

The Missing Ingredient

John 15:1-11 (Key Verse: 5)

Christians and churches many times leave out the most important ingredient in their daily lives and in their service for the Savior. Without it, we don't accomplish anything. Do you know what is so often missing? Let's find out. Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 15 as we consider "The Missing Ingredient."

read John 15:1-11

God is telling us, apart from Him we cannot do anything.

Key Problem: We are unfruitful.

Key Cause: We do things apart from Him. When God is the missing ingredient, we will not bear fruit.

Apart from His power, apart from His presence, just like a branch separated from the energizing sap which flows from the vine, we are powerless.

And yet, countless believers today are striving to accomplish God's work without God's power. That may be true for some of you today. You are so focused on the task, that you have left God behind in the dust. And when that happens, you are serving out of your own strength instead of His. And when that happens, we learn what Jesus meant when He said, "without Me you can do nothing."

The apostle Paul put it another way in Galatians 2:20

"and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;"

Or, Philippians 4:13, where Paul writes

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

Even though we are familiar with these verses, and many of us can quote them, we **still** time-after-time try to accomplish God's work in our own power. And we scratch our heads and wonder why there isn't a fruitful outcome.

When I try to do kingdom work apart from God and His power it turns out as badly as this cake without baking soda.

Key Solution: Abide in Christ

“he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit”

Abide is mentioned ten times in this paragraph of scripture. Ten times! What do you think God is trying to tell you and I? That’s right. The secret to a fruitful life and fruitful service is to ABIDE in Him!

“Abide” means to remain, to stay closely connected. This paints the opposite picture of one who wanders away from God’s precious presence and operates under his or her own power. Remember, with the grapevine, it is the sap flowing from the vine that produces the life-giving energy for fruit to come forth.

Paul presents to us his testimony of abiding in Christ and seeing the fruit come forth, Colossians 1:29. In this verse, Paul declares that his acts of Christian service are based not on his own power, but on the mighty power of God which flows through him like sap running from the grapevine into it’s abiding branches bearing much fruit.