

**JESUS IS THE ONE
WHO IS THE TRUE VINE**

John 15:1-17

INTRODUCTION

- Jesus walks with His disciples as He teaches them the importance of staying connected to Him.
- He explains to them that they will not be able to do any work for the kingdom's sake without abiding in His Spirit.
- There will be seasons of pruning and cleaning, but they are necessary for more fruit to come into their lives.

ABIDING IN THE LORD

JOHN 15:1-11

I am the
True
vine



JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- Jesus claims to be the true vine.
- The disciples are outside, and Jesus uses the vine as an illustration of their need to be connected to Him.
- The vine imagery was used as a symbol for Israel and its disobedience. Israel was compared to a vine that had become wild and dried up.
- Jesus was warning the disciples against this.

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- (vs. 2) Jesus teaches that the branches that bear fruit will be pruned.
- Three types of believers are named or inferred in this chapter:
 - Those who bear no fruit (verse 2)
 - Those who bear some fruit (verse 2)
 - Those who bear much fruit (verse 5)

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- The verb for pruned is often translated “to clean.” The process isn’t free from pain.
- Cleaning can be taxing. Cleaning can be painful.
- But once it is done, you will bear more fruit.
- The world will know His disciples by the fruit they produce. We are not to be wild and unproductive.

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- Notice that Jesus doesn't tell His disciples to produce fruit without teaching them how they will accomplish it.
- The key is to "abide." This word appears 11 times in this passage. We are to abide in the vine.
- Fruitfulness is a sign of vitality for the branches. They will produce fruit if they remain connected to the vine. The branch is not a self-contained entity.

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- (vs. 4) The new covenant that Jesus is giving them challenges their perspective.
- They have to give up their idea as believers that their faith is tied to memberships or associations. Instead, they are to be connected to Jesus and the Spirit.
- When the Spirit of God comes to live in them (and us) they will developed the fruit of the Spirit and see its increase.

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- (vs. 6) Jesus adds a very sobering warning: if you do not abide, you will be thrown away. There are three possible interpretations:
 - Burned branches are Christians who have lost their salvation (contradicted by other verses in John).
 - Burned branches are Christians who will lose their rewards (judgment seat, 1 Corinthians 3:15).
 - Burned branches who weren't actually Christians.

JESUS IS THE SOURCE

- (vs. 7-8) Jesus then returns to the positive and teaches that an effective prayer life is linked to fruit-bearing.
- D.A. Carson - “Christians must remember that the fruit that issues out of their obedient faith-union with Christ lies at the heart of how Jesus brings glory to his Father.”
- Failure to honor Jesus the Son is failure to honor God the Father.

KEEP COMMANDMENTS

- (vs. 9-10) Here we enter into one of the great love passages in the New Testament.
- Six times in the next eleven verses, the disciples will be told to love one another.
- Jesus is between God and the disciples: the Father loves first, the Son reflects the love, and we remain in his love. We abide in His love through obedience.
- (vs. 11) A new word enters the discussion: joy.

AFFECTION IN THE BODY

JOHN 15:12-17

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

- (vs. 12-14) John never forgot these words. They appear throughout his epistles.
 - We are to love one another as Jesus loves us.
 - No greater love than for someone to lay down his life for his friends.
- This means: unity instead of rivalry, trust instead of suspicion, obedience instead of self-assertion.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

- (vs. 15) The disciples were called the servants of Jesus, but He now chooses to call them friends.
- This must have shocked the disciples. They were called *doulos* which means servant or slave.
- In the Bible, only Abraham was called God's friend (James 2:23).
- Notice they still address Him as Lord and Master.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

- How many friends do you have?
- Facebook allows you to accumulate 5,000 friend, but is it possible to have 5,000 genuine friends?
- Oxford University anthropologist Robin Dunbar says the mind can only manage 150 relationships at one time. This is known as “Dunbar’s Number.”
- To have friends, you need close communion.

GOD CHOOSES YOU

- (vs. 16-17) This verse reminds us that we did not find God, He found us.
- He appointed us to bear fruit and that our fruit should abide in Him.
- We also have the promise that the Father will answer our prayers if we abide in Him.
- Once again we are reminded to love one another.

PRINCIPLES
OF
PRAYER

SOVEREIGN GOD

- If God is sovereign, why pray?
- God is indeed sovereign and controls and plans all things (Proverbs 16:33 - decision; Daniel 2:21 - kings).
- When we pray, we are linking our will to His will.
- Prayer is more for us, but it also moves the hand of God (Genesis 19; Psalm 107 - cried to the Lord, Matthew 7:7 - ask, seek; John 14:13-14 - I will do it).

PRAYERS AREN'T ANSWERED

- Why aren't someone's prayers answered?
- What about the prayers that are earnestly prayed, and the answer does not come when we need it?
- First, we may not be praying according to God's will (1 John 5:14 - ask according to His will).
- Second, we might have sin in our lives (Psalm 66:18 - wickedness in my heart, Lord will not hear).

PRAYERS AREN'T ANSWERED

- Third, it could be someone has wrong motives (James 4:3 - ask with wrong motives, pleasures).
- Fourth, it could be that we do not believe that God will answer our prayers (Mark 11:24 - believe).
- Fifth, God may want you to persevere (Luke 18:1 - pray and not lose heart).
- Finally, God may be answering your prayer in ways you cannot see (Daniel 10).

PRAYER LEGALISTIC

- Is the command to pray legalistic?
- This is a misinterpretation of John 15:7 - “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”
- This does not mean that if you spend 30 minutes of prayer that God will give you 30 minutes of blessing.
- It does mean that the power of prayer is in abiding.

PRAYER LEGALISTIC

- How does abiding help our prayers?
- Abiding will guide our prayers (1 John 5:14 - according to His will) - we will know His will for us.
- Abiding builds our faith (Mark 11:24 - believe that you have received) we will see answers in faith.
- Abiding transforms us morally and spiritually (John 8:32 - truth will set you free).

PRAY WITH POWER

- How can I pray with power?
- Key verse: John 14:7 - abide in Jesus, ask anything.
- 1 John 1:10 - “If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is no in us” - we must know ourselves better, that we are sinners.
- John 17:8 - “They have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you” - receiving the words of Jesus is key.

PRAY WITH POWER

- 1 John 2:14 - “you have overcome the evil one” - this gives us victory over Satan.
- John 14:24 - “He who does not love me does not keep my words” - if we abide, we keep the words of Jesus.
- John 8:47 - “He who is of God hears the words of God” - abiding helps us hear God’s words.
- John 15:3 - “You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”

