

*"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 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." - Jesus, from the gospel of John (John 15: 3 - 4 ESV)*

Abide.

When I hear the word 'abide', I often think of the hymn, "Abide with me, Fast Falls the Evening Tide". There's a warmth to that word, a feeling of comfort. To 'abide' with someone is to stay near, be close, loved.

Jesus spoke these words to encourage his disciples. Jesus is talking about the vine and it bearing fruit, using this parallel to explain how we need to remain in Jesus.

We need to abide in Jesus.

How do we abide in Him?

We need to read the Bible, to pray and stay close to Him - mindful of how we use our time and what we expose ourselves to. We are exposed to so much through our culture - tv, news, movies, radio, social media and so many opinions. Let's protect our minds, and in turn, our actions:

"I need Thy presence every passing hour

What, but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power

. . . through cloud and sunshine, oh abide with me" (lyrics from the hymn, "Abide With Me")

Let's take this week to focus on how we can abide in Jesus and remain close to Him:

- Read the Bible often, start with John 14 - 15 where Jesus comforts us and promises us the Holy Spirit
- Seek friendships that are encouraging and kind, friends who love Jesus and who want to see you live a full life, developing the gifts God has given you.
- Enjoy songs that glorify God and music that helps you feel at peace and relaxed, able to reflect on the beauty of each day - beauty God gives us in creation, and in relationships.

I hadn't heard of Fernando Ortega until I listened to the song, "My Worth is Not My Own" on youtube - the one from the *Sing! Conference* where Fernando was the guest pianist with Keith and Kristyn Getty. Since hearing this song, I listened to a few more selections by Fernando and I do really enjoy listening to his stories and his beautiful piano playing. Very relaxing and meaningful.

Surrounding ourselves with Christian influences is important.

We are in the world and exposed to secular culture, of course, but we can choose what to listen to, what influences us. Choose Jesus - He is with us always, through this pandemic, sickness, even death. Jesus is here. Abide in Him.

*"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say,*

*'The Lord is my helper;  
I will not fear;  
what can man do to me?'" (Hebrews 13: 5 & 6 ESV)*

Have a wonderful week,  
Marsha Heeg  
Worship Director

Abide With Me [https://youtu.be/i5nbq\\_VEea0](https://youtu.be/i5nbq_VEea0)

Other great links, if you have extra time for listening:

My Worth is Not My Own <https://youtu.be/MV5x6M38ea8>

Living Room Concert Series: Fernando Ortega <https://youtu.be/9G7pxlGbFpg>