

MEN'S RETREAT

THE PRUNING

JOHN 15:1-4 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. 4 Abide in me, and I will abide in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you abide in me.



Cutting away the unhealthy
 Pruning the healthy



Hebrews 12:10 But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness.



"Because grape wood that is more than two years old will no longer produce fruit, you have to prune in such a way that you have replenishing vines growing that can replace the older wood." (Gardener's Secret Handbook, McGroarty)

GOD CUTS AWAY THE UNHEALTHY
THINGS IN OUR LIVES TO MAKE
ROOM FOR THE HEALTHY.

Hebrews 12:11 No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening —it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

"In most cases proper grape vine pruning requires that you remove as much as 75% of the vegetative growth so the plant can properly develop and ripen the fruit it produces."

(Gardener's Secret Handbook, McGroarty)



THE PROBLEM IS WE WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF FRUIT-BEARING WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE PRUNING.





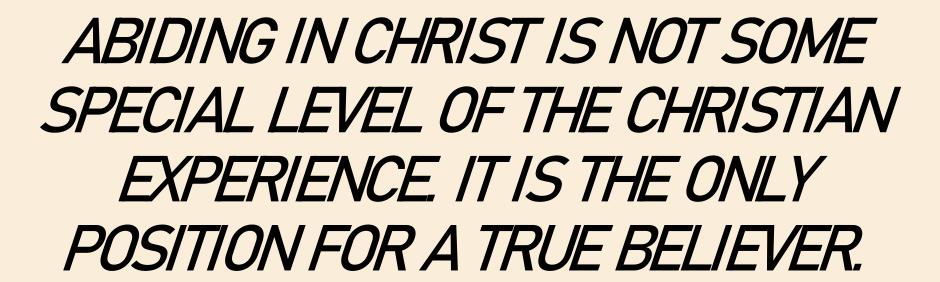
JOHN 15:5-8 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. 7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.













Psalm 63:1 "O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

To abide in Christ means to keep up a habit of constant close communion with Him--to be always leaning on Him, resting on Him, pouring out our hearts to Him, and using Him as our Fountain of life and strength, as our chief Companion and best Friend. - J.C. Ryle

Vs. 5 ... For apart from me you can do nothing.

WE CANNOT BRING GLORY TO GOD UNLESS WE ARE IN CLOSE FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS.



Vs. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you...

BEING IMMERSED IN GOD'S WORD IS THE KEY TO LIVING A LIFE THAT BEARS FRUIT.



1 John 2:5 But those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him.

JOHN 15:9-12 "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. 11 I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! 12 This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

LIFE-ALTERING RESULTS

Love
 Joy



LIFE-ALTERING RESULTS

Vs. 10 When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love

YOUR LOVE FOR GOD IS DISPLAYED IN YOUR OBEDIENCE TOWARD HIM.



"We are sent out into the world to love one another. Sometimes we live as if we were sent into the world to compete with one another."

—William Barclay



LIFE-ALTERING RESULTS

Vs. 11 ...you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

JOY IS A BYPRODUCT OF ALLOWING GOD'S LOVE TO FLOW THROUGH YOUR LIFE.

LIFE-ALTERING RESULTS

Ephesians 3:19 to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Some think it is quite sufficient if they avoid what Jesus forbids. Abstinence from evil is a great part of righteousness, but it is not enough for friendship."

-C. H. Spurgeon

