

INTRODUCTION: Lent is a time when we take inventory of our obedience to Jesus. In John 14-16, Jesus teaches His disciples about how they will live in the world once He has departed. The central metaphor of the entire teaching is a vineyard. Jesus tells us that He is the vine and we are the branches. Abiding in Jesus allows us to bear fruit that matters. But how do we do this? How do we abide? Jesus calls His followers to live faithfully to his way. But being a disciple is going to be difficult. That's why He promises to send the Holy Spirit to lead them so that they can live righteously in the midst of hard times and that's why they will need to love each other as He loved them. Living like this is the pathway to true and lasting joy.

CENTERING: Take a moment to center yourself for communion with God.

STAYING ATTACHED TO GOD:

- In what ways did God make His presence known to you since our last meeting?
- What temptations did you face since our last meeting? How did you respond?
- Have you sensed any influence or work of the Holy Spirit since our last meeting?
- What opportunities did God give you to serve others since our last meeting? How did you respond?
- In what ways did you encounter Christ in your reading of the Scripture or by sharing the Gospel since our last meeting?

READING: John 16:5-33

DISCUSSING SCRIPTURE:

- What does this story tell me about God?
- What does this story tell me about people (or myself)?
- If this is God's word for my life, how will I obey it?
- Whom am I going to tell?

TAKING INVENTORY:

- When you think about life, do you anticipate blips of sorrow and mostly joy OR blips of joy and mostly sorrow?
- How do you tend to cope with times of difficulty (i.e. seek to escape, focus inward, etc.)?
- In what ways do you need to lean into your grief and be comfortable "weeping and mourning" while the world around you rejoices? What hope do you have that your grief will turn to joy?
- What would it look like to face your life's troubles with the assurance that Jesus has overcome the world?

PRAYING:

- Pray for one another based on inventory reflection.