

**June 20, 2023**

The Lord wants you to live in His liberty and freedom.

***John 15:5-7 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. If you do not remain in Me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (NIV)***

We all go through periods in our lives. Some are fruitful and fulfilling and others can seem like we are living in a parched desert. A few years ago, the Lord spoke to me through a study on this passage. It is here that I found the difference in those barren times and times of plentiful ministry and life. It is all found in one simple word: remain or abide. The Greek word is *meno* which means *to come and stay; and not to leave*. I believe for most of us, we treat our relationship with the Lord like this: *Lord, I need You today. Will You help me with my problem? (or) Lord, I don't know what I should do, please give me guidance*. These are sincere requests no doubt. But the problem is we treat the LORD as if He is a crisis hotline that we call when we have a need. But, when it seems that everything is going okay, we don't call at all.

The LORD is a jealous God. He wants every part of us. And so, He calls us to come and stay in Him. Why? Because He knows that we can only be fruitful and fulfilled when we are connected to the vine - Jesus. Have you ever been in an area where your cell phone reception is bad? You walk around holding your phone in the air hoping that you can find that single spot where you can make a connection. Our connection with the LORD is found only in abiding in His presence. It is there that He speaks. It is there that He fulfills. It is there that He abides in us. I have to come to the place of abiding because like most of you, I tend to wander. My focus is in many ways on myself or my desires and not on Him. But, when I am abiding in Him, He fills me with His love and power and presence. And it is there that I find true joy and peace and LIFE!

**Dear LORD, it is in You alone that we find our rest. You are the vine. We cannot make it on our own. Help us to stay. Help us to remain. Help us to focus on the purpose of this life rather than our selfish pleasures. In Jesus Name, Amen**