

I AM | Week 5 - I AM the vine**Message Big Idea**

“Remaining” in Jesus is the answer to longing for how to make lasting change possible. He is the vine and we are the branches.

Scripture

John 15:1-8 and Galatians 5:22-23

Points to Keep In Mind

1. If you and your group haven't already, this week would be the ideal time to sign up for Community Daily as we will read through the entire Book of John together during this I AM series. Community Daily is a free resource created by our staff here at COMMUNITY that goes directly into your inbox once you sign up. It's a great way to start your day! You can sign up at communitychristian.org/daily
2. God is the gardener, Jesus is the vine and we are the branches and according to Jesus' metaphor, we can only change by “remaining” in Him. “Remaining” in Jesus means staying connected to Him through time in prayer and His Word, celebrating together in worship and service and growing together in small groups. Here at COMMUNITY, we like to talk about the three connections that come together in the YOU+ life, You+ God, You+ the Church and You+ the World. These are very practical areas where we are invited to “remain” in Jesus.
3. The first type of pruning is more negative. The branch is dry, bearing no fruit, so it's cut off and thrown away. If you don't do this type of pruning, the dead parts can kill the whole vine. The second type of pruning is more positive. The branch is living and healthy, so it's pruned to produce even more fruit. In both cases, pruning requires that you “remain,” which can take time. Just as Moses found himself exiled from Egypt, as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into the fire and Esther was alone in the royal court with a difficult decision, they all “remained” in God. God was with them all, just as Jesus says to us in John 15:4, “Remain in me, and I will remain in you.”
4. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and produces behavior traits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Additional Questions and Resources

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism
4. What have you been learning from the Community Daily? communitychristian.org/daily
5. If someone is seeking professional counseling, you can always refer them to our resource page: communitychristian.org/mentalhealth/
6. Find out more about having a YOU+ conversation by visiting: youplus.info
7. How have you been able to BLESS others recently? (B-begin with prayer, L-listen, E-eat, S-serve and S-share your story)