

A stylized illustration of a tree with a dark grey trunk and branches against a white background. The tree is decorated with several colorful, teardrop-shaped leaves in shades of yellow, orange, red, pink, teal, and green. The leaves have a textured, watercolor-like appearance.

ABIDE

A 30-day devotional
to help you spend
time with Jesus

Hello.

A lot of people pick up a daily devotional (what a book like this is called) and wonder what to do with it. Instead of crossing our fingers and hoping for the best, we thought we'd just tell you what you're getting yourself into.

First, the overall theme of all the devotions is **abide**. To abide means to remain or stay or continue. It means that we remain focused on Jesus, we stay aware of His presence in our lives, and we continue to live in response to the things He leads us to say or do. It's a pretty small word with a pretty big meaning.

Second, each day, you'll see four headings — here's what they're about:

>>Refocus

Life is busy ... and distracting ... and stressful. Most of us could use some help slowing down our brains and clearing our heads enough to hear God's voice. Each day of this devotional, we'll begin with a short, centering prayer to help us focus our attention on the remarkable reality that God wants to spend time with us.

>>Read

We believe God is present when we read the Bible, and one of the main ways God's people have abided in Him throughout history is reading and meditating on His Word. Each day, we'll share a short Bible passage for you to read in a variety of ways.

>>Reflect

When the Biblical writers encouraged us to meditate on God's Word, they were encouraging us to think deeply – or reflect – on the Biblical texts. Each day, we'll throw out some questions to ponder as we consider 1) what God is revealing about Himself and His ways, and 2) how it applies to our lives.

>>Respond

In James 1, we're encouraged to not only hear the Word, but also do what it says. Each day, we'll offer a few thoughts on ways you can respond to whatever amazing thing God just said to you.

Oh, one more thing.

Sometimes we get excited about God and commit to doing a devotional like this every day. And sometimes we miss a day (or three) and start to feel guilty. Don't! God loves us, and He wants us to spend time together because we want to, not because we feel bad if we don't. Whatever's going on in your brain to make you feel like God's going to zap you if you miss some days, stop it! God delights in you, so take a deep breath, smile, and jump back in when you can.

DAY 1

>>Refocus

Jesus, thank You for these moments together. Help me put aside all distractions and focus on what You want to say to me today.

>>Read

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. John 15:4

Read today's passage again, but this time read it out loud. Change the words "me" and "I" to "Jesus." Focus on how Jesus is with you, He is for you, and He loves you.

Have you ever used a water hose and gotten a kink or a bend in it? The water flows well, but then it abruptly slows or stops.

God designed us to be in relationship with Him – to abide in Him. When we do that, God produces fruit in our lives. (If you're curious what this fruit is, check out Day 15 in this book.) But just like the broken water hose, when we disconnect from Jesus, the fruit stops flowing in our lives.

>>Reflect

Why does a branch that is mostly broken and barely connected to a tree begin to turn brown? Why can't a branch like that produce fruit? How is this broken branch like a follower of Jesus who isn't abiding in Jesus?

>>Respond

Thank God that He wants to bring fruit into your life. Commit to abiding in Him today.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DAY 2

>>Refocus

Jesus, may Your Holy Spirit guide me to seek Your presence more and more. I know that it's in You that I find true peace and rest.

>>Read

Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

Read today's passage again. Then handwrite it in the margins of this page. Underline the phrase "produce much fruit."

As followers of Jesus, we are connected to a source of love, joy, compassion, peace, and power that is beyond our understanding. We can't force those things to show up in our lives (or in anyone else's lives), but if we abide in Jesus, God brings those things to us. Disconnect from Jesus, and we have frustration. Stay connected to Jesus, and we have hope.

>>Reflect

How do you typically respond to pressure-filled situations? What does it do in you to learn that Jesus said our only job is to abide (or remain) in Him, and if we do He'll bring fruit into our lives? How can that take the pressure off of you to be perfect all the time?

>>Respond

Thank God for the way He loves you and the way He brings fruit into your life. Ask God to help you abide in Him today.

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