



Trellis Church's vision for 2026 is grounded in three movements: *Be with Jesus, become like Him, and do as He did*. Everything begins with the first. Before transformation or action, Jesus invites us into **relationship** – to remain with Him.

In John 15:1–17, Jesus describes Himself as the true vine and His followers as branches. The repeated command to “abide” comes from the Greek word *meno*, meaning to remain, stay, or make one’s home. This is not a call to occasional connection, but to a deep, ongoing presence with Jesus. Apart from Him, we cannot bear fruit; with Him, we at least have the chance.

The timing of this teaching matters. Jesus speaks these words on the night before His arrest and crucifixion. He is not inviting His disciples to future meetings or religious activity, but to remain in Him even as suffering approaches. Maybe more importantly for us today, He was inviting His disciples to abide in Him AFTER the crucifixion. When His physical presence was no longer an option.

Many people have experienced spiritual “mountain-top” moments. Some chase these experiences, while others distrust them. Jesus invites us beyond both extremes into regular, intimate encounters with Him—not manufactured emotion, but genuine presence that shapes us over time.

When the disciples were physically with Jesus, they experienced God’s kingdom—prayer, healing, rest, joy, miracles, teaching, love, grace, mercy, justice, and more. Today, we experience that same kingdom by abiding in Christ. Being with Jesus is one of the primary ways God’s kingdom permeates earth as it exists in heaven (Matthew 6:10).

Traditional practices like Scripture, prayer, worship, and church life are essential ways of being with Jesus. Yet Jesus also meets us personally and creatively—in silence, conversation, community, nature, art, movement, or quiet moments alone. The question is not *what should it look like*, but *where do you genuinely meet Him?*

Being with Jesus does not always bring answers. Often it brings perspective, and sometimes simply presence. Even when nothing seems to change, time with Jesus slowly changes us. Desire deepens, trust grows, and fruit begins to form. The invitation is simple but profound: Be with Jesus—and allow Him to do the transforming work.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you about Jesus’ invitation to “abide” or “remain” in Him?
2. How have spiritual high points—or the lack of them—shaped your view of faith? What’s your reaction when you hear someone talk about a “Spiritual High”?
3. What practices currently help you be with Jesus? Which feel most life-giving? Is there a way you’ve wanted to be with Jesus, but resisted because it doesn’t feel “normal”?
4. Where might Jesus be inviting you to meet Him in a new or more personal way?
5. How have you seen slow, long-term change in your life through time spent with Jesus?