

March 17, 2023

Spring College Retreat, Ashland Woods Fellowship Center

Message 1: Jesus is the True Vine

[00:00]

Mark Miller: Can we read the verse all together as we end the singing time? Ready, go!

All: All things are yours, when you are His, and He and you are one!

Mark: And now smile!

All: “A boundless life, in Him there is, whence doubt and fear are gone!”

Mark: Amen. You can turn to your neighbor, and you can say, “there’s a boundless life.” You can go ahead, do it.

All: There’s a boundless life.

Mark: Do we even know what boundless means? You could say limitless life. You can turn to your neighbor and say, “there’s a limitless life.”

All: There’s a limitless life.

Mark: Wow, isn’t that good? Isn’t that good to be together and to sing like that?

Audience member: Yes!

[00:57]

Mark: I wanted to say hello to all of you. It’s good to see you. There’s many faces I don’t know; I haven’t met you yet. I’ll introduce myself. My name is Mark Miller. I live in Cleveland, Ohio. I live there with my wife and my children. I have a daughter who’s three and a half and a son who’s four months old, so we’re in the throes of babyhood. And we’re gonna share a simple—oh my goodness, wow. Thank you, brothers. We’re gonna share a simple message tonight, and did you all have outlines passed out to you? Wow, we’re on top of it.

Before we do though—I just had to say—I had to leave the room for the bingo game, but I heard the bingo game happening and I wanted to ask who won the bingo game? I see a lot of hands going up right now.

Three people? Did you guys find someone who carries dental floss with them?

[02:07]

Audience: *inaudible*

Mark: What?! I was looking at some of these and I was like, “wow, these are crazy!” ‘Is an ENFJ personality trait?’ Do you even know—do you know what that is? Do you even know who you are?

Audience: *inaudible*

Mark: You know three of them?! You guys are crazy. ‘Does not eat vegetables?’ You’re gonna get scurvy! And then some of them, I was like, “wow, this is downright aspirational.” Like ‘has zero unread emails?’ Is there anyone in here? What?! No, I don’t believe it! You guys should stand up and take a bow to everyone else.

Oh, DMs, not emails? Do you guys even use email? Man, these are wild. So, three people won? And you got golden tickets? Wow! Are there more golden tickets this week?

Audience member: Yes!

Mark: There are?

Audience: *inaudible*

[03:20]

Mark: I'm excited. This is a weekend full of excitement! And golden tickets. Well, I'd like to come to the message, to the outline tonight. So, if you finally have your outlines, if you can take them out. And I want to talk a little bit about the title for this conference and about the heart behind it. The title that's on the page before you says, "Knowing and Enjoying the Lord Jesus." And I saw the title on the slide before it was different. It was "Walking with the Lord." Walking with the Lord, but you know, you can just put the two together. We're talking about the same thing: Walking with the Lord, knowing and enjoying the Lord Jesus.

And the heart behind this is that our Christian life is something more than merely outward things. Outward activities, outward obligations, outward responsibilities, outward practices. These things are all good and important and it is important to have them, but the Christian life is much more than merely these things. There's something inward, something on the inside, something vital in the Christian life, and we hope to capture that by this title: "Knowing and Enjoying the Lord Jesus."

I wanted to share a story with all of you. It's not personal—it's a Bible story, okay. Maybe I'll have a personal story later. But this Bible story happened many, many, many, many years ago, way back in 2 Chronicles in the Old Testament. And at that time, the nation of Israel was in the midst of civil war. So, they were only a couple generations removed from their best kings—from King David, from King Solomon. Many of us have heard about these kings. There were people alive who probably heard King Solomon speak, and there were people alive who probably even saw David when he was in his old age—can you imagine that? But, after these kings, God judged the people because of Solomon, or He judged Solomon. And because of that, the nation was split in two. God's people were split into two halves. And—well, not quite two halves because, out of the 12 tribes of Israel, 10 of the 12 stuck together, and they were known as the Northern Kingdom. And then two of the 12 stuck together, and they were the Southern Kingdom.

You guys got it? North and south. We're in college, right? North and south. And you know, these two different sides fought each other a lot. They had a lot of battles, a lot of struggling with each other. And then the story picks up no differently. The two sides were going to battle each other. And the king of the southern nation—the southern kingdom—he had an idea for a speech to give. Now the king of the southern nation, he was from the house of David. He was the king according to God's heart. And then also, he was from Jerusalem where the temple was, and all the worship that was for God was there. And so, this king, he stood up—I imagine he stood up on a mountain—and he shouted over to the other mountain where the northern army was, and he said, "Hey you guys, don't fight us!" And then if you were on that side, you might be wondering, "Why shouldn't we fight you?"

[06:51]

Well, the king had a reason. He said, "Let me tell you why you shouldn't fight us! We have God on our side!" But listen to the reasoning that he gave. He said, "We have the sons of Aaron as the priests." The sons of Aaron were the people who God chose to be priests. He said, "We have the sons of Aaron as our priests, and they serve in the temple!" So, he said, "We have the right people doing the right things." And then he said even more. He said, "They offer the sacrifices in the morning and the evening, they offer incense in the morning and the evening, they put the showbread on the table; they're ready to light the lampstand." So, even more than that, it was the right people in the right place doing the right thing at the right time. Wow, can you believe that? And then, so he yells this over to the other side, and he says, "So don't fight us because we're right!"

And the other side shrugged their shoulders, and they said, "We're going to fight." And they divided into two sides, and they came against the southern army from two different sides. And the southern army, when they realized that they were sandwiched between two armies—you know what they did? They cried to the Lord. They said, "Lord, help us!" And

then the Bible says, “The Lord fought for them.” And then they won the battle. Even though they were outnumbered, even though they were sandwiched—they were in like an army sandwich—they were the ones who won the battle because the Lord fought for them. It's very interesting. If you had asked them, “Why did you win?” they might have said, “Because we have the right people doing the right things in the right place at the right time, so there!” But the Bible says something very different. The Bible says they won the battle; God fought for them because they trusted in the Lord.

You know, they had the right people doing the right things in the right place at the right time. If you looked at them outwardly, everything was right. Can we say that together? “Everything was right?”

All: Everything was right!

[09:10]

Mark: But the Bible says that's not why they won the battle. There was something much more than merely the outward things that were right. It was they trusted in the Lord. If you were to ask me, I'm not trying to put down the outward things. Actually, it is important to know what is right. I don't know how many of us even have a thought for what is right in God's eyes. But it is important—I'm not trying to put that down; I'm not trying to put that to the side. You know, I think it is right. God has a desire that His believers would meet together in oneness in the city that they live in, shining as a testimony of Christ to the people around them, and that's called the church in that city! But there's something more than merely being right! There's something on the inside—something on the inside of *you*—that matters. And that's why this title is called “Knowing and Enjoying the Lord Jesus.”

Do you know what the heart of this weekend is? You know what the title could have been? “Being Right.” Being Right. We all love it. We could have given a conference on it: Being Right. The title could have been “All the Outward Things.” That's not a bad title. That's kind of intriguing, kind of like, wow, I want to know all the outward things. All the outward things. But no, the heart of this weekend is this: Knowing and Enjoying the Lord Jesus, not something merely outward. We want to be talking about something on the inside, something in your heart, something in your relationship with the Lord. In this relationship with the Lord, it's not about just the outward things, not about merely being right. It's about knowing and enjoying the Lord Jesus. How many times can I say this title? Knowing and Enjoying the Lord Jesus. That's what everything this weekend is about. If after this weekend you go home and you remember nothing, you know nothing except how to know the Lord and enjoy the Lord from the inside, then this weekend was a success. That's what we want to touch, that's what we want to spend our time in, that's what we want to linger in. We want to linger in this thought of this inward knowing and enjoying of the Lord.

[11:35]

So, we come to the first message. This is the first message, “Jesus is the true vine.” And eventually we're going to get there in John chapter 15. And in John 15 verse 4, Jesus said to his followers, “Abide in Me and I in you.” Talk about an inward life. “Abide in Me and I in you.” And we'll get to that phrase, we'll talk about it, we'll try to demonstrate it, we'll see if it works. But before we even get there, I want to look at this first point here. Before even talking about abiding, I want to read this verse to you from Matthew chapter 11 verse 28: “To the weary and lowly, Jesus called: “Come to Me and follow Me.” And this is the verse, Matthew 11:28. How about we read this all together? Go.

All: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Mark: How about we read that one more time, and let's emphasize the “come to Me” and “I will give you rest.” Ready, go.

All: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Mark: This is something Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11, and I want to notice a couple of things in this verse for all of us. The first one is the audience who He's talking to. The audience is all who are weary and heavy laden. Maybe you came here this weekend, and you feel weary and heavy laden. You know, Jesus was speaking this word to all—to everyone who is weary and heavy laden.

Sean, when you look around this room—can you stand up and look around the room? How many is all?

Sean: All

Mark: Yeah. How many is all? Yeah. Is there anyone who is outside all? If you said all in this room, is there anyone outside? No. So can you just point to all? *Wow.* Thank you, Sean.

[14:00]

This word from Jesus, look at that word, it's to *all*. It's not to some. It's not to people who have given their life to follow the Lord. It's not to people who are living a certain way. It's not to people who have their life—things in their life—in a row. It's not to people who have grown a certain amount spiritually. It is to all, all who are what? Who are weary and heavy laden. You know, weariness implies a kind of activity. When you run, you grow weary. If you walk a lot, you grow weary. If you're carrying things with you, you grow weary. And then heavy laden implies something has been put on you by someone else. So being weary implies a lot of activity on your part. And being heavy laden implies being acted upon by someone or something else.

You know, all of us in this room, I believe at some point or another, have been weary or heavy laden. Weary because you do so much. Weary because you're so active. Weary because your life is so busy. Does anyone here have a busy life? If you say no, I don't believe you. Oh, that should be a bingo thing, "someone who doesn't have a busy life." Or you could write that on your card. You'll never find someone who matches that. Because all of us have lives that are so busy and so active—so many things happening, so many things to take care of, so many responsibilities. All of us at some point or another have experienced this word that Jesus says, "you are weary." Maybe even this weekend. You've come to this weekend, and you barely dragged yourself to this weekend because you're so tired from the week you just had. I know many schools just had their spring break, so maybe you're not so weary. But not every school has spring break. Maybe you're in the middle of midterms. Maybe you had midterms last week. Maybe you have them coming up. Someone just told me recently they don't want to think about going back to school next week. Why? Because it's wearying. It's so tiring. It's so busy. It's so active. And all the activity can make you weary.

This is true humanly. It's also true spiritually. Some are so active spiritually, doing so many things spiritually, being in so many groups—church groups—doing so many spiritual activities. You know what you sometimes find yourself feeling? You feel weary. Why? Because you're so active and tired. And then the "heavy laden" means that someone else has put something on you. And you're now burdened. You're burdened by that thing. Sometimes we get burdened by our own doing. We do things, and then all of a sudden, now we have a burden on our shoulders. Now we feel a sense on the inside of responsibility, or on a negative side, a sense of guilt, a sense of shame. All of these things are burdens that we carry upon our shoulders. Sometimes it's things that other people do to us. And we're carrying that with us. And it just makes us feel like, "Ugh, I have this weight on me." That's the heavy laden. And Jesus cries out. He calls out to all who are weary and heavy laden. And listen to His call. His call is not to do, His call is not to learn, His call is not to go. His call is to come. His call is to come. Jesus' call to you if you are weary, His call to you if you're heavy laden, His call to you, even this weekend, is come! Come where? Come to Me.

[17:55]

Oh, how much Jesus desires that we would come to Him. You know, when He said this statement, there was a lot of other things happening around Him. There were disciples of John the Baptist, there were disciples of the Pharisees, there were other things going on. You know, Jesus didn't say, "Come to John the Baptist," like another powerful minister. He didn't say, "Come to religion." He didn't say, "Come to tradition." He didn't even say, "Come to the right things." He didn't say, "Come *do* the right things." Jesus said, "Come to *Me*." You know what is on Jesus' heart? You know what's on *His* heart? Here, I started this whole thing by saying we want to talk about our heart, but do you know what's on Jesus' heart? On Jesus' heart is this call to all of us: "Come to *Me*."

This weekend, what does Jesus want from us? Come to Me. Tonight, what does Jesus want from us? Come to Me. Jesus is calling this out to each one of us, even tonight, even right now. This is the call of Jesus echoing out through the

scripture to us today. Jesus is saying “Come to Me!” Oh, have you come to Jesus before? Jesus is calling, “Come again. Come again. Come to Me again.” If you've never come to Jesus before, maybe you're here, maybe you're in this room and you're like, “I have forever eternally been weary and heavy laden.” Maybe you've never come to him before. My encouragement to you tonight is to listen to the call that Jesus has given you tonight. Come to Him. Oh, come to Jesus. And you know, you may have come to Jesus many times before. You may have come to Jesus this morning. You know what? The call of Jesus to you tonight is still the same as it was then: come to Me! You know what Jesus wants? He wants you to come to Him. What does it mean to come to Him? Well, you've got to just, like, leave where you are. Algernon, if I ask you, “come to me.”

Algernon: Sure.

Mark: Can you do it? Yeah, come now. Come on, come on, come on. Wow, look. Wow. *Wow!* What a good illustration. Do you know what Algernon had to do? He had to leave his chair and come to stand up here with me, right? Amen. Yeah. And he did it. Praise the Lord. And you know, when Jesus says, “come to Me,” you know what He wants you to do? He wants you to leave your burdens, leave your activity, leave all the busyness of your life, leave everything that you were in this week, this morning, today, this afternoon, before this meeting, leave it and come to Him! Thank you.

[20:56]

That was an easy illustration. You know, Jesus wants you to just come to Him. I don't know. I feel like this is, maybe this is the only thing on my heart tonight, is that you would come to Jesus! That's it! After everything you've been going through the past days and weeks and months and years, maybe your whole life, Jesus wants you just to come to Him! And He gives a promise to all who would come to Him. His promise is this: I will give you rest. Wow. Praise the Lord. To those who are weary, to those who are heavy laden, Jesus has a promise, and that promise is rest. And that is not just a promise to you, it is a promise that Jesus Himself says, “I will give.” *I will give.* It's not just that you'll find rest, it's not just that you'll be able to ignore all the things that give you the burdens. But Jesus says, “*I will give you rest!* Just come to Me. Leave where you are, leave your position. Come to where I am, and *I will give you rest!*”

You know what we hope this weekend? We hope that after this weekend, you would just feel like, “Wow, I'm so rested.” Maybe not physically. Because there's golden tickets to win, you know? There's competitions to get first place in. And there's people to talk late into the night with, all the pillow talk, all the—whatever—catching up, all the whispering in the middle of the night. You may not go to bed until a certain time. You may leave the weekend a little bit tired. You may sleep all the way back to where your home is. But maybe, at least we hope that on the inside, from your spirit, you would have a sense, “*I found rest!*” Why? Because I came to Jesus! I came to Jesus Friday night. I came to Jesus Saturday morning. I came to Jesus Saturday afternoon. I came to Jesus Saturday evening. I came to Jesus Sunday morning *twice!* I came to Jesus so much, and now I'm just filled with a restfulness that comes from Him. I hope, you know, we should all pray tonight. Oh, Lord, I want this weekend to be a weekend of rest. But, you know, it's not just by ignoring all the busyness. It's by coming to Jesus. When you come to Him, that's when His promise comes true. He will give you rest. Oh, you know, what I'm talking about also—and maybe you already heard shades of it—is that in Jesus' heart is not just a coming and then leaving. But in Jesus' heart is a coming and *staying*, a coming and *abiding*.

[23:47]

So, let's go to the next point to His followers. So, to the weary and lowly, Jesus called, “Come to Me.” Then to His followers, Jesus entreated, “Abide in Me.” You know, it's the same voice. The same voice that called, “Come to Me,” is the same voice that now says, “Abide in Me.” This is what is in His heart, is that we would come, that we would stay, we would remain. You know, some other words for this word, “abide,” you could use the word “continue,” “dwell,” “endure,” “remain,” “stand,” “tarry,” “*abide*.” All of these words just kind of portray a picture of a lingering, of a staying, of a remaining, of a continuing, of a continuing in the very presence of Christ. He says, “Abide in Me and I in you.”

Okay, I want to try to show you—Sean and Joe, can you come up? My brothers. Okay, very good. Oh, sorry, *that* Joe. Sorry, Joe. Sean and Joe, both from Cleveland, Ohio. Yay, okay. Sean, I want you to be Jesus, and Joe, you're all of us, okay? So, I want you to start over here. Jesus, what are you calling out to Joe?

Sean: Come and follow me!

Mark: Very good. Come to Me—He said, “come to Me.” Yeah, what is He calling out to all of you?

Audience: Come!

Mark: Yeah, come! We're getting it! Come to Me—very good. Okay, wait, you came too fast. Joe is all of us, Jesus is over here calling.

Sean: Come to me!

Mark: And we're going, “Hey, how are you doing, how's your week, how was your week?”

Sean: Come to me!

Mark: Hey, did you see what happened in March Madness today? Did you see what happened *yesterday*?

Sean: Come to me!

Mark: Did you get that assignment done that you had to get done?

Sean: [*whispering*] Come to me.

Mark: You gotta be louder, louder, louder, louder. Did you hear what she said?

Sean: Come to me! Come to me!

Mark: You see, all the things that can get in the way? Sorry, I'm running out of ideas on the spot here. Did you find someone who carried dental floss? No, I didn't find them either, I don't think they exist.

Sean: Come to me!

Mark: Okay, so many things can easily distract us from the call that Jesus is calling out to us tonight, but praise the Lord, that call can get through. Can you just call again?

Sean: Come to me!

Mark: Yeah! Amen. And so now all of us—all of us—need to come, come to Jesus. Okay, but now it's not just “come to Me.” What's the other word that we're talking about?

Audience: Abide.

Mark: Abide! Abide in Me. Okay, so I'm over here. Hey, Joe, let's talk about March Madness. Joe, we forgot to hit submit on that project!

Sean: Abide in me!

Mark: Joe, what's on your phone? You know what Christ wants? He wants not just a coming, but a remaining, a continuing, an enduring. What are some of these other words? A remaining, a standing, a tarrying, an abiding. You can say, “Joe, I just want you to abide in me.”

Sean: Abide in me.

Mark: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sean: I want you to abide in me.

Mark: And I in you.

Sean: And I in you!

Mark: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And so, then I can be over here. You forgot to hit submit!

Sean: Just abide in me.

Mark: Yeah, yeah, yeah. But then, Joe, you can come to take care of this, but He abides in you. Yeah, there you go! Okay, very good. Okay, wait, stay up, stay up. Okay, this is a very good illustration of abiding, but this is a very good illustration of abiding *with* someone. Can you abide *in* him?

Not bad, not bad. That's like, abiding *on* him. And then, now, can *you* abide *in* *him* at the same time? Does your mind hurt now? Yeah, you know, we can illustrate abiding *with* someone else—not that hard—but to abide *in*, now this is another matter. Thank you, brothers.

[28:48]

Jesus didn't just say, "abide *with* Me; He didn't just say continue *with* Me." He said abide—what—abide *in* Me and I *in* you." You know, this "in," we have to appreciate this word "in" and how precious it is. It really portrays a relationship with the Lord that is intimate beyond any relationship that you could have. Oh, abide *in* Me and I *in* you. You know what this "in" means? It means, okay, abide in Me, abide in Jesus. It means that everything that's in Jesus, you are there! Everything that's in His heart, you are there! Everything that's in His mind, you're there! All the fullness that's in Jesus, you're in there! Wow!

And then also, "and I in you." He in you. That means that everything that is in you, Jesus is there. Your whole heart is open to Him. All of your thoughts are open to Him. All of your feelings are open to Him. Your decisions are open to Him. Your whole person, every part of you is open to Him. Everything that's in Jesus, His whole person, His whole being, all of who He is, all that He has is just like, open to you. Everything in His heart is open to you. Of the fullness that's in Him, it's open to you. Everything in Him, you're there! He says abide in Me! You know what Christ wants? He wants you to be right in there. Where all of His thoughts, all of His feelings, all of His heart, all of His desires, all of His fullness is just open to you. And He also wants you to be just as open to Him. Your heart, your thoughts, your feelings, your decisions, your desires, everything that you're going through, your life, your living, all that you have in you could just be open to Him.

Wow. "Abide in Me and I in you." What a different Christian life this is. We like—especially at a young age—we like to be told what we should do. Especially young men. Am I right? Well, okay, I'm not gonna ask you. You're all gonna say, "No, we don't wanna be told what to do." Okay, but just anecdotally, one of the favorite books of the Bible for young brothers to read is the book of James. Why? Because it tells you, "Shape up or ship out!" And also, Proverbs—Proverbs and James. Those are some of my favorite books of the Bible to read when I was in college.

[31:41]

And then, I'm with some college students now, and we asked them—some young college brothers—and we asked them, "What do you want to study this semester?" What do you think they said? The book of James! And I was like, "Oh man, okay, fine." But, you know, we like to be told what to do. We like to be given helps. We like to be—whatever—all of these outward things. But the life that Jesus is opening up for us here is much deeper than just that. It is a life where we are in Him and we're *remaining* in Him. And it's a life where He's in *us* and He's remaining in us. Kendrick, you know what? You can be in Him! You are in Him! And Jesus says, "I want you to remain there!"

And then also, you would be so open to Him. He's in you and He's remaining in you. Well, not just Kendrick, but also all of us. Jesus' call to us this weekend is "come to Me." And not just "come to Me," but "abide in Me." I wanna just cover one more point and then kind of end. But this is from the verses that are down below. "The Christian life is more than a system or outward form. It is a life of abiding in Christ." And this is John chapter 15. I'll read verses one, and four, and five.

"I am the true vine and My Father is the vine dresser." And verse four: "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit. For apart from Me, you can do nothing."

Okay, in this picture—when Jesus says, “Abide in Me and I in you—” is the result of it that the right thing is done? Is it that the outward forms are taken care of? It's not. I'm not trying to put those down. But I'm just trying to emphasize and portray to us tonight that the result of abiding in Him and He in you is that fruit is born! But not because of an outward system, not merely in outward form, but because of a life flow within. You know, when you just talk about this picture of the vine and the branches, Jesus Himself is emphasizing this one thing: there is a flowing of life from Me, the vine, to you, the branches. And the life flows back. And then I flow more life to you.

[34:34]

And then eventually, as I flow life to you again and again and again and again, eventually fruit is born from those branches. You know what you need? You know what kind of Christian life you need? You need a Christian life that's a flow of Christ's life. You know, Christ came to give life. We sang songs before this meeting, right, about that life within. I don't know if they were purposely chosen—they probably were—but there's a life within that comes from Christ Himself. Christ came to give life and to give it abundantly! And when Christ speaks and you hear His words—Oh, you come to life! You know what He wants to give you? He wants to give you His life! And then you know what He wants you to do? He wants you to remain in Him. And He wants you to experience, as you remain in Him, a flowing of life. A flow of life that comes from Him and just flows into you.

Okay, so Joe and Sean, can you come back real fast? All right, here's our Jesus and us. And let's just say they're abiding in each other, okay? All right, abiding in Jesus and Jesus abides in you. Yes, very good. And then you know what's happening here in this relationship? As we abide in Christ and Christ abides in us, you know what's happening between us—or between them? There's just a flow of life, a flow of life that comes from Christ to us. When you're abiding in Christ and Christ is abiding in you, you know what you experience? Do you experience great power? Not in this picture. You experience a flow of life. Do you experience wonderful victory? Not in this picture. In this picture, when you're so joined with Christ—so one with Christ—you know what you experience? You experience a *flow* of life. Can you just show that, just a flow? Yeah, look at that. Yeah, well, yeah, very good—just for you, just for you.

I hope that this is our weekend. I hope that this weekend we could touch this, that tonight we could touch this. But even more than tonight, this whole weekend we could touch this. We are abiding in Christ, and there's a life flow from Christ to us. And then not just this weekend—thank you, brothers—not just this weekend, but even our whole Christian life could be marked by this.

[37:08]

It's easier to taste this flow of life when we're together with a lot of Jesus lovers, Jesus seekers, and then you suddenly taste in a stronger way, “Wow, there's a flowing of life from Christ to me.” But even more than that, when you go home, sometimes when you're by yourself or when you're just with a few Christians on the campus that you're at, you can still experience a flow of life. Because the flow of life is not dependent upon a big group that's gathered together being led in song and worship. The flow of life is dependent on one thing: abide in Me, and I in you.

If you can be a Christian just abiding in the Lord, and the Lord is abiding in you, you know what your Christian life becomes? It becomes a life of just following a flow of life, a flow of God's divine life. You could be doing a lot of things. You could be a very busy Christian. You could be doing a lot of outward things—and that's why I'm not trying to put down outward things—but actually in all those outward things, in all those tasks, responsibilities, the things that you do even for the Lord, you become a Christian doing those things, but you're full. You're full of life. You're in these things, but you're experiencing a flow of life. As Christians, we don't need more external effort. The branch doesn't need to try harder. A branch just needs more communicated life, life from the vine. You know this weekend, you don't have to try harder, praise the Lord. You should all smile and say, “praise the Lord.” You don't have to try harder. When you go back to your campus, you don't have to try harder. It's not about more effort. It's about, oh, just a flow of life from Christ. A flow of life from the vine to you. A flow of life to you, a branch. And then as the life is flowing, then it just bears fruit.

I don't know of any branch that tries really hard to bear fruit. I gotta do it, I gotta do it. And then boom, it happens. No, it's just the branches are just in the vine. And then the vine is flowing life. And then as the life flows, fruit is born.

Something is born that makes glad, both God and man. Something for God or something for man, it doesn't matter. I'm not here to define fruit tonight. I'm just here to emphasize again and again and again that flow of life from Christ. You know, Jesus is calling us tonight. He's calling us to come to Him. Tonight, maybe this whole message was the most boring thing to you in the world, but still, I know Jesus is calling you. He's calling you tonight. He's calling you to come to Him. And not just to come to Him once, but to come to Him again and again and again and again. And the same voice that is calling you to come to Him is also calling you, remain in Him, abide in Him, continue in Him, linger in Him, open yourself to Him, open your heart to Him, open everything in you to Him. He says, "I also wanna open everything in Me to you."

[40:18]

And as this openness is between us and the Lord, *wow*, there's a flow of life. In the singing, may we experience a flow of life this weekend. As we're in the Bible, may we experience a flow of life. As we're in the small groups, may we experience a flow of life. Even when we're having the whisper pillow talk in our rooms in the middle of the night. *Wow*, I do hope there's a flow of life. Why? Not because of the outward efforts, but because we're in Christ and Christ is in us, and our Christian life, all of a sudden, is no longer just the effort, but actually, we're full of life, full of freshness, full of the very presence of the Lord Himself. Maybe I'll just end there, and I'll end with a prayer, and then I'm not sure what's next, but I'll end with a prayer for this weekend.