



Sermon Notes from 13 January

Eat, Pray, Love (John 15:1-11)

by Pastor GL Wong

Bridging the gap between your feelings and what God has commanded is crucial. The truth that fuels change: *God's desire for my good matches my greatest felt need.* The wider the gap between God's desire for our good and felt need, the lesser the renewal in your life and vice versa. The world today suffers from the epidemic of loneliness. It affects all categories of society. "Loneliness isn't new, and God's redemption includes salvation from its deepest form – isolation from God and his people." – Jeremy Linneman. Because of our sin, we are separated from a holy God. Christ came to save us by dying on the cross that we may be reconciled to God. As we enjoy this reconciliation, Christ also invites us to enjoy the presence of other people in our lives. The antidote to the epidemic of loneliness is a life full of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the ultimate answer to your loneliness. Abide in Him!

What Does It Mean To Abide In Christ?

Jn 15:1-4 One of the seven 'I am' statements that reveals the divinity of Christ. The metaphor shows the close relationship between Jesus (the true vine) and God the Father (the gardener). It also invokes the Old Testament's common reference to Israel (God's chosen nation) as an unfruitful and useless vine (Ezk 15:6). This spiritual depiction of ethnic Israel fits us too. Our only hope is in the gracious saving connection with the 'true vine', Jesus Christ.

Ezk 15; Jn 15:2,6 'Branches' refer to people.

Jn 6:37,39, 10:27-29 Jesus' strong words of judgment, in the light of the larger context in John, show that genuine Christians will never lose their salvation in Him. The branches that would be cut off and discarded refer to professing, but not true believers and disciples.

Jn 8:30-31,37, 6:66 There is a distinction between believers and true believers.

The so-called believer will be judged but the God-called one will be saved - the former bears no fruit but the latter always bears fruit.

God's *desire* is for us to abide in Christ – have a deep trust, dependence and reliance on Christ. Loneliness is a suffering that indicates a craving for a deeper connection to God. God can use your loneliness to awaken you to a greater need for his presence and bring about growth in your life.

Jn 15:5 True branches are pruned for growth. It is through the painful pruning process that you experience the full impact of abiding in Christ.

The life of someone who is abiding in Christ:

1) Eat vv4,7; Matt 4:4 Read the word of God daily! *"A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough for the next six months or take sufficient air into his lungs at one time to sustain life for a week. We must draw upon God's boundless store of grace from day to day as we need it"* – D.L. Moody.

2) Pray Jn 15:7-8 Your God glorifying prayers are meant for fruit bearing. Pray prayers that magnify His name, for His kingdom to come and His will to be done to bear great fruit!

3) Love vv9-12 Those who abide in Christ will rest in Christ's love, love Christ (the head) and those in the Church (the body). Doing this draws you closer to Christ and the church.

Jn 15:16, 4:35-36 The disciple who abides in Christ loves those who are in Christ, and loves the lost by bringing them to Christ.

The one who is delivered from loneliness and isolation gains 3 joyful connections: He is connected to Christ, to others in Christ, and connects others to Christ.

Jn 15:13 The Cross is your greatest motivation for Agape and sacrificial love.