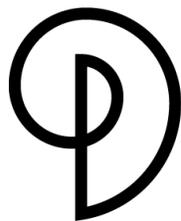


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Connecting

September 11 & 12, 2021

With all the distractions of daily life, being conscious of God's love and presence in every moment of every day may seem like an unrealistic goal. But with practice, it's possible!

SCRIPTURE TEXT: JOHN 15:1-8

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

In so many ways we are the accumulation of our habits. We become the things we do habitually, repeatedly, without thinking about it. And that principle is as true in discipleship as it is every other area of life. A disciple is someone who apprentices themselves to someone, to learn what they know, do what they do...to become like them. That describes our relationship with Jesus. We connect our lives by faith to Jesus' life, learning what he knows, doing what he does, drawing on the power of the Holy Spirit. It's awkward and challenging at first, but with practice we develop habits that shape our lives more and more into the likeness of Jesus.

Throughout this worship series we are going to be talking about developing the spiritual habits that deepen our faith, empowering us to experience the fullness of life that Jesus promised, and ultimately transform our lives more and more into the likeness of Jesus. But no matter what spiritual habit we're talking about, the goal is to connect us more deeply to the living Christ and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. And that's what Jesus is describing in our Scripture reading. Using the metaphor of a grape vine and branches, Jesus is telling his disciples, and us, about the importance of staying connected to him. Various translations use various words here...abiding, remaining, staying joined...but they are all describing an intimate, life-giving relationship. It took a while for me to understand that what Jesus is really describing is what I would describe as **awareness**. Scripture teaches that Christ dwells in us through the presence of the Holy Spirit, but we aren't always aware of it. The Spiritual Habits are those practices that increase our awareness of Christ in us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a time when you lost something...only to realize it was nearby, on your head or in your hand.
- What is Jesus teaching us in this passage?
- What are some things we can do to raise our awareness of Jesus in our daily lives?
- Why is it important to raise our awareness of Jesus?

APPLICATION: This week, consider one small step you can take to raise your awareness. Maybe it's a post-it on your bathroom mirror or some intentional time in Scripture. Ask God to help you become more aware.