

Simple *Christmas*

Joy – December 17, 2017

Scripture Texts

John 15:1-17, John 14:13-14 (For types of fruit see: Galatians 5:22-15; Luke 6:43-45; John 4:35-38; Philippians 1:9-11; Hebrews 12:11, 13:15)

Connect

What is your favorite Christmas movie?

What did God teach you during the message this Sunday? Did anything in particular stand out?

Engage

This week's sermon was on joy – it is a journey; it comes from being near Jesus; it comes from being a servant of God; it is found in salvation through Jesus and it is shared as we rejoice with each other. In John 15:11 Jesus tells us: “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” So, let's take a look at “these things” so that His joy might be in us.

Read John 15:1-17

In this passage, Jesus says that we will bear fruit if we abide in Him. What does it mean to abide? What are some examples of the fruit that He referenced? (For references on ‘fruit,’ see above.)

If vine branches were human lives, what pain would be involved in pruning? What tools? What fruit?

Jesus repeats ‘abide in me’, ‘love’ and ‘bear fruit’. How are these words related? What is the ‘fruit that will last (abide)’ (v. 16)?

As we read in this passage, a branch is nothing without the vine. How can we (as branches) practically stay connected to Jesus (the Vine)? Have you experienced seasons in your life when you felt disconnected from the Vine? If so, how did you reconnect?

How do verses 9 and 12 go together? How is love the essential dynamic of the Christian life? How does your relationship with Jesus change once you start practicing his example of love?

What is the link between obedience and prayer (vv. 7 & 16, see 14:13-14)?

Think back to a time when you pursued a relationship with someone, either a friend or a significant other. What things were necessary in order for you to grow closer to him or her? In what way(s) does that compare to your walk with Christ?

Apply

As a branch on Christ's vine, how would you describe the fruit of your life: Grade A-1? Juicy? Green? Wormy? Why?

What steps do you need to take to increase your abiding in Jesus? Set some goals and ask the others in your group to help you keep them.

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