**“I am the Vine”**

**Resources for Preparation beforehand:**

* Who is Jesus/Who am I sheet
* Paper and pencils/pens
* A large piece of paper with the stem and leaves of a vine drawn on it.
* Cut out bunches of grapes from paper for each member of the group
* A bunch of grapes
* A means of playing the worship song and/or copies of words for everyone

**Reflective Eating:**

A bunch of grapes for people to taste and reflect on, eating them mindfully. Thinking of how they might describe the experience.

**Discussion Starter:**

What helps you feel connected to others? What helps you to feel connected to Jesus? Do these types of connection overlap?

**God Reveals Himself:**

As with many of the other “I Am” sayings of Jesus there are links with God’s revelations in the Old Testament

Psalm 80 v 8–18 and Isaiah 5 v1-7

How would Jesus’ listeners have understood His words when He said “I am the true Vine”?

**Reading**: John 15 v 1 -8

**Questions:**

1. If you connected with one of the services, what did you take away? [You may also like to watch Jo Vickery’s talk about pruning from May 29th <https://youtu.be/NiWGkC9kQXs> ]
2. What do we know about pruning in our gardens?
3. What does this passage tell us about pruning in the kingdom of God?
4. How can we remain in (or abide in) Jesus?
5. How can we actively cultivate an intimate relationship with Jesus?

**Experiential:**

When we remain in Christ, we will bear fruit

* Invite each person to write a couple of things that they are good at that they could use to share with others in our church on their paper bunch of grapes . Examples might be prayer, baking, visiting, singing.
* Invite them to stick their bunch of grapes up on the vine.

**Response & Worship:**

* ***Song suggestion: “****Teach me to abide” by Jody Cross* ["Teach Me To Abide" - Jody Cross - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj17r-cfHVk) *Or “Abide” by The Worship Initiative*[Abide Lyrics - The Worship Initiative - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxqrifvLAfg)
* *Create a time of quite where people can talk with God about their own connection to “the vine”*
* ***Prayer:*** *pray for someone you know who once was connected to the Vine but may not be anymore; pray for a Christian you know who is not connecting with any Christian fellowship*

**Take Away**

* Encourage everyone to record something on their “Who is Jesus/Who am I” sheet and bring it to add to each week.
* For during the week:
  + Try having a candle burning when you have your quiet time, sit quietly with God
  + Continue to develop an intimate connection with Jesus, quietly sit with Him.
  + Can you use your gifting to build someone in your community up
  + Continue to pray for a friend or family member who doesn’t yet know Jesus
* As we finish this series you might like to:
  + Reflect on the notes that you have made on the “Who is Jesus/ Who am I” sheets.
  + Plan to have an Agape Meal in your group (a sample structure can be found at [Liturgy for Agape Meal for Maundy Thursday - DQOW Benefice](https://dqowbenefice.co.uk/liturgy-for-agape-meal-for-maundy-thursday/) and adapted).
  + Write prayers of praise and intercession based on the “I Am” sayings of Jesus

**Abide**

For my waking breath  
For my daily bread  
I depend on You  
I depend on You

For the sun to rise  
For my sleep at night  
I depend on You  
Yes I depend on You

You're the way the truth and the life  
You're the well that never runs dry  
I'm the branch and You are the vine  
Draw me close and teach me to abide

Where the Spirit leads  
As I'm following  
I depend on You  
Yes, I depend on You

For the victories  
Still in front of me  
I depend on You  
Yes, I depend on You

You're the way the truth and the life  
You're the well that will never run dry  
I'm the branch and You are the vine  
Draw me close and teach me to abide

Be my strength my song in the night  
Be my all my Treasure my prize  
I am Yours forever You're mine  
Draw me close and teach me to abide

When I pass through death  
As I enter rest  
I depend on You  
I depend on You

For eternal life  
To be raised with Christ  
I depend on You  
Yes, I depend on You

Aaron Keyes | Aaron Williams

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**Teach me to Abide**

Lord, you are the Vine I am a branch

Teach me to abide

Lord I cannot do anything without you

Teach me to abide

For as long as I live help me remain

Rooted in you bearing fruit in your name

You are the vine Lord I will abide

I’ll remain in you Jesus

I’ll remain in your love

I’ll remain in the truth of your word

And I will bear much fruit

Words & Music © Jody Cross