

JESUS IS THE VINE

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: LIVING FOR JESUS / SERIES: GOD IS I AM

BIG TRUTH: JESUS IS THE VINE

1 John 5:20; John 10:10

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:5

"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."

BIG IDEAS

- Jesus is the true vine; we are the branches.
- We must abide in Jesus to bear fruit.
- Apart from abiding in Jesus we can do nothing.

BIBLE PASSAGE: JOHN 15:1-15

TRANSFORM: LIVING FOR JESUS

In High School, the Transform Year is an exploration of what it looks like to have transformed influence as we seek to live for a Kingdom that is greater than our own. First, we recognize that we will never be transformed if we are not Living for Jesus. To do this, we must first know who Jesus is by looking at who He says He is (John 8:58), and then look at what the Bible says about how in Him, we live by faith (James 1:6). Next, we recognize that to have transformed influence means that we must live as disciples in pursuit of Christ and His Kingdom over ourselves and our own kingdoms.

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The 8 different "I AM" statements that Jesus uses in the gospel of John.
- We will always be dissatisfied when we search for joy and life apart from Jesus.
- The value and worth of our lives is found in Jesus alone



Every student should feel...

- Awe that God would make a way for our relationship with Him through Jesus.
- Convicted of the lies that they are tempted to believe about Jesus.
- Responsible to use their influence for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read the entire gospel of John.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Practice sharing the truth about who Jesus is using the 'I Am' statements from Scripture



Every student should want to...

- Grow in their understanding of who Jesus is.
- Abide in Christ deeper than they ever have before.
- Be known for how they point people to Jesus with their lives

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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JESUS IS THE VINE

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:5

"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."

Jesus is our only source.

"I am the vine; you are the branches."

- Jesus uses the analogy of a grape vine and branches in this passage as He explains the connection that His followers have to Him. The branches on a grape vine are connected to the vine and receive everything from that vine. They do not have multiple sources from which they draw their nutrients. A branch that bears grapes doesn't draw its energy or nutrients from an apple tree or a different type of vine.
- Jesus is a believer's only source. There is no other source for us. The life and freedom we receive from God, we receive through Jesus. He is the only way we receive anything because He is the only source of anything. We receive life from Him and hope. We are forgiven for our sins through Him and we receive eternal life through Him.

Jesus is the true source of hope.

"Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit..."

- We can find temporary sources of hope in this world, but none of them bring true hope like Jesus does. He alone is our true source of hope because only He can give real hope.
- Without Jesus, we are hopeless. We may find hope for a time in things of this world, but this hope doesn't last. It burns for a little while and then dies out as the reality of the darkness of this world sets in. With Jesus, hope is eternal and lasts forever. When we are connected to Him, our hope is forever and everlasting.

Jesus is the only way we can bear lasting fruit.

"Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

- Bearing fruit is not optional when we are in Christ. Because we receive God's Spirit at salvation, we will bear fruit. When we abide in Jesus, we are seeking to pursue Him and dwell with Him in an intentional way. When we do this, we will bear much fruit.
- Just as the branch that is connected to the grape vine will bear many grapes, we will bear much fruit when we are connected to Jesus. Because Jesus is our source of life and the way in which we are connected to God the Father and Spirit, it is only through Him that we can bear lasting fruit.

BIG IDEA #1: JESUS IS THE TRUE VINE; WE ARE THE BRANCHES.¹**[THIS]**

In John 15:1, Jesus reveals another truth about Himself through one of His “I AM” statements. He says He is the true vine. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was commonly referred as God’s vineyard. By calling Himself the true vine, Jesus is making a statement about who He is and His purpose in coming. He is fulfilling the prophecies of old. He is the chosen One sent to redeem God’s people. Not only is He the chosen One, but He is the only One. He alone gives life and is the source of all things because He is God in the flesh. Through Him, those who have saving faith have access to God the Father. Through Him, His people receive the Holy Spirit and the ability to bear fruit for God. Without Him, all of this is impossible. Unlike the nation of Israel, Jesus is righteous, holy, and perfect. As He lived on earth, He lived the perfect life, making Him the true vine.

[THEREFORE]

Since Jesus is the true vine, why should we align our hearts and lives with His Word?

As Jesus reveals that He is our true source of all things, we should align with Him because He is trustworthy. Proverbs 3:5 and Psalm 9:10 teach us that God is faithful and trustworthy. To trust in Him is to trust in a firm foundation.

[THIS]

Those who have saving faith in Jesus are branches that are connected to Him. As Jesus taught that He is the true vine, He reminded His followers that those who trust in Him are His people. They are connected to Him. We are extensions of Him on earth as we live for Him and are used by Him to fulfill His purposes in this world. God uses His people to make His name famous in the world by expanding His kingdom. We bear fruit because we are His branches, and He is the true vine. Anyone who has believed has been made clean and has become a branch of Jesus. Being a branch of Jesus means that we are washed clean of our sin and set free to live for Him. We are no longer enslaved to our sin nature and we are awakened to the truth of God. We are part of His family and become His vessels to be used by Him for His glory.

[THEREFORE]

Why does Jesus use the example of a vine to describe our relationship to Him?

In John 15:5, we see that those who have saving faith are branches of Jesus. To be His branch means to bear fruit for Him. When we bear fruit for Him, we live a life of obedience to His Word. Our lives reveal that we are new creations and that we are being transformed by Him. It means that we are connected to Him, our vine.

What are some false vines we turn to in our lives instead of trusting in Jesus?

Matthew 24:24 warns us that there will be false gods that try to lure us away. We may turn to other things to bring us hope. We will trust in our own abilities to produce good works, but Jesus is our only source of producing good works. Acts 4:12 reminds us that our salvation is found in Christ alone and no one else.

1. John 15:5: Jesus is the way in which we receive the Spirit and it is only through Him that we are able to bear fruit.

BIG IDEA #2: WE MUST ABIDE IN JESUS TO BEAR FRUIT.²**[THIS]**

Those who are in Christ abide in Him. Being a branch of Jesus means being connected to Him. Because we are connected to Him, we will bear fruit. The amount of fruit we bear and how consistently we bear fruit depends upon how consistently we abide in Him. If we do not daily pursue our relationship with Him, turning to Him always, then we will bear fruit sparingly, or sporadically. Our lives will seem stagnant and our spiritual growth will be slow. The branch that seeks to draw upon the vine is the branch that grows strong and bears much fruit. The same is true for God's people. When we seek Jesus daily and desire to know Him so much that we are taking in His Word and spending time in prayer, we will walk in the Spirit and bear the fruit of the Spirit. This means our daily lives will look more and more like Jesus' life every day.

[THEREFORE]**How does a branch bear fruit?**

In John 15:4, Jesus says that those who abide in Him will bear fruit. If we are to bear fruit, we must know Him. A knowledge of Him is necessary in order to be like Him. 2 Peter 3:18 and Romans 12:2 both remind us of the importance of growing in our knowledge of Christ that we might become like Him. The power to bear fruit does not come from the branch, but from the life of the vine it is connected to.

[THIS]

The fruit that we bear as a branch of Christ isn't just good deeds. It's the fruit of the Spirit. We bear this fruit because we have the Spirit inside of us as a child of God. Because the Spirit dwells inside of God's people, His people will bear fruit of His presence. Just the presence of the Spirit produces evidence of His transformation of our hearts. When we discipline our hearts and minds to a daily devotion to the things of the Lord, our lives begin to look a lot different. The evidence of the Spirit in our lives begins to grow and we are transformed more and more each day. Our spiritual growth increases as we abide in Christ. As we devote ourselves to studying God's Word and praying, we will see our attitudes transform from worldly attitudes to Godly attitudes. As we submit our hearts and desires to God, we will see our love change from a love of earthly things to a desire for God's kingdom. Day by day we will become more and more like our Savior and less and less like the world we are living in. This is abiding in Christ and bearing much fruit for Him.

[THEREFORE]**What distractions can you set aside to make room for a daily abiding in Jesus?**

It's easy to make excuses for ourselves, but the reality is we have no excuse for not seeking God daily. It is the most important part of our spiritual journey. 2 Timothy 2:15 and Philippians 1:9 remind us that we are to be prepared and in order to be prepared, we must grow in our knowledge of Him.

How have you noticed a growth in your spiritual life because you have abided in Jesus?

Those who seek God will find Him. Proverbs 8:17, 2 Chronicles 16:11, and Hebrews 11:6 teach us that God rewards those who seek Him. The reward is His presence and knowledge of Himself. As we grow in a knowledge of Him, we grow spiritually.

2. John 15:4: If we are to bear fruit for Jesus, we must abide in Him.

BIG IDEA #3: APART FROM ABIDING IN JESUS WE CAN DO NOTHING.³**[THIS]**

When Jesus makes “I AM” statements, they are revelations about Himself. The truths He states are truths that help us understand who He is and the redemption He offers. They help us understand how to live for Him. In John 15, when Jesus says He is the true vine, He is saying more than just He is a source of life. He is the only source of anything. As He taught this truth, He boldly taught His followers that unless they believed in Him, they really couldn’t do anything. This statement expressed the fullness of His deity. Because He is God, everything is made possible through Him. Unless a person knows Him and has saving faith in Him, they can do nothing of eternal significance. Even daily things are impossible apart from Him. He is God and makes life on earth possible. He sustains life, so even continuing to live on earth is possible only because He allows it.

[THEREFORE]

What has helped you understand that you cannot live for Jesus unless you seek Him daily?

The more we seek God, the more we will grow in Him. As we grow, the more we realize we need Him. Colossians 2:6-7 helps us understand that we need Him and are dependent upon Him to grow. We can do nothing without Him at work in our hearts and lives.

How have you tried to accomplish spiritual growth apart from Christ?

Often, we come to God with the wrong motive. We ask for things and work toward things for our own glory or gain instead of for God’s. James 4:1-3 speaks to the motive our hearts and how we may try to do things apart from Christ.

[THIS]

In John 15:5, Jesus says that we can do nothing apart from Him. He is speaking of a life lived for eternal value. If we want to live any type of life that has any eternal value, then we will have to know Jesus and abide in Him. Not only that, but we will have to abide in Him and submit our heart and minds to Him. In order to be used by Him and do anything with any lasting purpose or value, we must do it through Him and for Him. To abide in Him is to live a full life for Him. To dwell in Him is to live fully for Him and to bear fruit that has great eternal value. This means that all we do is done with His kingdom in mind. We live to advance His kingdom and we live longing for His kingdom. We can’t do this without Him. Unless we know Him and are connected to Him, we cannot accomplish this. We will falter and become distracted by the things of the world. We will feel discouraged and become burdened by the weight of this world if we do not abide fully in Him.

[THEREFORE]

What is the difference between eternal fruit and good deeds?

Anyone can accomplish a good deed. Anyone can do a nice thing for someone else or the world. Only those who know God and are known can bear eternal fruit of His Spirit at work inside of them. Matthew 6:24-25 reminds us of what it looks like to seek earthly things and what it looks like to seek heavenly things and that there is a difference.

Does your life reveal more good deeds or eternal fruit?

Matthew 6:33 tells us to seek the kingdom of God first. As we abide in Christ, we will set aside any notions of pleasing the world or accomplishing good things in the world. Instead, we will bear eternal fruit and advance the Kingdom of God.

3. John 15:5: Jesus is our source for everything and without Him we can do nothing.