



DEEPER

UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 1 - *JOHN 15:1-11*

LEADER NOTES

Be sure to sign up for the mandatory group leader training in January by clicking this [link](#).

Leaders, thank you so much for your commitment to leading a Group at Upstate Church. The next four weeks are going to be instrumental in the life of our church. What God has done over the past few years has been extraordinary. We've seen the church grow, add campuses, people come to know Christ, and countless people take their next step with Jesus.

However, we believe the best is yet to come. While we praise God for what He has done, we want to be good stewards of His blessing. That means seeking to go deeper than ever before in our walk with him. We want to create a disciple-making culture at First Baptist Simpsonville/Upstate Church that brings us closer to God than ever before and takes the name of Jesus to people in the Upstate and around the world. For that to happen, each of us must be serious about going deeper in our walk with Christ.

Challenge your group over the next few weeks to get ready to go deeper!



FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE
UPSTATE CHURCH

COMMUNITY

OPEN THE GROUP BY CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND ALLOWING A MOMENT FOR EVERYONE TO HAVE A PLACE TO BELONG.

START THE GROUP BY TAKING PRAYER REQUESTS, FINDING OUT ABOUT PEOPLE'S WEEK, AND PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- *WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CONNECTED TO CHRIST?*
- *WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE IN YOUR LIFE?*

SCRIPTURE

TAKE THIS TIME TO STUDY THE BIBLE TOGETHER. REMEMBER, THE GOAL IS NOT JUST TO CONVEY INFORMATION, BUT TO HELP PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP LEARN TO READ THE BIBLE FOR THEMSELVES.

THE POINT

THE PATH TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS STARTS AND ENDS BY STAYING CONNECTED TO JESUS.

John 15:1-11

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 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. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), John 15:1–11.

STUDY NOTES

There are two primary things that people need to walk away from your group having learned from their study of the Bible this week:

1. It is significant that Christ called himself the “true vine.”

In the Old Testament, God called Israel “the vine,” so when Christ calls himself the “true vine,” he is saying that he is the fulfillment of the promises of God and the realization of the hope of the people of God. *We need to see how utterly amazing it is that Jesus comes to us as the fulfillment of all our hopes for an abundant life and connection to God.*

2. It is absolutely essential to remain connected to Christ.

The Christian life begins and ends with being connected to Christ. Connection to Christ is how we are saved. Connection to Christ is how we grow in our walk as Christians. Connection to Christ is how we bear fruit. Connection to Christ is how we find joy in life!

Focus on these two truths for groups, and connect the truths for your group! We must stay connected to Christ because he is the “true vine,” the fulfillment of all our hopes!

For more resources on this passage click the resources link [HERE](#).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- *Why is it significant that Jesus called himself the “true vine?”*
- *If Jesus is the “true vine” and we are “branches” of the vine, what does that say about what our relationship with him should look like?*
- *What does it mean to “abide” in Christ?*
- *How does Jesus say we can tell if people have a true connection to Christ?*
- *What does it mean to bear fruit?*
- *How does staying connected to Christ lead to the fullness of joy?*
- *Did the message or Bible study this week reveal a place in your life that you need to focus on connecting to Christ instead of living in your own power?*
- *How can we hold each other accountable to remaining connected to Christ?*
- *Is there anyone who would like to share a prayer request where they need God to move in their life?*

COMMISSION

AS YOU WRAP UP YOUR GROUP, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WE GO INTO THE WORLD ON MISSION FOR JESUS. USE THIS TIME TO FOCUS EVERYONE TO LIVE ON MISSION AS YOU LEAVE.

- CHRIST TELLS US TO STAY CONNECTED TO HIM AND BEAR FRUIT. WHAT IS JESUS CALLING YOU TO DO FOR HIM THIS WEEK?
- WHO IN YOUR LIFE NEEDS TO KNOW JESUS?



**CONNECTION
COMMUNITY
COMMITTMENT
COMISSION**