



Finding Home

Jesus' Invitation to a Transforming Friendship

"Make your home in me, and I will make my home in you."—Jesus

Spiritual Direction

Jesus states that a life connected to him will be fruitful. In a 21st-century culture that worships productivity, it's critical to understand the difference between "fruitful" and "productive." Fruit is the by-product of an organic process—farmers cannot manufacture an apple. Neither can we produce faith, hope, or love—they are gifts of the Spirit. Like a farmer, we can only cultivate the possibilities where something incredible can grow.

Exploring

What are Jesus' possibilities for our lives? Another way to ask this question is, "What is God's will for our lives?" Again, our Western mindset can severely bias our perspective here.

When discussing God's will, the New Testament never mentions any of our 21st-century vital concerns, such as vocation, job promotion, salary, investments, where to live, retirement, health care, education, marriage, significant purchases, etc.

Three passages in the New Testament describe God's individual will—his possibilities for our lives: Colossians 1:9; Romans 12:2; and Ephesians 5:15-17. In each case, a list of personal character traits follows, clarifying what God most desires for us.

God is specifically interested in our character—not our accomplishments, achievements, possessions, comforts, or fascinations other than how these shape or influence who we become. It is our character and what we do with it that translates into eternity.

Jesus asserts that the fruit of this "true vine" will be:

- 1) A wholehearted love for God and others (God's purpose).
- 2) Personal character conformed to the image of God (God's possibilities).

Question

What aspect of your character is currently "under construction"? In what ways is it being conformed to the image of Jesus?