



Links Players

Life: Union with Jesus

So you must remain in life-union with me, for I remain in life-union with you. For as a branch severed from the vine will not bear fruit, so your life will be fruitless unless you live your life intimately joined to mine. (John 15:4, TPT)

Have you been able to pause and wonder what you are hoping for in 2023? Did you write down any goals or resolutions? Maybe you want to read your Bible every day! Pray more? Volunteer? Read more books? Spend more time on the practice range or chipping area (always a good idea).

Our new intentions are often action-oriented. This is not a bad thing, for life to move forward, we need to do things. However, our relationship with God expands when we stop all doing and start living in union with him.

You might be more familiar with this translation of today's passage, "Abide in me, as I abide in you (NRSV)." What does intentional abiding or remaining in life-union with Jesus look like? How does abiding in Jesus lead to bearing good fruit?

There was a significant moment in Jesus' ministry when many who had been following him no longer believed and walked away. Jesus asked his disciples, "Do you want to go away as well (John 6:67 ESV)?" They were wrestling with Jesus' teaching, "Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (John 6:56 ESV)."

Peter responds on behalf of the group, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life (John 6:68 ESV)."

Jamie Winship, in *Living Fearless*, writes, "Peter, at least at this moment, understands that being with Jesus is not a contractual, transactional, quid pro quo that is worthwhile as long as it's working to his advantage. In fact, Peter explains his relationship with Jesus as quite the opposite." How often do we fall into a transactional relationship with Jesus?

Winship continues, "It's a divinely initiated, covenantal relationship, the benefits of which are quite one-sided. Jesus alone has the words of eternal life, and Jesus is the only hope because Jesus is the absolute Holy One of God, the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter's part is to receive." And so, it is to be with us - receive.

As we walk through our days this year, may we choose life-union with Jesus. This will require us to ask questions, stop to listen, and then pay attention to what he has to say.

Jamie Winship offers some questions to help our abiding.

"God, teach me something about you and your universe that I do not know."

"God, teach me something about myself that I do not know."

"God, teach me something about someone else that I do not know."

"God, what is the most important thing you want to say to me right now?"

"Lord, would you tell me or reveal to me one place in my life where I'm not living in truth?"

Engaging honestly with these questions will deepen our life-union with Jesus and lead to bearing good fruit.

Prayer: Lord, open our minds and hearts to abide in you this year. Teach us to stop and ask you questions and then to listen and pay attention.

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Tracy Hanson

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