



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC How to Serve God Effectively

SPEAKER Elder David Foo

THEME Faith

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In the Old Testament, Israel was often symbolised as God's vine (Ps 80:6, Hos 10:1, Jer 2:21, Ez 15:6-7). However instead of producing good fruit, Israel produced bad fruit. Despite this failure, God did not abandon His people. Instead, Jesus came as the 'true' vine, fulfilling what Israel could not. John 15:1 states "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser".

HOW CAN WE SERVE GOD EFFECTIVELY?

By identifying Himself as the 'true' vine in John 15:1, Jesus invites us – His disciples – to participate in His mission. But how can we do this effectively?

John 15:5 states "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit...."

1) Remember: We are the branches through which Jesus, the True Vine, bears fruit

While Jesus is the 'true' vine, we, His disciples, are the branches. In serving God, we are to:

a) Remember it is privilege to serve

While Jesus could have done everything Himself; in His sovereignty and wisdom, God chose to give us a part to play in His plan. It is not a chore or burden. On the contrary, we get to be part of God's plan as He uses us to partner Him to bear fruit and to bring about His redemptive plan for His glory.

b) Remember it is God who brings the fruit

God is the one that brings the victory, we are merely vessels through which God works through. Without God, there will be no fruit. It is not about us, our capabilities or abilities, instead it is all about Him. Hence all glory belongs to God. Our task is to 'abide' in Him.

2) Remain: Our task is to abide in Him

John 15:4 states "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine; neither can you, unless you abide in Me"

What does it mean to 'abide' in Him?

a) Abiding is Continuous Connection to Jesus

This refers to a constant and active approach to being connected to Jesus - staying close to Jesus through praying, listening and acknowledging Him. While we may be more used to talking to God (in prayer), we need to practice the art of listening to God and learn how to discern the voice of God. God wants to connect with us and many times, God may speak to us, but we are too busy or distracted to hear Him speaking to us. We need draw near to God to practice the spiritual discipline of listening to God. God's Word is like *manna*, needed daily for our spiritual growth and sustenance.

b) Abiding is Following God

- To abide in Him, we are to, in faith, follow His leading and His will for our lives. Instead, many times, we act in presumption – doing things our own way and expecting God to bless our plans and actions anyway. While it is good to go to God in prayer with our wants, it is better to go to God to ask Him what He wants.
- To abide in Him, we are also to follow His timing. This means to be patient and to trust in His timing which is always perfect. We need to “wait on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14), and guard against taking shortcuts or taking matters into our own hands.

c) Abiding is Obedience

Abiding is a two-way relationship. God abides in us when we obey His teachings (John 14:23). We abide in God when we keep His commandments (John 15:10). Both passages show that as followers of Christ, we need to obey Him and follow His commands and teachings. Only then will God abide in us.

CONCLUSION

To serve God effectively, firstly, **remember** that it is a privilege to serve Him. Jesus is the true vine, and we are the branches. The fruit comes from Him, not us. God works through us, allowing us to partner Him in His restorative and redemptive work. Secondly, we must **remain** or **abide** in Christ daily. Only when we *listen* to God can we *know* His will. Only when we *know* His will can we *obey* Him. Only when we *obey* Him do we truly *abide* in Him and He in us.

Only then can we truly bear much fruit- fruit that glorifies the Father and advances His Kingdom.

QUESTIONS

1. What does it look like in your daily life to “abide in Christ”? What practical habits or actions help you walk in obedience to God?

2. Serving God is a privilege and it is He who brings about the good fruit(s). In what ways have you been tempted to rely on your own strength or plans in serving God instead of trusting Him to bear fruit through you?

3. God wants to speak to us, but often we are too busy or distracted to hear His voice. Elder David Foo emphasized the need to have spiritual discipline to discern the voice of God. Pray this prayer and listen to what God is saying to each one of us. Share what God has spoken.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for Jesus. Because of Jesus, I can come right now into Your presence, into Your very throne room. I come not by works, but by grace through faith in Jesus. Lord, here in Your presence, I ask that You please silence any other voice that is not Your own in Jesus' name. Sanctify my mind and imagination and fill me with the fullness of Your Holy Spirit. Lord, please speak to me and tell me what You want me to know right now. If there's anything You want me to do, please let me know. In Jesus' name, Amen.