

to remain and to know

“remain in me, and I will remain in you. no branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.” john 15:4 (NIV)

To remain in Christ is to *stay, abide*, -- to be constantly connected as a branch is to the vine. We cannot grow and remain in Jesus without being *in relationship* with Jesus, and therefore God.

My vision for vitamin is ***to continue to cultivate a deep and ever-growing relationship with God in CCF, in our daily lives, and ultimately live to bring Him glory.*** As we continue to pursue and unravel the wonder that is God, we learn to bear fruit for the glory of God. We cannot, however, bear fruit if there is no connection to the vine. How will we bear God's glory and witness if we do not know Him? This year, I want to focus on four ways we might remain in God and so He remains in us.

discussion - “Your word is a light for my feet, a light on my path.” psalm 119:105 (NIV)

Learning the Word is a vital part of our relationship with Christ - it guides us in the right direction and informs us of how we are to live. Large group is a great first avenue to study the Bible in a comfortable environment. However, time constraints are expected, sometimes questions are not answered, or you simply don't feel comfortable asking. I want to approach Vitamin as a supplement to what we learn in large group, but also as a round table discussion for us to learn from each other. This is a learning place for everyone - we are all learning more of who God is!

application - “put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.” ephesians 6:11 (NIV)

As we study the passages, context and background are just as important as how we should interpret and live out these passages. I want to stress three questions during our time this year: where is God in this passage/what are His characteristics? how does this passage fit within their context, as well as ours? how does that tell us to live? Background and context behind the passage gives us an idea of what was being written for who, and why. Application will help us take what we know from the passage and to live out in a way that is pleasing to God -- to bear fruit and to be a witness.

prayer - “and he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.” romans 8:27 (NIV)

Prayer puts us in direct contact with God. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us and God knows what we need. As we pray, we invite God to shape our understanding of the Word, and how that might fit into His will. Prayer to understand the passage should come before and after the study, as we will always be learning from God. Prayer is also a good way in which we can intercede for each other, as the Spirit does, and grow accountability and trust with each other. Ultimately, prayer connects us to God and establishes a two way relationship.

devotions - “blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.” psalm 1:1-2 (NIV)

To meditate on the word is to focus on the passage, slowly read, and find realistic ways in which this can be applied to you. Like I mentioned before, to know God's word is to be one step closer in knowing His will, who He is, and how to live. While large group discussion is great for getting ideas

out and key themes to be discussed, devotions are a more personal approach to studying the word, and gives us a more one-on-one time with God. I'm encouraging doing devotions because, while it makes us read the bible more frequently, it also ensures that we come to God and we get to know Him on a more personal level. Also, like I mentioned in the application section, knowing God's word and applying it guards us against spiritual warfare!

"how sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" psalm 119:103 (NIV)

I hope that our study this year will make us as excited for God's word as the writer here. Let us dwell in the thrill of continuous knowledge and experience of God!