

MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDE 2

ABIDING IS POSITION AND PURSUIT

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: I AM IN CHRIST
SERIES: GOD IS THE VINE - I AM A BRANCH

BIG TRUTH: ABIDING IS POSITION AND PURSUIT

1 Corinthians 6:17; Romans 8; Philippians 3:8-16; Jeremiah 7:23; Philippians 2:12

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:10-11

"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."

BIG IDEAS

- Jesus gives us position in God's family.
- Jesus calls us to follow Him.

BIBLE PASSAGE: JOHN 15:1-12

TRANSFORM - I AM IN CHRIST

The Transform Year is an exploration of what it means to become a "new creation" in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17) In order for this to happen, we must first find our identity in Him. Many of us live in a consistent state of identity crises. We wrestle with questions like who am I, where do I belong, why do I exist? The answer to these questions is found in Jesus. Our prayer for this semester is that like the Apostle Paul we would be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- God is the vine, and they are a branch.



Every student should feel...

- Insufficient and inadequate at their inability to meet their own needs, while at the same time thankful and overwhelmed by an all-sufficient Savior who satisfies.



Every student should strive to...

- Memorize Gal 2:20, read and meditate on John 15:1-15, and pursue an abiding relationship with Jesus together with leaders and others in their church.



Every student should want to...

- Abide in Jesus and to aim higher in their personal pursuit of Him.

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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ABIDING IS POSITION
AND PURSUIT**BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:10-11**

"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."

When we keep Christ's commands, we reveal we are abiding in His love.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love..."

- Abiding in Jesus means that He is Lord over our lives. We set aside our own desires and our own will and obey His Word and His commands. As we obey His commands, we reveal that our hearts belong to Him. Abiding in Christ means we are daily becoming more and more like Him as His Spirit works in us to sanctify us.
- Abiding in Christ leads us to love like He loves. As we grow in Him, we will love Him and others with a Godly love that is possible because of the Holy Spirit inside of us. The way we love God and others reveals that we are submitting to Jesus' lordship over our lives.

We become more like Jesus as we submit to His Lordship daily.

"Just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love."

- Jesus modeled submission to the Father in His earthly life and He went before us to show us how to love others. Jesus obeyed the Father's commands, even dying on the cross. Jesus loved the Father and others with a Godly love and He revealed this love by His obedience to God the Father.
- As we obey God's commands, we become like Jesus. Jesus does not ask anything of us that He has not done Himself or overcome Himself. He is the example set before us of how to obey fully God's commands and grow in His love.

When we abide in Jesus, we bring God joy and we have joy ourselves.

"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

- Because our love for God is revealed through our obedience to Him, when we obey God's commands, we show that we love Him. This obedience brings God joy in us because we are revealing lives that are submitted to Him in love.
- As we abide in Christ, we have joy ourselves. We grow in our knowledge of Jesus and our position in God's family. This knowledge will bring us joy because we daily live in the knowledge that we are no longer separated from God, but are a part of His family forever.

ABIDING IS POSITION AND PURSUIT

BIG IDEA #1: JESUS GIVES US POSITION IN GOD'S FAMILY.¹

[THIS]

Apart from Christ, we are separated from God. Isaiah 59:2 says that man's iniquities have separated him from God. Romans 3:23 teaches that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory. It is through Jesus that our position changes from outcast to part of God's family. Because Jesus is the only way to know God, when we abide in Jesus, we reveal that we are God's child. We are no longer enemies of God, but are His sons and daughters. Our position change means that our identity changes.

[THEREFORE]

How does daily abiding in Christ give you a better understanding of your identity?

In Romans 8:12-17, Paul teaches that those who have God's Spirit show evidence of their adoption into God's family. They are no longer slaves to their sin natures, but are set free to live for Christ. We see in John 1:12 that those who are in Christ are given the right to be God's sons and daughters. In Ephesians 1:5, Paul teaches on the adoption of believers into God's family as they become heirs with Christ. Lastly, in Romans 6:6, we see that our position change means that we are no longer slaves to sin, but are new creations.

[THIS]

Our adoption into God's family brings Him joy. His joy is in us when we are abiding in Christ. When we are daily abiding in Christ, our lives bring God glory because we are obeying His commandments. Our position is no longer one of a withered branch, but one of a connected branch as God's child. God brings us into His family and continues to grow us more like Him as we daily abide in Jesus. Our position change brings us joy as we grow in knowledge of Jesus and become more like Him.

[THEREFORE]

How does the idea of adoption into God's family help you understand your position in Jesus?

In John 8:12, Jesus teaches that those who know Him will not walk in darkness, but in light. When we are adopted into God's family, we no longer walk in the darkness of this sinful world. Instead, we walk in the light of Christ. Paul teaches about our adoption into God's family in Romans 8:17 when he speaks of believers being co-heirs with Jesus. In Ephesians 2:19, Paul speaks again of a believer's position in the family, or household of God. God's adoption of us into His family changes our position with Him.

In what ways does the fact that God finds joy in our adoption lead you to greater obedience of Him?

Romans 8:14 teaches us that a mark of God's Spirit in our lives is being led by it. When we are led by God's Spirit, we reveal that we are God's children. Jesus teaches in John 14:15 that those who love Him will keep His commandments. Also in John 15:15, Jesus shows us that those who abide in Him and keep His commandments are given the right to be called His friend.

1. 1 Corinthians 6:17: When we have saving faith, we are joined to God through His Son, Jesus. Through Jesus we are made sons and daughters of God.

ABIDING IS POSITION
AND PURSUIT**BIG IDEA #2: JESUS CALLS US TO FOLLOW HIM.²****[THIS]**

Abiding in Jesus means a change in our position, and it also means our pursuit of Him changes. Prior to knowing Christ, no person seeks Him. An unbeliever does not seek after God. God's Spirit draws an unbeliever into faith. As we grow in our new position in Christ, our desire will be to obey God's commands. When we obey God's commands, we show that we are abiding in Him. As we grow, we desire to be like Christ and to put on heavenly things as we put off earthly things. We are not satisfied in remaining the same. We desire instead to grow and change.

[THEREFORE]

In what ways has your obedience revealed that you are following Christ?

In Philippians 2:12-13, Paul writes to the Philippian believers about their new position in Christ and the marks of their obedience. This same principle can be applied to all believers as God's Spirit works inside of them to lead them to greater obedience. 1 John 2:6 also teaches us that those who love God obey Him and this shows that they are following Christ. Ephesians 4:22-24 teaches that a putting off of our old self and a putting on of our new selves is an indicator that we are following Christ. Luke 6:46 serves as a reminder that some may call Jesus Lord, but they do not obey Him.

How are you actively seeking to be like Jesus?

In Matthew 5:48, Jesus teaches that those who follow Him must be perfect like He is perfect. This means that we must seek to be like Jesus by abiding in Him. In Proverbs 3:5-6, we see the principle that those who trust in God and acknowledge Him in everything will walk a straight path. Acknowledging God in everything requires abiding in Jesus and seeking to be like Him.

[THIS]

When our identity changes from withered branch to growing vine, our pursuit of Christ will be different. We will seek to be like Christ because of God's Spirit inside of us leading us to follow Christ. We will love God and show our love by keeping His commandments. When we abide in Christ, we will not be satisfied to remain the same. We will desire to grow and become more Godly as we obey God and grow in him. Our position is now one of son and daughter of God instead of slave to our sin.

[THEREFORE]

What things keep you from actively pursuing Jesus?

Proverbs 3:5 teaches that we should not lean on our own understanding. Instead, as seen in Proverbs 3:6, we should seek God and acknowledge in Him every aspect of our lives. Proverbs 14:12 shows us that sometimes we may think we know a way that is good, but it leads to death and destruction. God knows the best way and when we are actively pursuing Him, we are submitted to His way. Proverbs 29:23 shows us that our pride can stand in the way of our knowing Christ.

2. John 15:1-12: When Jesus commands us to abide in Him, he is commanding us to follow Him and become like Him.