

**LESSON 2: ABIDE—STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR LIFE SOURCE**

This includes:

- 1. LEADER PREPARATION**
- 2. LESSON GUIDE**

**1. LEADER PREPARATION****LESSON OVERVIEW**

In our shallow society, many people seek to establish their identities through possessions or looks. When conformity, comfort, and culture consume us, our time and hearts are pulled far from Jesus. Our identity becomes wrapped up in what we do, what we wear, or what we want to be, rather than in who we are—God’s children in constant need of the love and life that come through Jesus.

This lesson will remind students to abide in Jesus and find their true identity in him. When we’re left empty by what this world offers, we can find true life in Jesus. Everything else fades away, but he alone is constant. If we remain in Jesus, he will remain in us.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- 1. WHAT:** Jesus is our source of life and all that satisfies—when we stay connected to him, he fills our hearts and lives, and we find our true identity in him.
- 2. WHY:** Teenagers who find their identity and purpose in Jesus enjoy a relationship with him that remains even in times of hardship and temptation.
- 3. HOW:** When students ask Jesus to be their source of life and fill them with his love and purpose, they can reach out and impact their culture for him.

**PRIMARY SCRIPTURE**

John 15:1-12

**SECONDARY SCRIPTURE**

John 10:10

**TEACHING PREP**

**LEADER  
TIP**

**Use this short overview to prepare for your lesson. While you may not want to convey this information word-for-word with your group, you’ll want to absorb it as you prepare to lead.**

**Read John 15:1-12.**

This beautiful metaphor is found only in the Gospel of John. Jesus’ message is clear: He is the vine, and we are the branches. He is our life source. Outside of him, we wither away.

Jesus reminds us that he wants our lives to bear much fruit for him. This can happen only when we're connected to him. When we're disconnected from Jesus, fruitlessly searching for identity and joy from other sources, we'll never feel complete.

As a life source, Jesus—the vine—is irreplaceable. At times, we may knowingly or unknowingly seek another life source, such as our friends, sports, or entertainment. These things may add to life but cannot *give* life. Only Jesus does that.

In verse 7, Jesus offers an amazing promise. If we remain in him as our source of life, we can ask him for what we want or need. But if we seek life outside of him, we won't feel the full measure of the love he longs to share with us. Our deepest need won't be met.

Note that this isn't a threat of rigid do's and don'ts. In a world that seems to offer so much, only Jesus offers eternal love. He wants to be our life source as we remain connected to him. Then our hearts will be filled with joy, and we'll bear much fruit for him.

## **THE BEFORE & AFTER [OPTIONAL]**

### **TEXTS OR TWEETS**

**Send one or both of these messages to your students prior to your meeting. As with the rest of the curriculum, edit these questions to fit the needs of your ministry.**

- In what ways do your culture and faith collide? Come be part of an intriguing conversation tonight.
- Are you ready to make Jesus first in your heart, above all else? Let's chat about it! We look forward to seeing you.

### **PARENT EMAIL**

**Send this email to parents following the lesson to encourage them to continue the conversation at home. Feel free to edit and customize the email to fit your ministry needs.**

Dear parents,

This week, we studied John 15:1-12, where Jesus uses a beautiful, clear metaphor to describe himself as our life source. He explains that he is the vine, and we are the branches.

In our culture, we often look for meaning and identity in many other sources. But only when we recognize Jesus as our life source can we experience complete, fulfilled joy. In verse 11, Jesus says he has spoken these things so our joy will overflow.

This week, spend a few minutes with your teenager reviewing our lesson. Here are some questions you can use to fuel your conversation:

- How does being connected to Jesus, our vine, make you feel more alive?
- In what ways is this connection evident in people's daily lives?

- What are some things that might try to disconnect you from the vine? How can you be aware of those things and prevent them from interfering with your relationship with Jesus?

We appreciate your prayer and support for our ministry. May God bless your week!

**LESSON 2: ABIDE—STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR LIFE SOURCE****2. LESSON GUIDE****GETTING THINGS STARTED [OPTIONAL]****LEADER  
TIP**

Preview the following video for your group: [youtube.com/watch?v=ZQqH\\_7m003w](https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZQqH_7m003w) (or use another video about staying connected to Jesus). You'll need an Internet connection and a computer or tablet to display this video for participants.

Welcome your students and invite them into your meeting area. Open in prayer, and then play the video clip. Then **ASK**:

- *How often would you say you enter into Jesus' presence?*
- *Being busy and overscheduled is common in today's culture. What makes it difficult for you to find time to be with Jesus?*
- *Think about your current relationship with Jesus: What are some ways you'd like it to grow?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Even Jesus, who was God, needed to get away from everything, to be with God the Father. We, too, need to get away from distractions to stay connected to Jesus. Otherwise we might begin relying on other sources to provide the kind of life that only Jesus can give.*

**TEACHING POINTS****LEADER  
TIP**

Use the Teaching Points to help students capture the essence of each lesson with more discussion and less lecture-style teaching. Remember: All throughout these lessons, it's up to you to choose (1) how many questions you use and (2) the wording of the main points—keep ours, or change the wording to make it clearer for your audience.

Read John 15:1-12 together as a group. Consider dividing verses among your students so several people have a chance to read.

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Throughout the New Testament, Jesus taught by speaking in parables, or stories. He also used metaphors, such as the one we just read from John 15.*

**1. BELIEVING IN JESUS DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN YOU'RE CONNECTED TO THE VINE****ASK:**

- *How might people get to a place in their relationship with Jesus where they believe in him but aren't connected to him?*

- *What's your reaction when you meet people who say they believe in Jesus but don't bear any fruit for him?*
- *If you've ever been in that situation, how does it feel? How does being disconnected from Jesus affect your decisions and relationships?*
- *How were you able to reconnect with Jesus—or how do you want to reconnect with him?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Branches falling away from the vine is a metaphor for being separated from Jesus. Bearing fruit is a metaphor for being a disciple, or follower, of Jesus.*

## **2. BEARING FRUIT SHOWS THAT WE FOLLOW JESUS**

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Because Jesus offers himself as our ultimate lifeline, we can find our true identity in him. And our lives can produce “fruit” as a result. When we're connected to Jesus, our life brings glory and honor to him. We also find our true identity and meaning in the vine, not in anything the world offers.*

### **ASK:**

- *How can you tell when someone is connected to the vine? What makes him or her stand apart from other people?*
- *What “fruit” would you say you produce for Jesus—and how much? Explain.*
- *In what ways do you find identity and meaning through Jesus? Why is it “fruitless” to find identity and meaning anywhere else?*

## **3. PRUNING HELPS US BEAR MORE FRUIT**

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *In verse 2, Jesus says his Father prunes branches that are bearing fruit. Pruning involves cutting back branches so they can experience more growth. It's sort of like a haircut. Afterward, your hair can grow back even healthier and fuller than before.*

### **ASK:**

- *As branches, sometimes we have to be cut back in order to grow. What have (or can) you cut back to grow even closer to Jesus, the vine?*
- *What's your reaction to being pruned by God the Father? How does his desire to help us bear more fruit demonstrate his love for us?*
- *How can staying connected to Jesus and abiding in his love help us through difficult pruning experiences?*
- *Jesus doesn't just want us to be connected to him; he wants us to continue to bear more fruit for him, to experience more joy, and to be made complete through his love. How does Jesus' love complete you?*
- *When branches are pruned, dead leaves are left behind so new leaves and fruit can sprout. Who or what has pruned you, helping you grow in Christ?*

## EXTRA DISCUSSION [OPTIONAL]

Ask students to form groups of two or three to discuss these questions.



### ASK:

- Read John 10:10. In what ways has the thief stolen from you? In what ways has Jesus made you rich and given you a satisfying life?
- Why is it important to accept Jesus' offer to be our true vine, instead of relying on other sources for life?

Bring everyone back together, and ask for volunteers to share answers to the previous questions, as time permits.

## LIVING IT OUT

### ASK:

- What are some ways you can connect with or remain in Jesus today?
- How have you experienced Jesus as the source of life? What kind of "crops" has a relationship with him produced in you?
- What distractions make it hard for you to spend time with Jesus? What adjustments can you make that will allow you to enjoy his presence and connect to the vine?

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *If you feel like a branch that hasn't been growing, go back to John 15. Remember: Jesus doesn't want you to simply say you believe; he wants you to experience his full love and joy. Reconnect to the vine. Allow him to fill your branches with life—and fruit—once again.*

## SUMMARY



Provide a quick summary or take-home challenge based on (1) this lesson's content, (2) the dialogue that took place today, (3) your understanding of the issues and struggles your teenagers are facing, and (4) the big picture of your youth ministry and what your leadership team wants accomplished with the teaching and discussion time.

## FOR KEEPS [MEMORY VERSE]

Encourage and/or challenge your teenagers to memorize the Scripture below.

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).*