

Take some time to reflect on last week and developing a rhythm of prayer. What challenges do you face? Have you sensed anything change as a result of being more connected to Jesus?

We are all being shaped by key influences throughout our lives. Therefore, many of us are mis-formed when we come to Jesus. Being re-formed into being like Jesus is a necessary part of our growth as his followers.

One of the most significant areas that shape our lives is our family, both in growing up and the new ones we create or become part of. Often, what shapes those environments is the messages we grow up with or live with. Can you think of any unspoken, or spoken messages that may have shaped your life? ('Big boys don't cry, in this family we always do things the right way, happiness is..... etc).

Read John 15:1-8

1. In this passage, Jesus describes Himself as the “true vine.” What does this metaphor communicate about His role in our lives and reshaping who we are?
2. Jesus says that the Father “prunes” fruitful branches so they will be even more fruitful (v.2). What might pruning look like in your spiritual journey, especially in thinking about the negative messages that have shaped us?
3. Have you had an experience of intentionally opening your pain and suffering to God? What did God produce in your life through that experience?
4. Read v.4 In your own life, what practices or rhythms help you “abide” in Christ? Which do you find most effective?
5. Have you ever had a moment in your discipleship where you felt “stuck” – whether in habits, unhealthy emotional patterns, or in your relationship to God?
6. What is the consequence of not remaining in Christ, according to v.5–6?
7. Verse 8 says, “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit.” Do you think bearing fruit is about godly character? (Galatians 5:22–23.) What about 1 Corinthians 14:1? What fruit do you sense God is calling you to bear in this season?
8. When we read Scripture, we turn our attention to God, who is good and true. And as we focus on Jesus, we grow more like Jesus. As someone once said, “Where attention goes, neural firing flows, and neural connection grows.”² In other words, we become like what we pay attention to. When we meet God through Scripture, we are spiritually and neurologically formed. Do you read the bible regularly and allow the words to shape you?
9. What resources do you use to help you read, study and pray through the bible?
10. If you were to challenge yourself to engage with the bible and allow the story it tells to shape you more, what would that look like for you or as a group?

Prayer Points

Pray for the ongoing conflict in Gaza and those held captive by Hamas. Pray for peace in the region and opportunities for aid to get through effectively.

Give thanks for BMS partners supporting churches across Asia. Pray that church and community mobilisation (CCM) training will help churches be salt and light in their communities.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

September 21st 2025

Practicing the Way:

Spiritual Formation

John 15:1-8

Following Jesus has been likened to a long journey. When Jesus invited his first disciples to “follow” Him on the “way,” He was simultaneously saying that discipleship to Him is a lifelong path of learning. This series is designed to help you become more familiar with the journey of spiritual formation, help you get unstuck if you’ve stalled, or just guide you into being more confident to help others in their journey. Ultimately, its goal is to train you to live as an apprentice or disciple of Jesus: to be with Jesus, become like Him, and do as he did.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001