



*Daily Devotional Booklet
Mexico Mission Trip
Christmas Break 2022*

Abide

To “abide” is a verb. It is active. Abiding in Christ is not a feeling or a belief, but something we do. It means to **“remain” or “stay”** and is much more than just believing in Jesus as our Savior.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.” John 15:5

We are praying for you!

Our prayer is that this mission trip is more than a fun adventure. We pray God teaches you and changes you to *want* a deeper relationship with him. We pray that desire continues throughout your life and you strive to abide in Christ in the good times and the tough times. We pray that you are seeing this week as a time set aside to serve God and learn from God.

The Whole Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

The Armor of God

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Day 1-What's your story?

Focus Verse-Matthew 28:19-20

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

BIG Question:

What is your story?

-What was your life like before you met Jesus?

-How did you meet Jesus?

-How has Jesus changed your life?

You should be able to share a summary of the details of your story in three minutes or less.

Action: Share your story with someone today to practice. Pray for opportunities this week to share your story with someone who doesn't know Jesus. Pray for Divine encounters to happen. Pray for the discernment to recognize when God places someone in your life with whom he wants you to share with. Pray for boldness to share when the opportunity comes.

*If you are realizing you don't have a story of how you came to know Christ as your Savior, please tell us! That part of your story can start today!

Day 2-You are the Vine; We are the Branches

Read John 15:1-8

Focus Verse-John 15:5

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.”

Are you already a Christ follower? Great! But, God wants to keep working in your life. This week we are praying that you have a renewed joy in serving the Lord. That you will have a passion to abide in Christ this week and after you return home. We don't want this week to be a one-and-done week for you, and we do not think that is what God wants either. We know this week might not be easy. Many of you are the farthest away from home you've ever been. Many of you are unable to communicate with the local people here. You might be feeling overwhelmed or like you aren't equipped to serve here. That's great because guess who is equipped? Jesus. The verses we read in John 15 tell us that we are unable to do anything apart from Jesus, so lean into him this week. The Holy Spirit inside you is equipped to share Jesus with the nations, so please do not be relying on your own strength and knowledge this week, but seek Him and ask for His strength, guidance, and wisdom.

Another part that might be difficult this week, is that God might want to prune you. “Every branch in me that does not produce fruit he removes, and he prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit.” John 15:2

BIG Question:

How does God want to prune me this week?

-Is there something or some part of your life that might be hindering you from abiding in Christ? Are you relying on your own knowledge instead of letting Jesus work in and through you?

Action: Pray and ask God to show you areas that need to be removed, pruned, or cleaned up in your life. Surrender it to him instead of holding onto it. He wants to use you to produce more fruit!

Day 3-How Do I Abide?

Read Philippians 4:1-9

Focus Verse-Philippians 4:8

There are so many excellent things packed into this short passage. You might want to read that again!

BIG Question:

What am I dwelling on?

You have probably heard the expression, “You are what you eat.” This expression means that if you eat a lot of junk food, you’re going to be unhealthy and probably not feel the best. If you want to be healthy, you will eat healthy foods. The same can be said for our spiritual lives. If we want a healthy spiritual life that helps us abide in Christ, we need to fill ourselves with good things from Him, not the junk this world offers.

It might be easy to focus more on Christ this week because we are setting it aside specifically for serving Him. What about when we get home? What parts of your normal daily schedule/routine need to be changed to help you abide in Christ? Are you dwelling on things that make it difficult to abide? What things are filling your mind?

Action:

Think about and pray about the things you spend your time doing and thinking about in your normal daily life. Write down some things God wants you to stop doing or thinking about because they are not true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, or commendable.

Day 4-It Won't Be Easy

Read Matthew 16:13-28 and Galatians 5:16-26

Focus Verses: Matthew 16:24-25

In Matthew 16, Jesus says that if we want to be his followers, we have to deny ourselves and take up our cross to follow him. In Galatians 5:17 Paul explains that the Spirit and our flesh want opposite things. "For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want."

The Holy Spirit is supposed to be our guide to let us know that our fleshly desires are what we should be denying. Unfortunately we live in a society that celebrates the desires of the flesh. We have been told to "do what makes you happy" by so many people around us and by the media. The Bible teaches us that true joy and freedom will only come from denying those fleshly desires and serving the Lord. We have to make a conscious daily decision to say "no" to ourselves and "yes" to Jesus.

BIG Question:

Am I denying myself or giving into the desires of my flesh?

Action:

Spend time in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you are being selfish and doing what you want instead of denying yourself and doing what Christ wants.

Day 5-Stay in the Vine=Produce Fruit

Galatians 5:16-26 and John 15:1-8

Focus Verses John 15:8 and Galatians 5:22-25

Jesus teaches us in John 15:8 that, “My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be my disciples.” What fruit are you producing with your life? Are you producing good fruit, rotten fruit, no fruit at all? Galatians 5 tells us the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Are these fruits evident in your life, or does your life show more of the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21?

There is a really old apple tree that grows on the edge of our neighbor’s property. It always produces so many apples that she shares them with us. As I grow older, I hope I’m like that apple tree, producing more and more good fruit. That is what God desires of us.

When we crucify our flesh, remain in the vine, and live by the Spirit, more and more Spiritual fruit will be evident. This isn’t for our glory, but for God’s glory. And isn’t it worth it to give up things of the earth to glorify our Father and share Jesus with those around us wherever we go? We pray you see it is worth the cost.

BIG Question: What fruit is evident in my life?

Action: Write or draw out ways the fruits of the Spirit can be seen in your life.

Love

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Faithfulness

Gentleness

Self-Control

Day 6-My Story Now

Read Philippians 1:1-11

Focus Verse-Phillippians 1:6

I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

BIG Question:

How has God been working in your life?

(Yes, I know, we've already asked these same questions earlier in the week, but our prayer is that God has done so much, your answers will be different.)

-What is something good you have seen God do in or through you this week?

-What is an area in your life that has been difficult or a struggle? How is God helping you through it?

-What is something you are looking forward to in the weeks to come? Are you praying for God to do something specific, or teach you something specific?

Action:

Share your answers to the questions above with someone. Ask them to pray with you about something specific. Do you need someone to hold you accountable to something this week? Ask them to do that with you too.

Day 7-What's Next?

Focus Verse-Phillippians 1:6

I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

We have seen so many things this week. God has done so much. We are getting ready to return home, return to school, return to normal life.

What is your big takeaway from this week? What has God taught you?

BIG Question: What's next?

What does God want you to do to serve him at home? In your school? At work? In our community?

Action: Pray about what God wants you to do to serve him in the new year. What does he reveal to you? Share with someone. It's ok if you do not have all the details yet. Just share how you think God is wanting to use you next. You can write them here to help you remember.