

Stay Connected ~ John 15:1-15

- **A word about the vine of the O.T. The 'vine' was a symbol of "National Jewish Israel"**
 - **Psalm 80:8** *Thou didst remove a vine from Egypt; Thou didst drive out the nations, and didst plant it. [NASB]*
- **The prophets made use of this figure:**
 - **Hosea 10:1-2** *Israel is a luxuriant vine; He produces fruit for himself. The more his fruit, The more altars he made; The richer his land, The better he made the sacred pillars. (2) Their heart is faithless; Now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will break down their altars And destroy their sacred pillars. [NASB]*
 - **Isaiah 5:1-2** *Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. (2) And He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, And hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones. [NASB]*
 - **Jeremiah 2:21** *"Yet I planted you a choice vine, A completely faithful seed. How then have you turned yourself before Me Into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine? [NASB]*
 - **Ezekiel 15:6** *"Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'As the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so have I given up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; [NASB]*
 - **Matt 21:33-46** *Listen to the parable of the landowner, paraphrased.*

John 15:1 - I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser.

- That relationship was of corporate union of the branches with the Vine to produce fruit to the Vinedresser, Who for that purpose pruned the branches.
- **True vine** - Real, true genuine. Every other reference to the vine in the Bible is regarding degeneration. Jesus is the true vine and in order to see God we must be connected in a vital relationship with His Son.
- **Vinedresser** (husbandman, farmer). He is the one who cares for the vineyard; whose office it is to nurture, trim and defend the vine, and of course feels deep interest in its growth and welfare.

John 15:2 - Every branch in me.

- And this may be summarized: *Union, Communion, Disunion.*
- "**Union**" between Christ and His Church is *corporate, vital, effective, & organic*
- "**Communion**" - of Christ with His disciples, of His disciples with Him, and of His disciples among themselves.
- "**Disunion**" has a necessary counterpart, *separation* from the world.
- **Prunes (cleans)**. To lift it up. "So that it may produce the largest amount of fruit".

John 15:3 - Clean through the word.

- **Heb 4:12** *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

John 15:4 - Abide in Me, and I in you. See John 14:20

- **I in you.** A branch detached from the vine is necessarily unfruitful.
- A necessary prerequisite to fruitfulness is abiding in the vine, Christ.

John 15:5 - I am the vine, you are the branches.

- They are many branches, yet a grand unity in that Vine; there is one Church of which He is the Head, the Root, the Sustenance, the Life.
- **Abiding.** In isolation from Him no spiritual achievement is possible.
- **He is thrown away.** The Greek suggests immediacy.
- **Good for nothing.** The vine branches were not even allowed to be used on the altar fires in the temple. No BTU value.

John 15:6 - Does not abide in Me.

- The whole idea of the allegory is that if there is any real union between the disciple and the Master, there will be life, and if there is life there will be fruit.

- Cast them into the fire. The wood of the vine has the curious characteristic of being good for nothing. Uselessness invites disaster.

John 15:7 - Asked whatever you wish.

- "God is not a cosmic vending machine." This verse is NOT a blank check.
- We will continue to abide and pray in Jesus' name according to His will.
- We are not praying for a tri-level or a mate or a Mercedes.
- We are praying that we might produce fruit that God may be glorified, and others may be persuaded to abide in the Vine.

John 15:8 - Bear much fruit.

- A disciple first enriches his own life; his contact with Christ makes him a good disciple. Second, he brings glory to God.
- My Father is glorified. Discipleship is a growing, dynamic thing. The more fruit we bear, the more truly we are fulfilling the pattern of disciples, those who learn of Christ in order to be like Him.

John 15:11 - Be made full.

- Possession of His Joy may be partial at first, but the goal is to be made full, leaving no room for fear and dissatisfaction.
- Abide in my love. "We mark the *continuity* in the scale of love: the Father towards the Son, and the Son towards us; and our love for one another.
- **John 14:15** *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."*

John 15:12 - "Love one another".

- Love of the brethren was the one outstanding Farewell-Command of Christ. And to keep His commandments was to be His friend.

John 15:13-15 - And they were His friends.

O.K. ~ O.K. ~ O.K. ~ **"Just what is the fruit!"**

IT IS THE FRUIT OF OUR SPIRIT!

- **The character of the fruit is evidenced by the power producing it.**
- **Our fruit is the visible expression of the power of Christ working inwardly and invisibly in us.**
 - ***People believe what is true by what they act out, not by what they just say!***
 - **It is transmitted through us disciples (branches) to the fruit.**
 - *Matt. 7:16 ... grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes*
 - *People believe what is true by what they act out, not by what they just say!*
 - **If we are **connected** to the vine, the fruit will be filled with its substance.**
 - His character and attributes **will** pass through the branches.
 - **All that is necessary is that we stay connected through His word (John 15:7).**
 - His nourishment is on the way! Wow!