

GCFSM SUNDAY BULLETIN

JANUARY 21, 2024
BULLETIN ISSUE #3



SERMON OUTLINE

ABIDE IN JESUS

JOHN 15:1-11
REV. LITO VILLORIA

In this passage, Jesus used the metaphor of the vine to emphasize the need for the disciples to have growing intimacy with Him. The image of the vine and the vinedresser focused on the essential connection between the vine and the branches. In the Old Testament, Israel had been regarded as the chosen vine in God's vineyard. What Israel failed to do, Jesus fulfilled as the True Vine. Jesus is the ultimate personification of the main purpose of every vine—to give life to every branch (15:1; Isaiah 5:1-7).

The vinedresser aims to see the vine bear fruit through the

branches. Any dead branch is removed and thrown away. The Father identifies the spurious and serious believers of Jesus. The former is broken off to be judged. While the latter is pruned to be more fruitful (15:2-3, 6).

Jesus commanded His disciples to abide in Him so that they would experience His abiding presence. If they do not abide in Him, they will not be able to do anything worthwhile for God. Conversely, those who abide in Jesus will be able to do everything that God wants done (15:4-5).

Jesus assured His disciples that if they have a growing intimacy with Him, God will grant whatever they ask for. This will be true because abiding in Jesus will direct their hearts to ask the Lord for only what is aligned to God's will and will bring glory to Him (15:7-8).

Jesus asserted that His love for His disciples overflows from the Father's love for Him. The disciples must remain in the love of Jesus through obedience if they are to bear much fruit. And just as Jesus obeyed the Father and abided in His love, the disciples needed to do the same (15:9-10,12-17).

In the end, Jesus affirmed His disciples that He gave all these commands so they would experience the inexplicable joy of having a growing intimacy with Him. This kind of joy comes only from the Lord. It starts with a saving faith in Him, and is sustained by constant submission to Him (15:11).

In this sermon, we will be reminded that discipleship is not an easy journey. There will be a lot of trials and testings. But despite all these, we can have inexplicable joy in our hearts that no one can take away when we abide in Jesus. ✨

EACH ONE, DISCIPLE ONE

REV. LITO VILLORIA

Happy Anniversary to our beloved GCF South Metro (GCFSM) church family! God has been so gracious to GCFSM ever since He established it 27 years ago, January 19, 1997 at the 4th Floor, One Legacy Place outside Alabang 400. After a few years, we outgrew the place. In April 2000, we leased the IIAP Building at Madrigal Business Park, along Alabang-Zapote Road. By the time the 5-year lease expired, God moved us to our present facility here along Daang Hari.

All through those years, God did His great work in building up the church for His glory. We cannot be where we are apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:4-5). This is a timely reminder for us to have a posture of utter dependence on Jesus to be the church He wants us to be as we do the work He intends for us to do.

The year 2024 marks a transition year for GCF South Metro in our journey towards becoming an intentional discipling church. This glorious journey started in 2010 when God

convicted our church leadership to bring back the church to its discipling roots. During that time, we had less than 200 people in our Growth Groups. But, as we persevered in focusing on our Main Thing of Multiplying Disciples, God has entrusted to us today about 1,500 people in our Growth Groups including Evangelistic Growth Groups.

God has been faithfully guiding us every step of the way. We have seen the fruits of our labor. We witness people growing towards spiritual maturity. We see God adding people to our number. We get opportunities to be involved in mission work around our community, in various places around the country, and a handful of areas abroad. All these are made possible only by the grace of God.

Last year, God warned us of the danger of complacency. There are still so many areas we need to improve in our ministry. We are not yet where we want to be. And if we just keep doing what we have been doing the past thirteen years, we will get the same results. We need to exert every effort to discern how to improve our love for God and service to His people. Otherwise, we might be found unfaithful and unfruitful in doing the work of ministry.

As I went on a one-month extended time with God and His Word last September, the Lord

affirmed three things we need to focus on in the coming years ahead. First, guide people to grow towards spiritual maturity. Second, challenge people to keep directing others to Christ. And third, encourage people to multiply disciples. In essence, this year we encourage each one to disciple one.

We need to go back to the core foundation of our faith—the Lord Jesus Christ. As followers of Jesus, our purpose is to know Jesus in a deeper and more intimate way. Our priority is to love Jesus by obeying Him continually. Our posture is to abide in Jesus in utter dependence on Him. Our participation is to serve Jesus for the building up of His church. And our passion is to proclaim Jesus at every opportunity.

If you are to disciple another person, you need first to know Jesus, love Jesus, abide in Jesus, serve Jesus and proclaim Jesus. As you walk with Jesus, you disciple another by walking alongside that person and guide him or her to know Jesus, love Jesus, abide in Jesus, serve Jesus, and proclaim Jesus. This year and the coming years ahead, let's keep walking with Jesus (discipleship) as we do our work for Him (discipling)! ✨

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