

Jesus Is The Power For Your New Life A Bible Study On John 15:1-8

2nd Step - Lesson 4

"I want to live God's way. I want to leave this life of doing dope and doing wrong behind. I've been praying for God to keep me strong, and I've been trying my hardest for years to make it happen, but I don't ever seem to change. Every time I relapse I figure, Well, this time I just have to try even harder to live right. But I just can't seem to make it work."

It's frustrating and discouraging to keep trying and failing to change the way you live. Especially when you reach deep inside yourself for the strength and the will to change, and you come up short, it's easy to start thinking that there's no hope.

God has never said in his Word that it's up to you and me to somehow come up with the strength to change our lives. God doesn't just give us the commands; he gives us the will and the ability to carry them out. And he does that by giving us *himself*.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

- What are some ways that you (and other people you know) have tried to change your behavior (for instance: shaming yourself, scaring yourself, trying to use common sense, etc.)?
- Have you ever turned the control of something over to someone who was better at the job than you were? What does it feel like to work under a capable person, rather than trying to do a job yourself that you're not good at?

John 15:1-8

1 [Jesus said:] "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What happens to a living branch that gets broken off from the rest of the tree? What happens when a living branch stays firmly attached to a healthy tree?

What promises do you see Jesus making to you here, when he says, “I am the vine, you are the branches?”

2. In verses 1-2 Jesus talks about pruning the branches, cutting off the dead or diseased parts. How have you experienced God pruning things away from you that don't belong?

3. Look at Jesus' promise in verse 3. Here are some of the words of Jesus to you that make you clean:

- “Friend, your sins are forgiven” [Luke 5:20].
- “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned” [John 3:16-18].
- “My blood of the covenant is poured out for the many, for the forgiveness of sins” [Matthew 26:28].

Are there some other words of Jesus you can think of that let you know you are clean in God's sight?

4. In verses 4-5 Jesus is saying that he not only gives you his Word to be your strength, he gives you *himself*. How do you see Jesus describing his connection with you in these verses?

So what is your real source of power for living a new life? How do you think life might be different, relying on that power source?

5. Verse 6 talks about what happens to a branch that is cut off from the rest of the plant. What have you seen happen when you cut yourself off from your relationship to Jesus and try to use some other source of power to live your life?

6. In verse 7 Jesus is making a surprising promise. Think about what he means when he says, “Ask for whatever *you wish*.” As you grow in your relationship to Jesus, and Jesus replaces your sinfulness with his holiness, your desires change and become the same as God's desires. Have you seen your mind and heart changing with Jesus living in you?

7. If living the Christian life were just a matter of you trying your best, God wouldn't receive much glory from your life. What does verse 8 have to say about what happens when Jesus lives in you as the power for your Christian life?

CLOSING PRAYER: What “fruit” would you like to see Jesus producing in you