

John 15:7-8

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Date: 05 July 2026

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[0:00] And I was prepared for Wednesday, but then Jamie was here and we had an opportunity for him to give us a report on the trip to Peru, which is always important for us because as we send one of us out for if it's overseas or in the United States or wherever it is they're representing us as they go, they're representing Christ and it's important for us to know what God is.

And how he's moving and working within us to spread the gospel. So that's important for us to hear and know what what's going on there. So so anyway, so this is a key verse tonight will be John 15, seven.

The background again for these chapters, we in our Bible study, we studied chapters 13 through 17, which are John's recording of Jesus teachings in the upper room before the cross.

From the celebration of Passover, washing of the feet of the disciples. These are his teachings all through there. So he knew that his that the cross was coming.

He knew this was his final hours and opportunity to teach the disciples before before the cross. So very important words that we get there and important for us to get.

[1:40] I mentioned last week that we also studied Matthew 5 through 7, the Sermon on the Mount, which I think is another core teaching.

I think that's a lot of what he taught as he went around for the three years is probably, I think, was possibly what he was teaching. A lot of what he was teaching we find in that Sermon on the Mount. But but but anyway, we're looking at chapters 13 through 17. Last Sunday, we really looked at chapter 14 and then just want to pick up particularly on prayer and for this evening.

So the our core verse or verses are verses of read seven and eight says, if you abide in me and my words about in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you.

By this, my father is glorified that you bear much fruit so that you will be so that you you so you will be my disciples. So he gives us an important guide for prayer.

[2:52] And that is if we abide in Christ and if his words abide in us. So if we continue in in our relationship with him, we continue in his words, then what we can ask what we desire and he will give us that.

If we're abiding in Christ, then he is as Ivan preached this morning, it's becoming more and more Christlike. It's having a Christ centered life.

It's walking with him in verses preceding that one through six. He's talking about that. He is the vine and we are the branches. The father is the vine dresser.

And it's that being connected just like the branch of a grapevine to the to the vine itself. It can only produce fruit when it's connected.

And it's in that close connection and bearing fruit. Of course, he gives us more information about that is if we if we bear much fruit, he'll prune us so that we can even bear more fruit.

[3:56] So our our lives should be about bearing fruit for Christ, bearing that spiritual fruit. And so abiding in him, being connected to him closely is is how we do that.

And then we can pray effectively. It's a concern for me because I know studies show that church people, those of us who come to church, many don't read the Bible and many don't pray.

And if they do, it's very little. Prayer should just be a part of who we are. Being in God's word is a part of who we are. It should just be a part of us.

Jesus said, go and make disciples. Disciples are students. And so to be a student of God's word, to be a student of prayer, it's spending time in it.

A good student, which I wasn't. Lisa was. My teachers would tell you that I was a real nice guy that didn't try until I met until Lisa and I started dating.

[5:00] And then my grades got better. Mom and dad really liked Lisa. But anyway, a good student of God's word is going to be in his word.

He's going to be hearing the preaching. He's going to be in Bible study. He's going to be learning God's word and how to apply it to their lives. And they're going to be learning how to pray. And you learn how to pray by doing that. By praying, you learn to pray. You see God answering prayers. You see how he moves within your life. And it gives you more faith to continue in that. So we come to know the Lord Jesus Christ just as we are as infants, as babies, newborns. It's how we come in faith to know Christ.

And he wants us to mature and to grow as full-grown adult Christians. He wants us to grow in that and mature in our faith. So that's, I believe, what he means by abiding in him and abiding in his words.

[6:01] If you've heard me teach before, you've heard me talk about the disciples' cross and master life. And this is my representation of the disciples' cross.

This is one of the diagrams that you learn and you memorize the scripture. What you see here is a Christ-centered life. A disciple has a Christ-centered life.

It's becoming more Christ-like. The vertical bar on the cross is your relationship to God. The horizontal is relationship to others.

The great command, the first command, is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And your neighbor is your, the second is life. So it represents that as well as our relationships.

So our relationship to Christ and his word, we're students of his word. It's our foundation. And, of course, that's a key to praying effectively.

[7:01] Because if we're connected to Christ and we're connected to his word, we're abiding in those, then our prayer life will be effective. So that's sort of the key to our prayer life.

Now, Richard Blackaby, who is Henry Blackaby's son, you've heard of Henry Blackaby, probably did his study. A lot of people have. Wrote a book called Unlimiting God.

And I think, was that one of your books? Yes, that's where I got that book. Sometimes, I've read so many books, I don't know. I knew it wasn't on my shelf, but got it from somewhere.

But he says, Unlimiting God increases your capacity to experience the divine. God's power and love have no limits.

So why do Christians put limits on their relationship with him? We could be pursuing greater knowledge, experiencing deeper intimacy, and abiding in freer joy.

[8:02] And yet, we settle for mediocrity in our spiritual lives. And the most important relationship in our life is our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if we have that right, and we love him with all of our being, we will love others. It's just the natural outflow of that.

So the second greatest command is just an outflow from that first one. You can sort of tell a person's relationship with Jesus by their outward expression of their relationships to others.

How can we not love others if we understand what Jesus did for us and how he cares for us, the relationship that we can have with him?

Richard also puts down some reasons why we accept the mediocrity. He says, Sin holds us back. And that's true. We should, we come to him in faith and our sin is forgiven.

[9:11] But then we're going to sin during the day. We're going to sin in our lives. And we should be quick to repent of that and ask for forgiveness of that.

Keep that relationship strong. In Matthew 6, when Jesus gives us the model prayer, about midway down, he says that we should ask to be forgiven.

And then we are to forgive others. And then if that were not enough, a couple of verses later, verses 14 and 15, he tells us that again. He says, you won't be forgiven if you don't forgive.

So when we realize how much we've been forgiven, then we will forgive. Sin holds us back sometimes. And so that's something that as we grow in Christ and mature in our faith, that will not hold us back from having a close relationship.

A lack of faith holds us back. If we're not praying, if we're not familiar with the scripture, when you read the scripture and you see he told Abraham, your lineage is going to be in bondage for 400 years.

[10:17] And they were in bondage for 400 years. He told Jeremiah that Judah would be in captivity for 70 years. They were in captivity for 70 years.

And so on. You see prophecy and prophecy fulfilled. We see Christ and all of the scripture that points to Christ and how he fulfilled all of them.

Then we know there's a whole other set of prophecy about his second coming. And we know that's going to come true. That is coming. We know that those things are going to happen.

Our faith increases as we pray and we see prayers answered. And like I say, I write things down. I'll write that one down in my prayer notebook because I'll forget if I don't write it down.

If you give me a prayer request and I don't write it down, then I'm going to forget. To do that. But anyway, faith. And then he says, lack of love holds us back. Lack of love holds us back.

[11:20] Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? How much do you love him? How much do you love him? John chapter 3.

Familiar verses that you all know. Starting in verse 13. Jesus says, no one has ascended to heaven, but he who came down from heaven.

That is the son of man who is in heaven. Jesus came down of his own will. And because the father sent him for us.

For us to be our redeemer. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up. He knew where he was going.

He knew that the cross was where he was headed. To take on the wrath of God for our sins. For my sin. For your sin. So that we could be with him forever.

[12:27] How can you not but love him more and more as you draw close to him? And whoever believes in him, Jesus, should not perish but have eternal life.

We know there's two paths. There's the path that's wide and leads to destruction. There's the narrow path that leads to eternity with him. So everyone who believes in him would not perish but have everlasting life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. The father loves you with a love that we can't even imagine in our flesh.

Jesus loves you with a love that we cannot imagine in our flesh. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved.

He is that promised redeemer all the way from Genesis chapter 3 with the animal which I think was a lamb that was sacrificed to cover Adam and Eve's sin.

[13:34] To cover their shame. They knew from that point on that the redeemer was coming one day. He who believes in him is not condemned but he who does not believe is condemned already because he is not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.

Last week, chapter 14, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the only way to the father. And so how can you not but love Jesus when you know what he did for you?

Willingly came. Gave us the perfect example. Gave us the words he was correcting the religious leaders' teachings and giving us correct interpretation of the Old Testament as he was teaching.

Gave us the perfect way to follow. Gave us the perfect way to follow and knowing that he was going to take on the wrath of God so that we could come and be with him forever.

John chapter 15, starting in verse 9, Jesus says, As the father loved me, I also have loved you.

[14:46] And that word love, I didn't write that down. I'm real sure that word for love is agape. I'd have to check that to make sure.

But as the Father loved Christ, I also have loved you. Abide in my love. We're to be connected to him, be connected to his love.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. Just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. Jesus came and the words that he said, the actions that he did, the miracles that he did were all from the Father.

The Father, the Spirit, and the Son all were a part of that. And we can abide in his love and walk with him. These things I have spoken to you that my joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full.

This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. And what did Jesus do for us?

[15 : 50] He laid down his life for us. And that is what we're to do. He commands us to do the same. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.

My friends, are you a friend of Jesus? Are you walking closely with him day by day? No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing.

But I have called you my friends for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.

And whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give you. These things I command you that you love one another. Love one another. He gave these commands to the disciples in the upper room.

Then they, of course, passed that on to their generation after the Holy Spirit was given to them. And then that next generation passed it on.

[16 : 51] And that's what we're to do. We're to pass along to the next generation the love of Christ, to the next one. To be obedient to his commands. To go and make disciples.

To express God's love to them. So, one of the things that Richard Blackaby says is there's lack of love.

So, if we're not in his word and we're not in prayer, then we're not going to develop that relationship. And we're going to not have the love for Christ that we should have.

But as we draw closer to him, it sort of scares me as I study a lot of times. Because we're studying Romans right now. And Paul's, you know, he teaches a lot.

But as I study, I see more and more how my sin in my life and how that's keeping me from the even closer to walk with the Lord that I should have.

[17 : 47] So, the closer we get to him, because he's perfect. I'm not perfect. I'm far from it. And it's just exposed more and more to me as we walk along.

Just quickly, I'll mention again what Jesus taught us in chapter 14 last week. Verse 15. If you love me, keep my commandments.

Verse 21. He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father.

And I will love him and manifest myself to him. Verse 23. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. And my Father will love him.

And we will come to him and make our home with him. He will make his home with us. Is Jesus a part of your home? Is he your friend?

[18 : 43] You know, are you experiencing his joy? In verse 24. He who does not love me does not keep my words. And the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

It's so important that we know Christ's word. All of his word. What was he teaching? He was teaching the Old Testament at that time. They didn't have the gospels.

They didn't have the letters yet. Because he hadn't gone to the cross yet. But keeping his word and walking with him. John 13, 34, and 35.

A new commandment I give to you that you love one another. As I have loved you. That you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples. If you have love one for another. Does the war trace community sense that there is love here? That we love each other in this church? That we have true fellowship with each other? That was one of the things on here on the crossbar.

[19 : 45] The horizontal one is fellowship. Does the community see the fellowship that we have? The love that we have for each other? I hope they do. I know that we reach out in the community a lot.

And do a lot of things. I hope that they see the fellowship that we have. And want to join that. Don't you? I hope that they want what we have.

Because they can see that we love each other. Support each other. That they want to have what we have. And then we should be witnesses everywhere we go. Everything you say. Everything you do. People are watching. Especially if they know you are a Christian. They want to see how you react. You know? And then there is the ministry of service. Jesus calls us all to service.

So our love for the Lord. He says a lack of love holds us back. A lack of love. So it is so important that we are in His word.

[20:47] And in prayer. And drawing ever close to the Lord. Because I believe. I know for me. My love for Him grows. More and more as I study.

And draw closer to Him. John chapter 14. Verses 13 and 14. And whatever you ask in my name. That I will do. That the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name. I will do it. So you notice that you can ask anything in His name.

But He says here. That the Father may be glorified. There is a condition there. Don't get caught up in anybody that says just pray for whatever is on your mind.

But it is when we are in His word. And when we are connected to Christ. When our desire is to glorify God. Then we are going to pray rightly. We will pray rightly at that time.

[21:50] And whatever we ask. If you ask anything in my name. What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus? You know it doesn't mean that we always say in the name of Jesus at the end of our prayer.

But that is not what He meant. If we are praying in His name. It is praying representing Him. When we. When you take on the name Christian.

It is to be more Christ like. It is to live that Christ centered life. And so when we pray in His name. It is praying as He would pray. Today as we were studying in Romans chapter 8.

We came to the section that Paul is writing. And He teaches us that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. When we don't know what to pray. We don't know how to pray.

Or what we should pray. He is interceding for us. The Holy Spirit is. And then on my Bible. Because it was just across the page. In verse 34 I believe it is.

[22:53] It says that Jesus is at the right hand of the Father. Interceding for us. So we have. When you think about. Praying in His name. And you think about the Holy Spirit is interceding for you.

Christ Himself is interceding for you. That is what it is. More means I believe. To pray in His name. Is knowing that He is praying for us.

And we are praying along with Him. As He would have prayed. John 14. 13 through 14. John 15. 7 and 8. We have already looked at that. It is. Abiding or remaining in Christ. It is living a Christ centered life. Seeking to walk closely with Him.

Abide and remain in His words. How can we live a Christ centered life? How can you live that Christ centered life? It is through being in His word. It is being in prayer.

[23:50] It is fellowshiping with other believers. It is witnessing. It is using your spiritual gifts. It is to serve. It is in all of those things. And we can live that Christ centered life. By prioritizing our relationship with our Savior and Lord.

And spending time in His word and prayer. That the Father may be glorified. Our joy in life is to glorify the Father. Who provides our redemption and reconciliation with Him.

Do you ever think about the day that you are going to see Jesus? You know? Do you ever think about that? And how? What an impact.

You know, I was seeing Him for the first time in His glory. Draw close to Him. Draw close to Him now. That He would be glorified through your life.

John 17. 20 through 26. John 17. The first part of that, Jesus is praying for Himself. Second part, starting in verse 6.

[24:54] He's praying for the disciples. And then in verse 20. He's praying for us. He's about to go to the cross. They're getting ready to go to the Mount of Olives.

Where He'll be betrayed. And He's going to the cross. And He stops and prays for us. Prays for us. You know? I do not pray for these alone.

But also for those who will be believing in me. Through their word. That passing the word along to the next generation. That next person. Who do you have an opportunity to witness to?

That they all may be one. As you, Father, are in me. And I in you. That you also may be one in us. That the world may believe that you sent me.

And the glory which you gave me, I have given them. That they may be one. Just as we are one. Do you ever consider the oneness of God? The Father and the Son.

[25:59] Earlier, it was last week in chapter 14. Jesus mentions that. Something about going to the Father. And I think it's Philip. One of them asked him.

Well, show us the Father and that will be enough. And he says, when you saw me. You saw the Father. They are so much at one. They are one. Hear, O Israel.

The Lord our God. The Lord our God. The Lord is one. They are one. So when they saw Jesus, they saw the Father. And their oneness.

And what Jesus is teaching us. In these last chapters that John has written. Is not only about the love that we can experience with Christ. But also the oneness.

It's the unity that we can experience with the Father and the Son. With each other. And that is something to really sit down and think about sometime.

[26 : 55] When you're praying next time. The oneness that we can have in him. I in them. And you in me. That they may be made perfect in one.

And that the world may know that you have sent me. And have loved them as you have loved me. Father, I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am.

That they may behold my glory which you have given me. For you love me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father. The world has not known you.

But I have known you. And these have known that you sent me. And I have declared to them your name. And will declare it. That the love with which you love me may be in them.

And I in them. He's praying about the unity. The oneness that we can have with him. The love that we can share with him. It's just a beautiful picture for us today.

[27 : 57] And of course he wants us to go out each day. And be a witness to the world. The world is living in darkness. And the world is controlled by Satan.

But he wants us to go out and be a witness to those around us. That many others. He is drawing people to himself. And he wants us to be a part of that plan. To plant the seed.

Or to water the seed. And praise the Lord. Even be a part of the harvest. So as we go out. Whether it's to Peru. Or next door. We're always wanting to be a part of that.

So that others can be a part of this unity. Do you have a compassion for people like Jesus did? Can you imagine?

He was on the cross. And prayed for the soldiers that nailed him to the cross. He had a compassion for people. He wanted them to know the Father. And he wants us to go out in his name.

[28 : 58] So we have John. Those verses in John. Where he talks about prayer. And so that we can be effective in our prayer.

John 14. John 14. 27. Talks about Jesus. And the peace that he gives. Psalm 119.

165. Says. Great peace. Great peace. Have those who love your law.

And stumbling causes them. And nothing causes them to stumble. Greater peace. Have those. Who love your law. Who love your law.

Do you love the word of God? Are you spending time in it? And then Jesus teaches us in. 14. 27. Peace I leave with you.

[29 : 55] My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives. Do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled. Let neither be afraid. We can experience Jesus' peace as we walk through this life.

We're going to have struggles and difficulties. Going to be prayer needs. Like we shared earlier. Things are going to sort of build up on us.

For one reason or another. We have an enemy who is always against us. You're going to face spiritual battles. There's going to be some health issues. And other things in life.

But we can walk through those. With the peace of the Lord. Because we're at one with Christ. And the Father. And because he's given us each other. Within the church.

And. Just. Want to see us. Express that love for each other. More and more each day. Where we trust each other.

[30 : 51] With those things that are dear to us. That we know. That it's not going to be gossiped about or anything. But it's going to be held in confidence. But so that we can. Can.

Walk with the Lord each day. And experience his peace. We don't go alone. We always have the Holy Spirit with us. But we have each other. So John 14.

27. We have the Holy Spirit. He's talked about the Holy Spirit also. The helper. And that's also how we can have the peace.

With him. Isaiah teaches us. In Isaiah 53. About Christ. And the suffering that he will have. He will experience for us.

He takes on the wrath of God. Verse 4 says. He has borne our griefs. And carried our sorrows. And I believe when we learn to give our burdens to the Lord.

[31:46] And he carries those for us. We can live in this peace that he's promised us. He's promised us peace. He's promised us joy. He'll also promise us the way to that.

So. And there's some scripture that you can look at. Matthew. Philippians. Ephesians. 1 Peter. In James. That you can look at.

And see. I believe some of how he will carry those burdens for us. What he's taught us. That we can experience with him.

So. I just encourage you in that. Jesus wants us to pray. He wants us to be in his word. And he wants us to pray rightly.

And effectively. He wants to walk with us through this life. and he won't make you he always gives you the choice he either choose or not when i when i taught with the five essentials one of the things i'd read another book and it was about the priestly prayer in numbers god gave moes the prayer that the priest were to pray over israel every day and at the very beginning of it the lord bless you and keep you the word bless there means to draw near and come down on your knee so it's a picture of god drawing near to you on his knee waiting for you like jet coming to mason you know if mason and jet comes running up it's sort of that picture uh god draws near to you but you have to come to him he he wants you to come his arms are open uh he wants us to walk with him experience his love and oneness and his grace and mercy so uh just encourage you in that encourage you in your prayer life get a book and write it all down so that you don't forget like me if you may not be forgetful like i am but anyway uh prayer is so effective so effective when we draw near to the lord any questions or comments or anything as we close that's right that's right we'll do all the rest of them yeah and and his his law is not burdensome he he gave us the law so we know right from wrong absolute truth and uh but none of that's hard if if you obey the number one adam and eve have one rule don't eat from that tree we have one rule love the lord your god with all your heart soul mind and strength all of yourself if we do that one thing we'll do the rest yeah good point yeah yeah but but

[35:21] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

[36:41] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. That's right. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

The verse here in Ephesians, Ephesians 4, 26 and 27 says that we're not to let the sun go down on our anger. We shouldn't hold on to anger.

Why is that? Because if we do, we give the devil a foothold or an opportunity in our life. Jesus started his preaching, his teaching and the servant on the mount with the Beatitudes.

[37:51] And it's the change that we're going to experience as we draw closer to the Lord. And it's humility and different things. It's a change in our life. It's that new person that we are.

And part of that is learning how to humble ourselves and give our issues to Jesus.

And I had a problem with anger with people who had a personality like my brother. Because my brother and I had a, it was not good. Our growing up was, from the day they brought me home as a two day old infant or whatever, the fight was on.

And, but when I learned how to pray effectively and give that anger to the Lord, because I had it all the way from the time I was an infant until I was in my forties.

I would meet somebody with Jeff's personality and the hair on the back of my neck would stand up and I'd be on point, you know. And, but I no longer have that because I learned how to give that burden to the Lord.

[38:58] And whether it's grief or anger or shame or any of your emotions, that once you learn how to effectively pray and give that to the Lord, you won't pray, you won't have that.

More things will happen. You need to learn to continue to pray for those things. But, but you can, the things that when she pushes your buttons, if you learn how to pray and give those burdens to the Lord, probably goes back to something in your childhood.

Yeah, she's good. Good. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Right. Right. Right.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Right. Right. Yeah. Yeah. Right. Right. Right. Right.

And that's biblical too. That's biblical too. Uh, first the scripture there in first Peter five that I have there, it ends with, Satan is looking to see who he can devour. And so if we don't give our burdens to the Lord, if he's not carrying them for us, then it just opens the door for Satan in our lives to poke the bear as it were.

[40 : 09] So anyway, well, let's pray and we'll, we'll go. Uh, heavenly father, we just thank you for this evening, this time to open your word. Uh, we thank you for prayer.

And, uh, just, I pray Lord as a church here that we would be, you would find us to be in your word and in prayer and just in walking closely with you, uh, day by day, uh, wanting to bring you glory and to live for you, uh, Lord.

And as things come up during the day, as we have problems, uh, that arise during the day, I just pray Lord that we would pretty quickly, uh, just call on your name and, uh, trust you with, with the situation at hand that you would give us the right words to say and to express your love to the, uh, those around us.

Uh, Lord, we on this, uh, day after independence day, we do pray for our country. Uh, um, think about the condition our country was in 50 years ago when we celebrated the 200th anniversary and the way it is now.

And just pray Lord for the church that we would truly seek you to, uh, walk with you closely. Uh, cause Lord, nothing is impossible with you.

[41 : 29] And I know if we, the church, your bride would draw close to you, that things could really change the, the, um, church could once again have influence in the world and, and Lord, that many, many would be coming to you.

So I pray Lord, as we celebrate the 250 years as a nation, that the church would just commit itself to prayer and your word and to, um, seeking to witness to the world.

So Lord, we thank you for this evening. I thank you for each one here and pray Lord that you'd just use us this week in some way to draw others close to you. And I pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.