



Remain

03.15.2015

John 15:1-17

## study questions

Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.



### INTRODUCTION

Jesus told his followers that unavoidable trials aren't aberrations: they are expectations - they are the pruning of a loving Father. They can actually serve a beneficial purpose. Why? Because God can redeem, use, or work through the undeserved, unavoidable, circumstantial trials in our lives. But in order for that to happen, we have to remain, not run, and persevere toward his amazing purposes.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you usually handle sudden changes in your schedule? Do you go with the flow or does the unexpected stress you out? How about when you hit "dead ends" and have to take a different path than you thought would be open to you?
2. Talk about a time in your own life or the life of someone you know when good eventually came from adversity. How did that event influence your faith?
3. During the message, Dwain said, "Faith that gets a yes from God is nothing compared to faith that gets no answer or no for an answer but endures anyway." How does that statement challenge what you believe (or want to believe) about faith? What is comforting about that statement?
4. **Read John 15:1-17 together and all at once.**
  - a. Do you think it's realistic to be able to consider your adversity or changes in life as God the gardener pruning for better faith? Why or why not?
  - b. How would a perspective like that change your relationship with God? How might it change the way you deal with your circumstances?
5. When Jesus calls his faithful-followers friends (v. 13ff), what does that do for your faith? How about your love for Jesus? How does that affect how you see adversity in your life?
6. Do you agree with the idea that spiritual growth and maturity has less to do with what you know and more with how you trust God and persevere in the face of adversity? Why or why not?
7. As you think about the adversity you face right now, what is one thing you can do to remain with Jesus through it "so that you might go and bear much fruit"? If you choose to "endure to mature," how might your current circumstances grow your faith? What can this group do to support you?

### MOVING FORWARD

Everyone deals with unexpected, unresolvable tensions in life. But God brings purpose to pain . . . if we cooperate. When you're "in the meantime," ask him for the strength to "remain in him." Ask him for direction. Pray like this:

*Heavenly Father, I believe you will use this until you choose to remove this. Give strength to remain in you, and to see as you see.*

*Jesus, thank you that you are my truthful and faithful friend. And help me to do as you say.*

### CHANGING YOUR MIND

I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. John 15:16