



**“Connection with God”**

### **BIBLE READING & DEVOTION USING “SOAP”**

**S**cripture: Read John 15:1-12

[Jesus said,] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes<sup>[a]</sup> so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

<sup>9</sup>“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup>My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

**O**bservations: What in this passage jumped out at me or drew my attention? Why? Make notes about your general thoughts – no more than a paragraph.

**A**pplication: What am I going to do about what I read? What is God asking me to do? Be as specific as possible.

**P**ray: This is time to commit your decisions above to the Lord, rather than praying your prayer list. Write down your prayer so you can review it later and recognize an answer.

**PRAYER & MEDITATION:** Take a few moments each day to pray or meditate. Write in a prayer journal; read a prayer devotional; use a prayer app on your phone (e.g., Pray.com, Echo Prayer, Daily Prayer, Lectio 365); simply sit in silence, focusing on God’s presence; pray over our weekly prayer list. Use a breath prayer from Rethink Church (on Facebook and Instagram, or [umc.org/rethink-church](http://umc.org/rethink-church)), which can be done as you breathe.

Some examples of breath prayers are:

- *(Breathe in)* Gracious God, *(breathe out)* gather me.
- *(In)* Jesus Christ, Son of God, *(out)* have mercy on me.
- *(In)* The Lord is my strength; *(out)* my heart will trust in God.

**ACTS OF KINDNESS:** Find small ways to serve others daily. Jesus said, “*Love each other as I have loved you*” and “*Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me*” (John 15:12; Matthew 25:40)

In what ways can you show kindness to someone else?