

MAGDALEN ROAD CHURCH, Sunday 7 August 2022

FRUITFULNESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, John 15.1-17

QUESTIONS FOR HOME GROUPS

This week we continued our studies in John's gospel, chapters 14-16. In a passage often called the "Discourse in the Upper Room," we see Jesus gathered in Jerusalem with His closest disciples, shortly before His passion, His suffering, death and resurrection. He has told them that He is going to leave them, which, understandably, distresses and troubles them. But He comforts them with a series of promises and teachings about the Christian life.

In this passage, the first part of chapter 15, Jesus teaches that "fruitfulness" is one of the characteristics of Christian living. To illustrate this, He takes the picture of the vine. He calls Himself "the true vine", and shows how His disciples are "the branches" ingrafted on to Him. Their fruitfulness depends upon this union with Him, and upon their being "pruned" so that they may be even more fruitful.

1. Many scholars see in John's gospel an "eyewitness" account (see 21.24). If this is true, does it make any difference on how you read this passage? If so, how?
2. What do you think is the "big idea" that Jesus is trying to get across here? Fruitfulness in our Christian lives? Union with Christ? Pruning, that is God's disciplining us? What impact does this idea have upon you?
3. Jesus says that without Him we can do nothing (verse 5). Is that true?
4. What does it mean to "remain" in Him (verse 4)? How do we show that we remain (or abide) in Him?
5. Jesus promises His followers "joy" (verse 11). Is that the same thing as happiness?
6. We often hear of "the cost of discipleship." What does that mean for you?