

Discipleship principle 2 - Connecting with God.

Read John 15:1-9

Why this is important? We live in an increasingly busy and complex world. So much going on. So much competing for our attention. The world around us tells us to do more, be more, try harder.....

Into this world Jesus says in John 15:5 - "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Q. 1 - What do you think it means to abide in Christ?

For me abiding in Christ mean **resting in the loving embrace of the father** (say this together). Slowing down and being with God, resting in God's plans, His purpose, His goodness. When we slow down spiritually, we know that we are deeply loved by God and love Him in return. Of all the wonderful things in this world, **nothing else satisfies like God's love** (say this together).

Psalms 46:10 captures a similar idea when God says to his people "be still and know that I am God". This idea of abiding can be captured in a simple picture of a semi-circle (refer memory aid).

At one point we have the need to abide/rest in Jesus. This is our starting point. From this place we work and do activities and things bearing fruit. In our doing we always need to remember to work out of rest.

We see such a rhythm in Jesus own life where he would frequently withdraw from a busy ministry life to pray and connect with his father in solitary places (read Luke 15:16).

After working we then need to remember to take a break and rest from work.

This basic idea of rest and work is built into the very fabric of our world. We have night and day. Wake and sleep. Seasons of the year and seasons of our lives. Rest and work exist across spiritual, mental and physical dimensions. It is very important for us to establish healthy rhythm of rest and work. Physical, emotional, mental. Without a good rhythm of rest and work things start to break and we move out of the living in the love of our heavenly father. Established rhythms of spiritual, physical and emotional renewal are essential. Our being/abiding must always proceed our doing.

Reflection questions: Use the learning circle to engage with this discipleship principle.

Observe - What do you think that is God saying to you about this discipleship principle today?

Reflect - Do you have established rhythms of connecting with God in your life?

Discuss - What really refills your spiritual tank?

Plan and account - How could you respond to what God is saying with faith and obedience (be specific)?

Act - Who could you share this principle with this week?

Extension material - Chapter from Spiritual care booklet on devotional pathways.

Memory aid - Semi circle

