SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

John

Chapter 15

The True Vine

MEMORY VERSE · JOHN 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in John 15

Jesus spoke John 15 to scared men on the last night, and He gave them one thing to do: stay close to Him. This week, stop trying to manufacture fruit and start staying — in His words, in His love, with your brothers. The Vinedresser's hands are kind, even when He prunes.

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The full Deep Dive, the O·I·A study and the slides for this chapter are on the John study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

The True Vine

READ · JOHN 15:1–4

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Who is the vine, who is the vinedresser, and what two things does the vinedresser do to branches (vv. 1–2)? What has already made the disciples clean (v. 3)?

REFLECT

Verse 2 says every branch that bears fruit, "He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit." What is being cut back in your life right now, and how might God be using it to make you more fruitful instead of punishing you?

REFLECT

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself" (v. 4). Where have you been trying to grow, change or stay clean on your own strength, and how has that been going?

RESPOND — TODAY

Read verses 1–4 slowly out loud. Then name one thing God is pruning and thank Him for it in a prayer, even if it still hurts.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 15:5)

DAY 2 OF 5

Apart from Me, Nothing

READ · JOHN 15:5–8

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What happens to the branch that abides (v. 5)? What happens to the branch that does not (v. 6)? What two promises does Jesus attach to abiding in verses 7–8?

REFLECT

Jesus says "apart from Me you can do nothing" (v. 5). What is one area — your sobriety, your temper, your marriage, your work — where you have acted like you could do it without Him?

REFLECT

Verse 7 ties answered prayer to His words abiding in you. How much of His Word is actually living in you right now, and what would it take to change that this week?

RESPOND — TODAY

Write verse 5 on a card and carry it today. Before one hard conversation or decision, stop and pray, "Apart from You I can do nothing."

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 15:5)

DAY 3 OF 5

Abide in My Love

READ · JOHN 15:9–13

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

How does Jesus say we abide in His love (v. 10)? Why does He say He has told them these things (v. 11)? What is the greatest love, according to verse 13?

REFLECT

"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you" (v. 9). Is it hard for you to believe Jesus loves you that much? Where did you learn to doubt it?

REFLECT

Jesus says to love one another "just as I have loved you" (v. 12), and verse 13 shows that love lays down its life. Who is one brother you can lay something down for this week — time, pride, money, a grudge?

RESPOND — TODAY

Do one concrete act of love for a brother today that costs you something, and do it without telling anyone else about it.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 15:5)

DAY 4 OF 5

Friends, Chosen

READ · JOHN 15:14–17

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What is the difference between a slave and a friend in verse 15? Who did the choosing in verse 16, and what were the disciples appointed to do?

REFLECT

"No longer do I call you slaves … but I have called you friends" (v. 15). Do you relate to God more like a worker afraid of being fired or a friend who is let in on the plan? What would change if you really believed the second?

REFLECT

"You did not choose Me but I chose you" (v. 16). Many of us have felt like nobody's first choice. How does it land on you that Jesus chose you on purpose?

RESPOND — TODAY

Pray, "Jesus, thank You for choosing me and calling me Your friend," and then ask Him what fruit He wants to grow through you this week.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 15:5)

DAY 5 OF 5

Hated First, Helped Always

READ · JOHN 15:18–27

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Why does the world hate the disciples, according to verses 18–21? Who is the Helper, where does He come from, and what will He do (v. 26)? What will the disciples do (v. 27)?

REFLECT

"If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you" (v. 18). Where are you getting pushback for following Christ — and is it for His name's sake or because of something you need to own?

REFLECT

Verses 26–27 say the Spirit testifies about Jesus "and you will testify also." Who in your life needs to hear what Jesus has done for you, and what holds you back from telling them?

RESPOND — TODAY

Tell one person this week, in a few honest sentences, what Jesus has done in your life — trusting the Helper to testify alongside you.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (JOHN 15:5)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Jesus moves from fruit (v. 2) to more fruit (v. 2) to much fruit (v. 8) to fruit that remains (v. 16). What fruit have you seen in a brother in this group that you believe will last?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Verse 11 says Jesus spoke "so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." What has been stealing your joy this week, and how does abiding speak to it?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

The world hated Jesus "without a cause" (v. 25). How can we as a group make sure that when we are rejected, it is for Christ and not for our own foolishness?

MY PRAYER

Lord Jesus, true Vine, keep me close to You today, because apart from You I can do nothing, so I ask You…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · JOHN 15:5

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."