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**Isaiah 41:10** - Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

## REVIEW

- Overview of series
- Matthew 4:19
- We are committed to following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and on mission with Jesus
- Pride kills discipleship
- Ephesians - 5 spheres
- Discipleship is the process back to our design in Him

## ABIDE

- We know our salvation comes from God alone

**Ephesians 2:4-7** - But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

- We have been given a gift
- We see it's God's kindness that has lead us to him (Romans 2:4)
- After this gift that we humbly receive we are drawn to Him (Luke 7:36-50)
- Sometimes we struggle to pursue but we push past it
- How can we follow, be changed, and be on mission if we don't know what that looks like?
- Romans 12:2 (Back to the design)
- Jesus Himself mentioned this

**John 15:1-9** - I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. "Yes, 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. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love.

- We are called to cry out for the nourishment of His word.
- Abiding is about seeing who He is, and who He says we are.
- It's a journey back to the design, not a list of demands for our own "pick and choose" design.
- We are called to let our roots grow down to Him
- Ephesians 3:14-19

## WHAT IT DOESN'T MEAN

- Going by our feelings (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- If we're in a war we will get all kinds of thoughts when it comes to prayer, journaling, listening quietly, reading, spending time. If we go by those thoughts we are to fight them and listen to what God calls us to Abide by.
- The enemy wants to cut us off from Abiding
- The word of God never contradicts the word of God
- We are to test the spirits or thoughts we have with the word of God (1 John 4:1-3)
- Jesus said his people hear his voice and follow him. Abiding isn't an option. If we are to know his voice we must spend time knowing it. (John 10:27)
- We are not only to spend time hearing his word in obedience. But devote our lives to putting them into practice.

**Matthew 7:24** - Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.

## PRACTICAL

- Reading the Bible
- Journaling
- Sitting quietly
- Listening to the Bible, dwell
- Reading books from the right people to help break down scripture
- Studying
- It's not an option

"The Gospel -the good news of what God has done for us in Christ- is like the manna God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness. It had to be gathered daily and could not be stored up. In a similar sense, we need to appropriate the Good News every day as we see ourselves continuing to sin every day." - Jerry Bridges

- Jesus modeled it
- We have no option
- We are called to spend time following Jesus, be changed by Jesus, and be committed to Jesus. This starts by obedience.

## CLOSING QUESTIONS

1. What are you hearing today?
2. Have you been living a life with a "pick and choose" definition of a Disciple or Christian?
3. Do you see God's design?
4. What does one step into obedience look like? Do you need to ask for forgiveness?
5. Have you accepted Jesus as Lord?

## QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

**Passages to consider:** Matthew 4:18-22; Isaiah 40:21-29; Ephesians 1:3-11

*Ice Breaker Suggestion: You are going on a long trip- two to three months, besides family and pets, what or who do you take with you?*

1. Share from the sermon something that was thought-provoking.
2. Read Matthew 4:18-22. What did it take for Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Jesus? Name some different areas of their lives impacted by their relationship with Jesus. What changes may have taken place in their life as they walked with Jesus?
3. How would you describe who God is to a curious friend? Take a look at Isaiah 40:21-29. How does this passage describe God? What is significant to you from this passage? How does your view of who God is compared to this?
4. Read Ephesians 1:3-11. Look for what God has done for us and who we are in a relationship with Christ. What do you discover? In what ways do being in a relationship with Jesus impact your identity – who you are?
5. Abiding or remaining is a term for relational connection. How do you nurture a life-giving connection with Jesus? What rhythms and practices help you? What can be challenging?
6. How is following Jesus impacting your life in this season? How does being in a relationship with Jesus require humility for you?

### Practical Action Step:

*Read or listen to Ephesians 1:3-2:10 this week 2 or 3 times. Each time notice the phrase "in Christ". Take note of what this passage says about who God is and who you are because of a relationship with Jesus.*

**Passages for next week:** Church Sphere – Ephesians 2:11-4:32