



PETRA GROUPS



abide

BEARING FRUIT THAT LASTS

2025 Winter Churchwide Study

Participant Workbook

theme verse

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

JOHN 15:15-16



What is this Christian faith all about? In his final dinner-devotional with his disciples, Jesus gives a metaphor that is so simple and powerful: like a grape cluster must remain attached to the grapevine, Stay attached to me! Abide! This six-week series will help you grow deeper in God—not by trying harder, but by remaining in Jesus. What does that mean and how do I do it? Those are questions you will discover already answered in John 15:1-17 as we study together.

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If you have any other questions about the series or as you're participating in your group, please feel free to reach out to Small Groups Pastor Matt Kauffman at mattk@petra.church or 717-354-5394 ext 129.



I've Called You Friend

WEEK 1

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 60 min

Tonight, we'll read through John 15:1-17 twice. The first time, we'll focus on the truths in the text. The second time, we'll focus on experiencing the Spirit and person of Jesus in the text.

1. In smaller groups of 3-4 people, **read John 15:1-17**. Make a list of repetitive words and themes that are used more than twice.
2. Explain what Jesus meant by each of these themes or ideas, but try to do so by citing the text. For Example, v.4, 5, and 6 all use the word "Remain." What does "remain" mean to Jesus?
3. For each of the themes that you are discussing—e.g., "Remain"—answer the following question: What does God desire, and why?

In these 17 verses, God the Son explains what relationship with God the Father is like. Reread verses 9, 14, and 15 and notice how important relationship is to God. Based on John 15:11, one of God's central motivations for relationship is for his "joy" to be in you and for his "joy" to be "complete."

4. In your own words, how do you describe a relationship with God? How do you experience the fullness of joy?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 60 min

Last week, we read John 15:1-17 and discussed how relationship is of central importance to God. To live in union with God, we must “remain” in him. Let’s look at three important components to “remaining” in Jesus. There are necessary responsibilities we have to rest in his work, to allow his Word to train us, and to obey him.

1. Resting. Trust in the work he has already done and the love he has already proved. Read these scriptures.

- Matthew 11:28-30
- Romans 3:23-25
- Galatians 3:10-12
- Hebrews 4:9-10
- John 15:9

- a. What details, themes, or truths did you notice in these scriptures?
- b. Do you find it easy or difficult to rest in God’s unconditional love and acceptance, or do you find yourself still trying to do things to impress him, or hiding mistakes from him?
- c. When is it most challenging to trust in his love? To receive his grace?

2. Training. Training is the necessary pathway that keeps me connected to Christ so I can grow in him. Reading the Bible, worshipping, praying, and meditating are essential habits that train us in the ways of God.

Read these scriptures.

- 2 Peter 1:5-8, 10
- 1 Timothy 4:13-16
- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18
- Ephesians 6:18
- Psalm 119:9-16

- a. What details, themes, or truths did you notice in these scriptures?
 - b. What is the difference between “trying,” “trusting,” and “training” in God?
 - c. What obstacles do you personally face in training toward mature faith?
 - d. Do you have any goals to improve the structure of your habits of scripture, worship, or prayer?
i.e., time of day, resources, groups, mentor, etc.
 - e. How do you prevent your disciplines from turning into lifeless routines or human efforts?
- 3. Obeying.** Jesus teaches that his disciples follow his words. We will explore this theme in more depth next week. For now, read Matthew 7:15-27.
- a. What details, themes, or truths did you notice in these scriptures?
 - b. Next week, we will explore this theme further.

notes



Transformation Through Obedience

WEEK 3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 60 min

1. Last week, we learned that to remain in Jesus, we must learn to trust, rely on his love, and train toward maturity. It's not enough to hear his teachings. James 1:22 says, *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."* Yet, in our quest to live a godly life, we run into obstacles.
 - In what areas of your life do your emotions, appetites, unhealthy thinking, or bad habits still kind of run the show?

 - Or have you noticed any powerful habits in your family or workplace that might need to be retrained by the truth of God's Word and Spirit?

2. Read the following scriptures and answer the following questions for each.
 - a. What details, themes, or truths did you observe in these verses?

 - b. How do you practically apply these to your life?
 - 1 Peter 1:14-16
 - John 15:10-12
 - Deuteronomy 10:12-13
 - Philippians 2:12-13
 - Joshua 1:6

3. Meditation is a tool that helps us confront the lies in our lives with the truth of God's Word. Read these couple of verses. How do you practically apply each of these verses to your life?
- Psalm 10:4
 - Romans 12:2
 - 2 Corinthians 10:5
 - Psalm 119:99
4. Obedience to God's will means that you are not in charge. Not only are you not in charge, but the fruit you produce isn't even for you to enjoy. Good fruit is for other people to be blessed and to benefit from your sacrificial love.
- If sacrificial love deeply transformed your life, visualize and discuss what that would look like in your daily interactions and the impact it could have on others.

notes



Hearing God's Voice

WEEK 4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 45 min

The most important way God speaks to us is through his timeless and inspired Word. Nothing is a substitute for the truth and authority of his Word. Yet God continues to encourage us, lead us, minister through us, and communicate with us through his Holy Spirit inside of us.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

- Based on this scripture, how do we come to know God's thoughts for ourselves?

- If the Spirit reveals God's thoughts inside of our own mind, how do we discern the difference between our thoughts and God's thoughts? (Notice, for example, in 1 Corinthians 14:29, Paul tells the congregation to weigh carefully what is said—to exercise discernment.)

2. Based on 1 Corinthians 14:3

- What is the purpose of the New Testament gift of prophecy? Discuss what each of these words means.

- If you are hearing God correctly, either for personal relationship or for ministry to other people, what should be the fruit of the Holy Spirit's ministry? You can refer to Galatians 5:22-26 if that would help.

3. God's Word is full of examples of people who prayed with inspiration from the Holy Spirit. Read the following scriptures. What observations can you make?
- Joel 2:28/Acts 2:16-21
 - Genesis 18:20-23
 - Exodus 32:7-14
 - Ezekiel 37:1, 4, 7
 - Psalm 50:7
 - Luke 2:36-38
 - Luke 22:31-32
 - Acts 9:10-17
 - John 10:27
 - 1 Kings 19:11-13
4. On a spectrum of hearing God's inward voice—zero (“I don't know what his inner voice sounds like”) to ten (“God speaks to me all the time through his inner voice”)—where would you currently fall on that spectrum?

notes



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 35 min

Read **John 15:12-17** & **John 17:20-26**

1. In these two chapters, Jesus uses different descriptions to articulate the same truth.
 - Based on these verses, what is the Lord's ultimate desire for his disciples?

 - What is his command, and how does it achieve the desired effect?

 - Jesus compares his relationship with his disciples to his own relationship with the heavenly Father. What do you think is so important about this comparison? See John 15:9; John 17:21.

2. We often try to manufacture love for other people that we don't possess. Another way to look at John 15:9 is to remain in the love Jesus supplies us—like keeping your bucket under the faucet so that you're filled up from the source.
 - How well do you do at keeping your bucket in the source?

- What disconnects you from his love source for others? Are there practical moments, patterns, or triggers that knock you out of alignment with receiving from your love source?
3. What encouragement do you think the Holy Spirit might want to speak to those places that are dry and love-less?

notes



Generations

WEEK 6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | 45 min

1. What is a “good thing” that your parents have passed on to you?

2. What traits have you inherited from your family that aren’t necessarily healthy?

3. The scriptures teach us that we are individually accountable to God for our sins. However, our sinful habits, or faithfulness, can impact our families and communities. Both individual guilt and collective responsibility can be true. Read the following scriptures and answer the questions below.

- Exodus 20:4-6
- Psalm 78:3-8
- 1 Chronicles 16:15-18
- Matthew 1:17
- Ezekiel 18:19-20
- Acts 2:38-40
- Luke 1:16-17
- 2 Timothy 1:4-6

Questions:

- a. What examples of blessings did you find from healthy generational faithfulness?

- b. What are examples of mistakes and unredeemed patterns we can pass on to our children?

- c. Why do you think God intends for communities to be a source of his blessing?

 - d. What practical ways can we be diligent to foster God's faithfulness in the next generation?
4. In review: What has the Lord been teaching and training you in through this Abide sermon series?

notes

Small Group Guidelines

Confidentiality is Essential: What's said in the group is not shared outside the group.

Speak Only for Yourself: Do not share information that is not yours to share.

Respect Others: Let everyone find their own answers; do not give advice unless asked. Be present and involved during group meetings. No side conversations.

Extend Grace, Not Rules: When people share their struggles or personal journey, our first reaction should be compassion and a desire to see them healed, not correction and a desire to see them set right.

Limit Personal Sharing: Everyone in the group needs an opportunity to share.

Start and End on Time: Use your time wisely; do not get stuck on rabbit trails.

Come Prepared: You'll get the most out of the material if you do a little bit each day—ten to fifteen minutes. The goal isn't to cram for a test just to get it done. The goal is to meditate on the truths and to create new habits that change our lives.

Take Responsibility: If you feel uncomfortable with anything happening in the group or among group members, share your concern with the group or with the leader or co-leader.

Agreement: Can everyone in the group agree to these guidelines?



PETRA GROUPS

SMALL GROUPS SURVEY

Please help us improve your future small group experiences by completing the short survey below. Thank you!

How did you enjoy your Small Group experience?

What aspect(s) of your Small Group experience did you appreciate the most?

What aspect(s) of your Small Group experience would you change for the future?

Is there anything else Petra can do to help facilitate your future Small Group experiences?

Would you like to discuss your feedback further with a member of the Small Groups Ministry Team?

Yes, please connect me with a member of the Small Groups Ministry Team

Name & Email (optional): _____



Let us know about your experience participating in a Petra Group!
If you choose to fill out this survey by hand, please submit it to
Small Groups Pastor Matt Kauffman upon completion.



Small Group Survey



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