

Study Guide Equip | Abide

Big Idea: Abide in Christ

1. Discuss what it means to “abide” in Christ.

Abide: (Gr. meno) - *to stay, remain, be true, to persevere.* (Strong’s)

2. According to Matt. 11:28, “Come to me...”, and John 15:4, “Abide in me...”, the invitation stands for us to have a close personal union with Christ. What does that mean to you? How does that play itself out in your daily life?

3. Read John 15:1-4.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

What is the nature of abiding in Christ according to the illustration of a vineyard? What does it mean for me? Discuss.

4. Read 1 Cor. 1:30.

“Of God are you in Christ, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”

Discuss the implications of what God has given to us in Christ, and why it is important therefore to abide in Him.

5. Read Galatians 2:20a.

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

Discuss what it means to live a lifestyle of surrender.

Application

Are there any practical steps you feel led to take that could help foster your abiding in Christ?

Message Notes**Equip****Big Idea: Abide in Christ**

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Abide: (Gr. meno) - to stay, remain, be true, to persevere. (Strong's)

Book Recommendation- 31-day Devotional

Abide in Christ- Andrew Murray

A. The Invitation

Matt. 11:28- "Come to Me..."

John 15:4- "Abide in Me..."

For the weak.

1 Cor. 1:27 "...God has chosen the weak..."

2 Cor. 12:9 "...I will boast ...of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

B. The Illustration- The Vine/Branch

>Vine image< with scripture passage

John 15:1-4a

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me...bear fruit...Abide in me, and I in you."

>Vine image < with scripture passage

"Of God are you in Christ, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30

C. The Implications

1. Surrender

Galatians 2:20a

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

2. Dependence

2 Cor. 1:21-22

"And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee."

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a. Receiving Water

"I, the Lord, am its keeper; every moment I water it." Isa. 27:3

b. Receiving Food

"...and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day." Exodus 16:4

c. Receiving in Stillness

"In quietness and trust shall be your strength." Isa. 30:15b

D. The Outcomes

John 15:5b

"Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit."



INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY METHOD

PASSAGE

DATE

OBSERVATION

WHAT DO I SEE?

PRIMARY THEMES

FIND THE CONNECTIONS

WHO
WHAT
WHY
HOW

PUT YOURSELF IN THE STORY

INTERPRETATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

APPLICATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MY LIFE?

KEY VERSE

KEY WORDS

PRAYER RESPONSE

HOW TO DO AN INDICATIVE BIBLE STUDY

Each time you pick up your Bible to read, make a habit of asking God to give you insight into his Word and to speak to you through the Scriptures that you study.

• OBSERVE // WHAT DO I SEE? •

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is simply, "What do I see?" It's a simple method to get an overview of what the author is saying. The time to delve deeply into meaning is still to come. The first step is just to observe.

This crucial skill of observation lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are five tasks involved in observation which I encourage you to start practicing.

Observation Task 1: Mark up the passage by visually identifying some specific elements. Time to break out the highlighters and pens!

- Underline the verbs. Verbs are indicators of either an action taking place ("we will reign with Him") or that a state or condition exists ("we are faithless"). The author's general flow of thought is usually depicted in the verbs.
- Circle key words or phrases. With practice, you'll be able to easily pick out the words or short phrases that carry the most weight in the passage. These words will likely be the big indicators of meaning or the storyline.
- Highlight repeated words or phrases. These repeated words are usually what the writer really intends to drive home as a major point. Look for the closely related words and phrases in a single passage and from previous passages.

Observation Task 2: List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week.

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as humility, salvation, the Holy Spirit, etc. After reading the passage, list 2 or 3 themes you observe as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will give you good building blocks as you continue.

Observation Task 3: Find the connections.

Take a bit of a step back and look for connections in the text. You're likely to find things like repetitions, similarity/contrast, cause/effect, general/particular, and the like. Note the unexpected or unusual.

Observation Task 4: Become a journalist.

Good journalists look for Who? What? Why? and How? Those questions will give you special insights as to how the story is unfolding in the passage.

Here are a few examples:

WHO is ...

... being talked about?

... accomplishing the action?

... benefiting from the action?

WHAT is the ...

... meaning of this word?

... significance of this phrase?

... implication of this statement?

... relationship between these phrases?

WHY did the writer ...

... choose this word?

...emphasize this phrase, statement, or command?

... not say _____?

HOW ...

... was this action accomplished?

... will this situation be resolved?

Observation Task 5: Get into the story.

It might sound a little strange, but a powerful exercise can be to become a character in the story. What do you see, smell, hear, and taste? What are you feeling and experiencing? Gaining understanding of the context can help you to gain greater understanding of the passage as a whole

• INTERPRET // WHAT DOES IT MEAN? •

Really observing a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Try using these five methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions.

Interpretation Method 1: Put the context to work.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author's flow of thought through the whole chapter. Look for the main connections and threads that run throughout the passage.

Interpretation Method 2: Study cross-references.

Cross-references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross-references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online references like BibleStudyTools.com or BibleGateway.com. No passage in the Bible was written in a vacuum - this magnificent book is has powerful themes tied all throughout.

Interpretation Method 3: Take some extra research steps.

It's always good to take a few more research steps like looking in a Bible dictionary to define words, phrases and concepts you don't understand. Look at the maps that are in most Bibles to understand the physical context of a journey or event. BibleGateway.com has a few Bible Dictionaries and other resources available - you'll find them under the Study tab when you select "more resources".

Interpretation Method 4: Compare multiple translations.

You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. Teaching at CFC is often from the English Standard Version (ESV) or New International Version (NIV). If you want to read passages with some expanded language or in a more conversational (less technical) tone:

- The Message version (MSG)
- The Amplified Bible (AMP)

We are fortunate to have so many free Bible versions easily available. The YouVersion app has hundreds of versions, all easily accessible through your smartphone or tablet. And online, you can access lots of versions on sites like BibleGateway.com or BlueLetterBible.org.

Interpretation Method 5: Tackle tough questions step-by-step.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this three-step process:

- (1) List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
- (2) List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and things like considering the book as a whole with cross references to other books.
- (3) Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. But continue to be on the lookout for how your conclusion may need to be adjusted as you continue to study.

Speaking of questions, as a final step in the Interpretation phase, ask yourself some "big questions" about this passage - What seems to be the main point or the core teaching of this passage? What did the author intend to communicate to the original readers? Why is this passage here?

• APPLY // WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MY LIFE? •

Effective Bible study always wraps up with the consideration of “how do I apply what I’ve learned from this passage to my life?” Always consider how you can practically apply the truths of the Word to things like your relationships, your pursuit of holiness, your prayer life, your offering of worship, your money management, your witness to non-believers, and so much more.

Here are two helpful application methods:

Application Task 1: List potential principles from your passage.

A “principle” is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Seeking these principles can be helped by asking yourself a few questions:

- Is there something to worship or thank God for?
- Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?
- Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?
- Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?
- Is there any relationship I need to work on?

Application Task 2: Choose one principle, and create a plan to apply it to your life this week.

Once you complete your list of principles, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on. If you sense conviction about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Then - take action! Write down some ways you will take practical actions to apply this principle to your life this week. Be specific!

As you conclude your approach of Observation/ Interpretation/ Application with the passage, take some time to talk to the Lord about your interaction with His Word and your desire to rightly apply it to your life. He loves when we seek truth in His Word, and then ask Him for help in letting that truth shape, affect, and direct our lives.

*Information gathered from materials provided by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX