

A STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6“If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. John 15:1-7

PREPARATION FOR NEXT CLASS:

Read John chapter 16

I AM THE TRUE VINE:

In this study we will dissect the rich and beautiful imagery which the Lord used to describe himself in this last of the “I AM’S,” of John’s Gospel. We have seen Jesus compare himself to bread, light, the door, a shepherd, and the way. Now he compares himself to a _____. This metaphor was significant in several ways, primary among which was the fact that the nation of Israel was represented by the _____.

Isaiah 5:1-2 *“Let me sing now for my well-beloved, A song of my beloved concerning His _____. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a _____ hill. He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the _____ vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, And also hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He _____ it to produce _____ grapes, But it produced only _____ ones.”*

Thus up against this picture of Israel is the sharp contrast of Christ, who here states, *"I am the _____ vine."* Here the word true in the greek imply's _____. He is saying *"I am the _____ vine."* In contrast to other gods, and other "truth" systems, Jesus is the _____ vine, and the only one who can _____ God pleasing fruit.

The statement which follows is equally important as he said *"and my is the _____."* In fact if we study the original greek we would read it like this; *"I am the genuine vine, and the Father is _____ vinedresser."* In other words, Christ is claiming to be the exclusive vine upon which the Father works. God the Father _____ tends to Christ. He does not tend to Buddha, Mohammad, Krishna, or any other so called god. This is why I have told you that the Holy Spirit will not _____ any other message, but the Gospel of Christ.

THE FRUITLESS BRANCHES:

Now the attention turns to the _____, or the off shoots of the vine, which represent the church. We are these branches, and there are several implications for us in this statement. First he said "Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away." This implies that there is an _____ on behalf of the vinedresser to find _____ on the branch. It is easy to produce leaves but there is a cost to bearing fruit. Just as in Genesis when Adam and Eve sought to use leaves to cover their sin, so today we have many leaves which may imply that fruit but only disguises _____. He said of these fruitless branches, that they would be taken away. In fact this is what some would call "sucker branches" or _____ vines, which look like the genuine vine, but are from another source altogether. There are two groups which we can speak of here, first the unsaved who have the appearance of godliness. They may look like a true believer, but there is not fruit to manifest that reality.

The other group is that group of believers which bears no fruit, and will subsequently loose their reward. Paul speaks of this in 2 Corinthians 5:10 *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or good for _____."*

THE FRUITFUL BRANCHES:

Then the Lord spoke of the fruitful branches, saying that *"every branch that bears fruit, He _____ it so that it may bear more fruit."* So lets look closely at the implications for us.

#1 The Father _____ fruit. He does not just like it, or hope to find it, but He expects fruit. Jesus said in v8 *"My Father is glorified in this, that you bear _____ fruit, and _____ to be my disciples."*

#2 _____ to the vine is essential for fruit bearing. *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it _____ in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do _____."*

#3 Even fruitful branches must be _____. Pruning is the difficult reality which accompanies fruitfulness. To bear fruit imply's a cost. The cutting away of the flesh is at times a hard process to endure, but the result is fruit, good fruit, and much fruit. _____