I think that's good.

[00:35:06] **Adam:** Yeah. Thank, thank you all for bringing the conversation back to love and abiding, 'cause I realize even in real time in my answers here in this conversation that I still can s- so tend to being formulaic of like, let me here, here's the goal, here's the plan to reach that goal.

But if we're abiding in his love those things are gonna naturally start to, to come out. So it's, it's less about the formula. Obviously we're gonna talk about practical things here of how, how to grow, but that foundation of abiding is where we need to start.

All right, so let's let's do some so what's.

It's it's time to share a personal takeaway from what you studied in this passage. And John who would like to kick us off?

[00:35:51] **Corina:** I can go. All I wrote down was fruit that won't spoil, and so now I'm looking at it like, what, what, what does that mean? But I think [00:36:00] ta- talk... This conversation has just been so, so wonderful and so focusing and centering.

I think about Jesus telling some disciples, well, hypothetically telling some disciples, you know, "You're gonna come to me and you're gonna say, 'Hey, we cast out demons in your name. We did this, we did that.' And I'm gonna say, 'I didn't know you.'"

[00:36:19] **David:** Mm.

[00:36:19] **Corina:** And so that discussion tells me that it's possible to do works for God that are not born out of a relationship- Mm.

Mm ... with God.

And I need to be less concerned about whether bearing apples or oranges, and more concerned about whether I'm abiding in the vine. And so I think of John Milton, who wrote Paradise Lost. He's got this beautiful poem that I've just come back to again and again over the past couple of years, where he essentially is asking God, he's 40-something years old, and he's lost his sight.

And he writes. That's what he does. That's how he glorifies God. And he's asking God, "How could you take my sight? How am I supposed to [00:37:00] do the work that you've called me to do?" And by the end, he's, he says, "You know what? There are some who, who stand in the, in the throne room. They, they also serve who stand and wait."

They're, they're... Those angels aren't getting sent out to go do things. They're just standing and waiting and worshipping God. And so for me, my so what is the fruit might look like picking up crumbs from the couch again. Mm. ... It might look very different from what I, in my heart of hearts and in my flesh, often hope it looks like.

I hope it looks like people can see it, and there's no doubt about it. Great things for God have been attempted here. It, it might not look like that, and that i- that is fine, right? As long as I'm abiding in him, and that fruit that's being produced is, is coming from him, then- ... glorifies him, and that's all, all I could want in the end, so.

[00:37:50] **Christina:** What a beautiful and helpful reminder that it doesn't have to be this huge thing. It can be beautiful and simple. I think of there's this beautiful book called Domestic [00:38:00] Monastery that I read when I became a mom, and, and there's a, just like an ancient monastic that went and lived in the desert for 30 years and, and just praying to God, spending time with God, spending time with God.

And he said when he came home after those 30 years and he talked to his mom, he was like, "Wait, this woman is full of more peace than I am- ... because she's raising 10 kids here." And, and it was just this beautiful reminder of like, okay, whatever God is calling me to today, I can abide in him- and I can bear fruit here. Very nice. Yeah.

[00:38:31] **David:** Yeah, the fruit is his choice. Yeah.

[00:38:33] **Christina:** Yeah. That's right. That's right. I think my so what, at the risk of sounding simple here, is man, in Jesus is everything we need. And I see that here in this passage. It, the joy that we are so looking for is in Jesus.

I see that in all of the I am statements that we have been studying, the, the satisfaction, Jesus is our bread of life, the, the rest we need, Jesus is our good shepherd. Just- ... just all of it. [00:39:00] Everything I think that we are so desperately searching for and desiring- Is truly found in Jesus.

[00:39:06] **David:** Yeah.

[00:39:07] **Adam:** Yeah. What stood out to me was the, And we talk about it a lot, but right toward the end of our passage Jesus talks about friendship, that we are his friends, and that he no longer- Yeah. Yeah ... is calling us servants but friends because we know what he's doing. He's revealed himself and the Father to us.

And I was thinking about, okay, so how do I approach a, a friend? What, what are my activities that I do? And so I invite them into my life. I share with them, and they share with me. And when I think of doing that with Jesus, I think, man, I don't... Nothing's good enough. It's like- ... my... If I, if I'm gonna invite you over to my house, my house is too small.

My, my, my heart is too small. You deserve better than, than what I can offer.
[00:40:00] There, you know, there's nothing that, that I possess or no trait that I have that's good enough, and yet there he is-

...

[00:40:08] **Adam:** Miraculously offering everything.

Love, guidance-

...

[00:40:14] **Adam:** Infinite joy, and, and I'm left to think, "Why?"

Wh-" There's that why question that sometimes it's hard to answer. I'm like, "Why?" And, but it's in his very nature that, that, you know, his goodness is radiating, and he wants to share that with me.

And so, yeah. My, my so what is let me approach this friend of mine and, and say, "Will you, will you teach me?"

To, to ask, to abide, to delight- Yeah ... and I know that my joy will be full in you in doing those things.

[00:40:54] **David:** Mm. That's, that's beautiful. Love it. And I think about this, this being the last I [00:41:00] am statement, this being almost to the end of his

teaching. With... He's actually quit teaching the crowds. Now he's down to his disciples, and this last reminder of, "Listen, this is...

As we move forward, I'm leaving," he tells them. "I'm leaving. But as we move forward, I want you to remember I'm there."

[00:41:21] **Christina:** Mm. "

[00:41:22] **David:** And you can connect to me. And this is how I want our... This is how I want the kingdom to be built. This is how I want the Great Commission to be, you know, filled out, is I want you to connect."

So my take it away is the victorious Christian life is a dependent life. It is not standing on my own two feet with my hands on my hips, ready to take on the world. It is leaning dependently upon Jesus every day, every decision, and that's where- Fruit will come that will glorify the Father. [00:42:00] So the dependent life is the victorious life.

That's my, my walk, my walk away. My w- not takeaway, my walk away.

[00:42:06] **Adam:** Walk away. Walking in it. Walk in that truth, David. That's right. That's right. And we will do so as well. Listeners you can walk in that truth that abiding in the vine can result in joy and practical fruit to the benefit of others. So stay attached, keep holding on, and as He is holding on to you.

And stick with us. We will be right back with Take It or Leave It.

[00:42:36] **David:** Have you been enjoying our series on the I Am statements of Jesus and

[00:42:39] **Adam:** want to go deeper? The Christian life comes down to one thing: knowing Jesus more deeply every day. We all want that, to seek Him, to know Him, to love Him. But how do you actually grow in that?

In our two-week I Am study, you'll walk through Jesus' own words in the Gospel of John and discover [00:43:00] who He says He is and what that means for you. See Him more clearly. Draw closer to

[00:43:05] **David:** Him. Find rest in His love. Get your copy of the I Am study today at shop.precept.org.

[00:43:14] **Adam:** Okay, we are back. It's time for Take It or Leave It.

Okay, I've got one for you, and I may just be the, the weird person here, but my take it or leave it is reading outside. So reading outdoors, take it or leave it.

[00:43:30] **David:** Man, I'm in. I lo- I... When it, the weather's good, I work from home mostly, and when the weather's good, I'm out on my back patio and with my- 'cause I got wireless out there, and I, yeah, I love reading outside.

I think that's... You have to, I have, even have sunglasses. I have to wear gl-readers, so I have sunglasses with readers in the bottom of them. That's how much I love to read outside. So I'm, I'm in. Adam, I take it. So you're

[00:43:53] **Adam:** equipped. You're ready to go.

[00:43:54] **Corina:** Wow. All

[00:43:54] **Adam:** right.

[00:43:55] **Corina:** Was that one just for David so that he would take one?

I think

[00:43:57] **David:** so,

[00:43:58] **Adam:** yeah. I [00:44:00] think so. Eh, maybe.

[00:44:00] **Corina:** Oh. I, I don't know. I, I might leave it. I don't know. I've never really done it. I love to be in a cozy, like with a lamp and, and stuff. Maybe leaving it?

[00:44:14] **Adam:** Okay

[00:44:15] **Corina:** Okay.

[00:44:15] **Adam:** All right. Christina?

[00:44:17] **Christina:** I am absolutely taking it. Granted that it's warm outside. I do not wanna do it right now in the Minnesota winter, but- Hmm.

Right ... if it's

[00:44:23] **Adam:** warm and

[00:44:23] **Christina:** there's sunshine, there's, there's nowhere I'd rather be than feeling the sunshine on me reading a good book.

[00:44:29] **David:** Yeah, I mean- All right ... God's light versus a lamp. Come on.

[00:44:31] **Adam:** Oh, wow. Okay. You're gonna go that way.

[00:44:34] **Christina:** Oh.

[00:44:34] **Adam:** Well- I'll

[00:44:35] **Christina:** pray

[00:44:35] **David:** about it.

[00:44:37] **Adam:** I am also leaving it. I'm with, I'm with Corina.

Yeah. What? And so here, here's the thing. I love being outdoors- Yeah ... but reading is the last thing I wanna do when I'm outdoors. I wanna- I hope that- ... be active and experience it. It's like, why do I wanna have my head buried in a book when there's all this beauty around me to explore and experience?

[00:44:56] **David:** Yeah.

Yeah, I

[00:44:57] **Adam:** don't know. That's a struggle. I- I can read a book at my
[00:45:00] home ... do want to be outdoors. Uh, in my co- like Corina said, in the cozy environment that I have for reading. That's what my house is for, is to read in. Everything else is activity outside. So, so I'm leaving it. So we're split right down the middle on that.

But yeah, listeners, we'd love to

[00:45:15] **David:** hear

[00:45:15] **Adam:** your

[00:45:15] **David:** take. I actually have a Kindle called a Paperwhite that I can read in direct sunlight- Oh, there you go ... at the beach. You can't tell me you don't wanna sit at the beach and read a, a great

[00:45:23] **Adam:** novel. At the

[00:45:24] **David:** beach?

[00:45:24] **Christina:** It's my

[00:45:25] **Adam:** perfect day. That's the last thing

[00:45:26] **Christina:** I wanna do.

Poolside, the best. Oh.

[00:45:29] **Adam:** Yeah. Okay. That if I'm gonna read on a trip, it's on the plane, because I'm inside. Yes. Yeah. Anything outside, no. Let- No read. No ... me do the stuff out there.

[00:45:39] **David:** All right. All right.

[00:45:40] **Adam:** All right. Well, very good. This has been fun. Listeners, thank you for joining us on this journey through the I am statements in the Book of John.

We, we hope it's been a blessing to you. Stick with us for our next episode, and we'll see you then.[00:46:00]

[00:46:02] **Corina:** Thank you for listening to Know God Deeply from Precept, a nonprofit Bible study ministry. For over 50 years, Precept has equipped people just like you in nearly 190 countries to discover the truth of Scripture for themselves. You can get to know God more deeply through Precept's inductive Bible study resources.

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