

Vine, Husbandman, and Branches

In John 15, Jesus gives us the last “I Am” description of Himself. Jesus gives His disciples and us a parable of the vineyard. Many times Israel, the chosen people of God, were called the “vineyard of God.” Jesus, nearing the cross, is transitioning His disciples to understand that God's grace comes to all believers enabling them to become branches of the true vine in God's vineyard.

Below are the first 8 verses of this chapter followed by a short annotation:

1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

This is the basis for the vineyard parable, Jesus is the true vine which is the true life giver (John 14:6) and our Father God is the husbandman, the owner and the gardener of the vineyard. We are the branches created to bear fruit. Fruit production is the goal of the Father, the husbandman, and the purpose for Jesus, the vine. The fruit is nourishment for others and contains reproducible seed.

2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Connected to the vine are two types of branches, those which have fruit and those that do not. The Father clears away the unfruitful branches from the vine. He prunes or cleans those branches which are bearing in order to bring more fruit.

3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Cleaning is done by the Father through his word (Ephesians 5:26) which is His will. We, the branches, are cleaned of all that is not His will or purpose for our lives.

4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

We can learn from the vineyard parable, that the secret to fruit bearing is abiding (dwelling, living, attached) in the Vine. We draw our life nourishment from Jesus. We can only produce fruit, good works, while connected to Jesus. We are created to bear fruit (Ephesians 2:10) and bring glory to the Father (Matthew 5:16). Good works are those produced with a selfless attitude in our hearts, not works for individual gain or fame.

5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

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The branches can do nothing or produce nothing separated from the vine. Abiding in the Vine, the branches will have much fruit, an abundance of good works.

6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Unfruitful branches are worthless and eventually die. Branches have no other use (in construction or as fire wood) but to bear fruit. They that are barren are taken away by the husbandman and are gathered by others and cast into the fire. This is a foreshadow of the second death of unbelievers.

7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Jesus commits Himself to His disciples with the comfort that He will intercede for them at the right hand of God (Romans 8:34). To receive, believers must be abiding in the Vine and connected to His words.

8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Our fruit bearing brings the Father glory (value or worth) as Jesus glorified Our Father by being obedient and connected in oneness to Him. We are identified as Jesus' disciples by following His example. We bring glory to the Father and Jesus by bearing fruit which feed others and disburse seeds (2 Thessalonians 1:12).