

**NEXT WEEK**

I am the way, the truth and the life

John 14:1-14

# ABIDING IN CHRIST



Staying Close To The Source Of Life

**John 15:5**

## Grapevines and vineyards

- Some say mentioned more than any other plant in the Bible.
- Required effort and work to grow
  - Grown on hill, ground had to be cleared of rocks
  - Wall or hedge was planted around it
  - A watch tower was build to prevent theft



How long after planting before the first fruit is produced?

- 3 years

Why do you prune grapevines?

- Maximize access to sun(light) to produce a better harvest

The land of Canaan was abundant with vineyards before Israel took possession of it (and still abound)



- Numbers 13:23 - And they came to the Valley of Eshcol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them; they also brought some pomegranates and figs.
- Deut 6:11 - and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full,

It was part of the good land promised to Israel in the OT & even included in laws of warfare



- Deut 8:7-8 - For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, ... <sup>8</sup> a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,
- Deut 20:6- And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit.

Because they were central to agriculture, God established specific laws regarding them



- Lev 19:10 - And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.
- Deut 23:24 - “If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in your bag.

Vines were often used throughout scripture to represent Israel (Ezek 15, 17, 19)



- Psm 80:8 - You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.
- Isa 5:5 - And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;
- Jer 2:21 - Yet I planted you a choice vine, wholly of pure seed. How then have you turned degenerate and become a wild vine?

## Where are we in the Live of Jesus?

- The last supper & garden visit
- Jesus is preparing disciples
- Jesus said he is going away (7:34; 8:21; 12:8,35)
- He is going to die (12:32-33)
- Let NOT your heart be troubled (14:1)
- Heaven is REAL & it's accessible (14:2-3)
- The way to heaven has been revealed – it is in and through Jesus Christ (14:5,6; Mk 16:16)





John 15:1 - "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

- Jesus identifies Himself as the vine
- Not just vine – but true vine
- Israel, as God designed it, had vailed
- Jesus will succeed where man Israel failed
- Jesus was the shoot of Jesse promised by Isaiah (11:1-2)
- Physical nation of Israel is replace by Jesus – the true vine
- Father is the vinedresser
- Relationship cultivated with Israel (vine) is now cultivated with the relationship to the true vine - Jesus



John 15:2-3 - Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.



- Your past does not matter – but if you bear fruit now
- If you are not bearing fruit, you are cut off
- No fruit means you don't belong to Jesus
- Believing one a Christian means nothing
- Evidence of who belongs to Christ : fruitfulness

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- Even fruitful branches are pruned, to bear more fruit
- Even Christians will not have a pain free life
- Pruning is the removal of things that inhibit growth
- Can be a painful process to lead to continuing to bear fruit
- Heb 12:10-11 – disciplines to share in His holiness

John 15:4 - Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.



- Jesus is talking about an intimate relationship
- Branch cannot bear fruit by itself
- Branch must be connected to vine to live
- Branch derives life from vine
- Vine produced fruit from branch

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.



- Apart from Jesus we can do nothing
- Of course, you can do all kinds of activities on your own
- You can do nothing toward God if you are separated from Christ
- Romans 8:8, “Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

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- Can't be saved because you bear fruit (do good works)
- Bearing fruit is product of salvation – because connected
- Fruit is only borne when branch is connected to vine
- We must evaluate our lives – do we see spiritual fruit
- John 8:31 - “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, (8:37; 15:7; 17:17)

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.



- If we are struggling spiritually, need to reconnect to vine
- Remain in Jesus by remaining in the word – it changes us
- “As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” Matt 13:23

John 15:6 - If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.



- Do you feel like you are withering spiritually?
- Jesus says you are not connected to Him
- You have been cut off and are withering
- Lack of fruitfulness shows you have been cut off
- If you are in need – reconnect to the word – then ask (v7)



John 15:8 - By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.



- Why is fruitfulness important?
- God is glorified by our fruitfulness
  - Remember, we exist to glorify God (Rev 4:11; Col 1:16)
  - We are lights...bringing salvation to the ends of the earth (Acts 13:47)
- Fruit is evidence of our discipleship – must bear fruit

## Sean's Thoughts -

So obviously Jesus is saying that whoever does His will produces fruit or good works. And whoever does not, gets thrown in the fire. If you look deeper, he also says that the people doing good still need help doing better. That is why he prunes them, so they can produce more. And if you are bad, he has no use for you and will discard you because you chose not to be in him. However, we see lots of examples that you can repent or change and still produce good things. So it's a choice whether we produce or get discarded, because we first discard him.



## Sean's Thoughts -

V 7- like in Sunday's lesson if you are righteous then he is happy to give what you ask for, and if you are not righteous asking is an abomination to him.

If we have Jesus' love, our actions are more impactful for those who see them. Doing good things or bearing fruit should be a joyful experience even if we have to sacrifice we should be able to do the right things.

