



# 5:17

## PEOPLE WEEK





# 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

*"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.  
The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!"*

## WELCOME!

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When you are invited to someone's home, you know that the relationship has reached a new milestone. They are inviting you to see their good, their bad, their ugly—their whole life under one roof. They are inviting you into the space where only family is usually present—and it should make you feel special when someone invites you into that space.

With this guide to **5:17 PEOPLE WEEK**, you'll discover it's about *Uniting Church and Home* working with your church to see this often-ignored teaching of our Union with Christ put into life-changing practice in your church and home. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, if you are in Christ, there's a new creation happening! But how is that "in Christ" and that "new creation" worked out in our lives?

The goal of this devotional is to give you and yours the vocabulary, the ideas, the foundational Scriptures, to begin this journey of living out our union with Jesus Christ. With your church and family providing both the encouragement (and often challenges) to put this into action, by the time you complete this week-long course, you'll have a new vision for how your home, your church, and your heart can be impacted by a fresh look at your identity and your union with Christ.

All references are from the ESV Bible.

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### A Leader's Prayer

It's Day 6! We are almost done, but God isn't nearly finished. Pray that today, God will work in and through you to reveal how we are connected to Jesus, and his life now runs through us like sap through springtime branches. Maybe you'll even see some fresh buds today—won't that be exciting? Pray, and expect God to do something.

## **DAY SIX: I AM A BRANCH**

[Watch the video introducing today's devotion by clicking here.](#) Password is 517NC.

*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

-John 15:5

As a child, we often enjoyed pretending we were someone or something. We enjoyed switching identities, changing our voices, wearing costumes. It was fun! But as Christians, **we need to stay constantly connected to who we are in Jesus in order to live for him. We need to remember and act on our identity each day or obedience is simply impossible.**

Can you think of a time when a storm that blew through your town and left a path of crumpled trees, tipped over trash cans, and leaves and twigs scattered across the town?

Several years ago, we had a storm just like that hit our area. High winds and heavy rain lingered for a couple days. From the safety of our home, we watched as the woods behind us swayed and bowed and the creek at the bottom of our yard rose to its highest level-ever and was flowing at a dangerous pace. Finally, once the storm passed, we went outside to look at the damage and to clean up the debris when we noticed that our beloved little peach tree took the worst hit. One of its strongest branches had almost completely torn away from the rest of the tree and was leaning badly to one side.

We knew that without being connected to the vital nutrition through its roots, the branch would shrivel up and die in a very short time, no longer able to produce those sweet, succulent peaches!

After some quick thinking, we were able to use a chain and a wooden pole to lift the branch off the ground and keep it snug against the rest of the tree. A few happy weeks later, the branch had grown back together with the rest of the tree, and after several more months was once again strong enough to stretch-out and produce the fruit we loved.

Like this branch, we depend on our connection to Jesus Christ, the true vine. When abiding in him we have everything we need to grow and be strengthened. Apart from him, like the branch, we are unable to survive on our own and unable to bear fruit.

Let's read our verse for today, John 15:5 - *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

## Discussion

- What are things we need every day? Which one do you think you would have the hardest time living without? Why?
- Of the identity statements we have studied this week, which one draws you closer to Jesus? Why?
- What are the fruit or thoughts, words, behaviors and feelings that you would expect to grow if you were more deeply identifying with Jesus? (Check out Galatians 5:22-23.)
- What are the things that get in the way of abiding in Jesus each day?
- In what ways does the story of a vine and branch change how you think about the priority or importance of your identity and connection to Jesus?

**Scripture Memory (it may help to say this out loud a few times as a family):**

John 15:5 - *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, thank you for making us one with you so that we can know and enjoy your love. Thank you for all of the spiritual nourishment we receive from you so that we can live for you. Please forgive us for the fact that we struggle to see how important our daily connection with you really is. Forgive us for not spending time with you in your word and prayer. Help us, through your Holy Spirit, to be moved by your love to joyfully seek you each day. In Jesus name, Amen.

## Activities

Coloring page for ages 2-10.

Word search puzzle for ages 11+:

You may want to give these to your children while you go through the devotion. Or, you may find it more effective to give to them afterward as a review. Use however you deem best!

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