

Small-Group Discussion Guide (1/11/2025)

Sermon recap: This week we heard that stewardship doesn't start with what we do for God—it starts with what we've been given in Christ: access to God's presence and God's promises. Scripture wakes us up to a hard but freeing reality: nothing outside of the Triune God can truly satisfy the human soul. That's why Jesus' call in John 15:4–11 is so central—before doing comes abiding. Fruitfulness and faithful stewardship are downstream from staying connected to Christ and resting in His love. Luke 10:38–42 warns us how easily even good things (work, family, ministry, responsibility) can become “false fountainheads” when we look to them for the joy and peace only God can give. The invitation is to begin each day asking God to satisfy us with His steadfast love (Psalm 90:14), returning to Him again and again, and letting all stewardship become a response to grace rather than a substitute for it.

Main passage: John 15:4–11

All passages used in the sermon: Ephesians 5:13–14; Psalm 16:11; 2 Corinthians 1:19–20; Psalm 87:7; John 15:4–11; Psalm 90:14; Luke 10:38–42; Acts 16:31; 1 John 1:7

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 11:28–30 (rest for the weary; learning Christ's way); Romans 8:1–2 (no condemnation; freedom in Christ); Ephesians 3:17–19 (rooted and grounded in love); Jeremiah 2:13 (broken cisterns vs. living water); Colossians 2:6–7 (walking in Christ; rooted and built up)

Brief definitions:

- **Abide** = to remain, stay, make your home in Christ; a relational posture of staying connected to Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you hear “stewardship,” what do you instinctively think God wants from you—and why? How has your background (family, church experience, culture) shaped that instinct?
2. What do Psalm 16:11 and Psalm 90:14 reveal about what God is like toward His people? Which phrase is hardest for you to believe personally right now?
3. Jesus says, “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). How does that confront both pride and discouragement? Which one do you tend toward more—self-reliance or giving up—and how do you see it?
4. The sermon described abiding as “returning again and again.” What are two moments in a normal day when you most need to return to Christ? What’s one simple “return” practice you could try this week in those moments?
5. Where do you most naturally look for comfort, control, or validation when you’re stressed (even if it’s a “good” thing)? What emotion are you trying to escape or satisfy when you go there?
6. Luke 10:38–42 (Martha/Mary): Martha is doing something good, yet she’s anxious and troubled. What might it look like for your “doing” to be reconnected to abiding? What’s one responsibility you could approach differently if you started from “I am loved” instead of “I must prove myself”?
7. If stewardship is “downstream from abiding,” how might that change the way you think about time, money, church involvement, and family life this month? What is one practical change you want to make—and what support do you need from others to follow through?

Prayer

Father, thank You that You invite us into Your presence through Jesus. Forgive us for drinking from false fountains that cannot satisfy. By Your Spirit, teach us to abide—to remain in Christ and rest in His love. Satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love, and help our lives bear fruit that honors You.