

**Introduction:**

1. Describe how you are good at controlling clutter around your house, yard and garage OR (if you aren't good at controlling the clutter!) What clutter do you KNOW you should get rid of?
2. What amazing change have you seen in someone's reaction to trying circumstances, that you just know is of the Lord?

**Understanding:**

3. Galatians 5:22-23 describes the fruits of the Spirit. Take another look at fruit in 2 Peter 1:5-8. How automatic is the fruit? Do we "just let go and let God?" Explain.
4. In the Old Testament, the image of a vine is often used to describe the nation of Israel. But Jesus says in John 15:1: "**I am the true vine.**" Read Isaiah 5:1-7, which describes Israel as the vine. What does this passage say about the search for good fruit? If these verses explain something about us (not just Israel!) how do they shed light on how desperately we need Jesus for good fruit?
5. In verse 7 Jesus talks about prayer. Someone tells you this means that prayer is meant to be a blank check to give us prosperity and our best life now. How could you reply to them, based on what it means to truly abide in Jesus?
6. Does Jesus' saying "Apart from me you can do nothing" mean that you can do nothing at all? Explain.
7. In verse 2: "**every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.**" The word for "prune" also means "to clean". Picture when you had greasy gunk on you and needed abrasive cleaner. Was it pleasant to use? Was the result worth it? Now think of how God has used "abrasive cleaning" in your Christian life. Has it felt pleasant? What will be the result? Is it worth it?
8. In verse 10 Jesus says "**If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.**" So we can't claim to be remaining in Christ if there are obvious areas of our lives where we're just not willing to obey him. Now look at 1 John 2:5-6. What does this say about obedience? And when we obey, what can we truly know for sure?
9. Jesus wasn't promising some prosperous, healthy, luxurious life. He was offering something much better: *joy*. Read Isaiah 25:8-9 – an Old Testament prophecy of Jesus. What are three great things that our Savior does? What is the great result in us?

**Application:**

10. In Galatians 5:22-23 we learn that fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Now read Isaiah 27:6. Which one of the fruit of the Spirit do you desperately need in your life right now to add to fruit in the world?
11. Ask yourself, "Is there some area of my life where Jesus has made God's will clear, but I'm resisting that?" Maybe it's a forgiveness issue; maybe it's a financial issue; maybe it's a sex issue or a marriage issue or an alcohol issue. What is that dead, useless piece that God wants to remove from your character?

12. This application is taken from the Chapel's "LENTEN GUIDE":

**READ:** John 15:1-7

**REFLECT:** What does it mean to abide in Christ? What happens when we try to live life on our own?

**FAST:** Replace one meal a day with a time of prayer. Focus on allowing Christ's life to flow through you.