

Abide



Abide - Formed and Fruitful

Date: Sunday 15th January 2023

Speaker: Andrew & Rosie

Key Verses: John 15:7-11

Talk Summary:

How do we **A B I D E**.

A **Aware of the presence of God.** To abide is to become aware of the presence of God in all of life. We rarely think of the air we breathe. You can simply take every breath for granted or you can choose to become aware of each breath. It's the same with the presence of God.

We can become aware of the presence of God at any moment in a busy day and we can make some focussed time where we can sit with our thoughts and feelings or burdens or joys, aware of the presence of God.

B **Bible: Let His words be in you.** v 7 "My words" refers to all that Jesus taught. The Old Testament points to Christ (Luke 24:27,) the New Testament tells us about Him. His word will never change or pass away. Spend time absorbing what He says. Be confident that every phrase, every word comes from a place of love. Read it, reflect on it and then...

I **Integrate God's word into your life v 10** Jesus isn't vague about what abiding is. He clearly says that to abide / remain in His love, is to keep His commandments. It's relatively easy to obey God when things are going well. The test of obedience is when we walk through difficult trials or when our instinct is out of step with God's word. We have a choice to trust and obey. "I couldn't figure out any reason for the treatment I was getting from the Good shepherd I trusted, and He didn't give a hint of explanation." Elisabeth Elliot – Through gates of splendour.

D **Direct your prayers to God. v 7** Jesus speaks specifically about prayer here. Remember the context. *"If you live in Me, and My words live in you"*. As we meditate on the words of Jesus they shape our longings and prayers. Our prayers are more about what God wants, and not us using God to get what we want.

We think we know God's will, but we don't always see from His perspective. Jesus promises to do whatever we ask but the scriptures still tell us to wait on the Lord. God often accomplishes His purposes in ways that seem backwards to us. We pray for power, then his power is made perfect in our weakness

E Expectant – That God is at work. v 8 He's at work bearing fruit. The reason God chose us

is so we would bear fruit. God has given each of us different gifts, we are to use those gifts to bear fruit for His kingdom. We glorify God when we bear much fruit. Good fruit is God's work advancing through us and God's character growing in us.

What word pops into your mind when I say, 'obedience'?. In Jesus mind its's joy! Jesus concludes this section with some powerful words in John 15:15. Living from our identity is key. Is it"I'm trying harder", or "I'm a friend of God." Servants have a list of jobs to be done. Friends get to enjoy each other's company. So we're called to ABIDE in Jesus, to be Formed and Fruitful.

Let's Become **Aware** of the presence of God, **Bible** – let his Word be in you, **Integrate** his Word into your daily life, **Direct** your prayers to God and, live **Expectant**

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusng obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a me of singing you can skip the above quesons but please do ask this queson each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? (Go around the group quickly don't spend a long me on it)

Discussion Quesons (choose some which are most relevant your group)

1. When you think about this invitation abide where you find yourself now? And what is the invitation from Jesus for you?

No routine, hit and miss, regular, solid

2. Are their any practices of abiding that are not just individual but are collective? What can we do to encourage one another

3. The breath prayer.

Select a verse that can be said as a prayer in one breath.

Sit comfortably and notice your breath. Begin to let the rhythm of your inhale and exhale slow down. If it feels comfortable, close your eyes.

Inhale on the first section, exhale and pray the second.

Here are some bible themes that can be used as breath prayers.

- You are the vine, I am the branch. John 15
- Peace. Be still. – from Mark 4:39
- You are the Potter. I am the Clay. – from Isaiah 64:8
- You, Lord are my shield. And the lifter of my head. – Psalm 3:3
- You satisfy me with good things. And I am renewed. – Psalm 103:1

Witness - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?

Other Notes: Encounter night - Night of Worship this Saturday 21st 7:30pm City Centre Site