

Jesus: The True Vine

(John 15:1-10)

INTRODUCTION:

A. The vine in the Old Testament

1. "Jesus, as so often, is working in this passage with pictures and ideas which were part of the religious heritage of the Jewish nation. Over and over again in the Old Testament, Israel is pictured as the vine or the vineyard of God. *'The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel'* (Isa 5:1-7). *'Yet I planted you a choice vine'* is God's message to Israel through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 2:21). Ezekiel 15 likens Israel to the vine, as does Ezekiel 19:10. *'Israel is a luxuriant vine,'* said Hosea (Hosea 10:1). *'Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt,'* sang the Psalmist, thinking of God's deliverance of his people from bondage (Ps 80:8). **The vine had actually become the symbol of the nation of Israel.** It was the emblem on the coins of the Maccabees. One of the glories of the Temple was the great golden vine upon the front of the Holy Place. Many a great man had counted it an honor to give gold to mould a new bunch of grapes or even a new grape on to that vine. The vine was part and parcel of Jewish imagery, and the very symbol of Israel"¹

B. Jesus then is the true vine and not the nation of Israel

1. Notice the comment by Barclay, "...the fact that you are a Jew will not save you. The only thing that can save you is to have an intimate living fellowship with me, for I am the vine of God and you must be branches joined to me.' Jesus was laying it down that not Jewish blood but faith in him was the way to God's salvation" Jesus made that He was the way for their and our salvation (John 14:6). For the people thought that their salvation depended upon their race as chosen people of God, *"Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, we have Abraham for our father, for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham"- (Luke 3:8),* also see, *"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"- (Matthew 5:20).*

C. The purpose of this sermon:

1. The lessons we will learn from this section in the Bible, as Christians we have a close relationship with the True Vine (Jesus).
2. Who are the true Christians
3. In order to grow pruning is necessary

[Even though we understand that Jesus is primarily speaking to his disciples nevertheless, it is still applicable to every Christian today. For apart from Jesus we have nothing worth perusing that has true value and that is eternal...]

I. CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TRUE VINE

A. Jesus statement, "I am the true vine..."

1. Jesus wants for his disciples and us that He is the true vine, that He is the true provider, the Way for salvation as Jesus already has stated on the previous chapter, *"Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me"- (John 14:6).*

¹ William Barclay, DSB-The Word

2. Jesus wants for His disciples and us to see the importance of this relationship with Him and how it needs to be maintained at all costs.
 3. This statement by Jesus is profound and has immense meaning for the Christian
 - a. We need to understand that by Jesus saying "I am the true vine..." he is making a powerful statement that other "vines" are false and cannot provide what Jesus can, salvation, peace, consolation, etc. ***"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved"***-(Acts 4:12).
- B. Being separated from the steam we have no life in Him (John 15:5)**
1. Without this relationship with Christ we are dead (**Ephesians 2:1-3**)
 - a. Being separated from Christ is having no hope (**Ephesians 2:12**).
 2. In Him we have life (**Ephesians 2:4-5**).
- C. How can we have this close relationship with Christ?**
1. In order to have this close relationship with Christ we have to keep His commandments, ***"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love"***-(John 15:10)
 - a. That is the will of God; do you know what the commandments of Christ are? In order to abide in Him we must keep them, (see **John 14:15; 1 John 5:2-3**) and how are we going to keep them if we do not know them? In other words do you know what the will of the Father is?
 - 1) It is pertaining to our own salvation, there is something we all must do, come to Christ by way of the plan of redemption, we need to understand that first we must be Christians
 - 2) Second, we must live according to the will of God, God has set for us rules, regulation a map is you will by which we guide our life as Christians we base and follow the commandments of God in the New Testament. Nevertheless we have the Old Testament for us as instruction, teacher (**1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4; Galatians 3:24**). We do not follow the old law in the Old Testament because it was nailed by Christ (**Colossians 2:14**).

II. TRUE CHRISTIANS = BRANCHES THAT PRODUCE FRUIT

- A. Types of branches, true Christians and those who called themselves Christians**
1. There are branches in the vine which perhaps appear to be joined to the steam of the true vine yet bear no fruit
 - a. There are men and women who appear to be members of Christ and yet they will prove by their lack of fruit to have no vital union with the vine (Jesus). They are just dead wood, pardon me the expression but this is exactly what Jesus said see, ***"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"***- John 15:6.
 - b. Therefore it is important for each individual to do a self examination to see if we are in the faith (**2 Corinthians 13:5-6**). Whether we are doing the right things, and that we are using the word of God as our bench of standard by which we must measure everything in our lives.
- B. The type of fruit a Christian must produce**
1. Must be "fruits in keeping with **repentance**..." (**Luke 3:8**) a change of life for the better (for example see Luke 3:10-14) that is to do what is right before God! Therefore, our union with Christ should not be mere external outward showing but must come from the heart! This is the kind of worshiper God is looking (**John 4:23-24**), not like being indifferent, mechanically without regard for what God wants (**Isaiah 1:10-17; Malachi 1:6-10**).

2. The way we live our lives as Christians
 - a. Not doing the deeds of the flesh (**Galatians 5:19-21**)
 - b. Rather doing the things that pleases God (**Galatians 5:22-26**), notice the text, "*...those who belong to Christ Jesus...*"
3. The braches do not produce fruit only once it is a constant process (**2 Peter 1:1-11**).

C. The purpose, the glorification of the Father

1. Our ultimate purpose is for the glorification of the Father just as Christ Himself glorified His Father by becoming obedient by following His commandments to the point of dying on the cross (**Philippians 2:4-8**)

III. IN ORDER TO GROW PRUNING IS NECESSARY

A. It is necessary! It hurts, but is needed

1. One way for God to prune the braches so that they may produce more fruit is by the trials we may encounter in life (**1 Peter 1:3-9**)
2. These trials are not meant to hurt us! Let us think and remember that is for our personal spiritual growth!

CONCLUSION:

A. If you are not a Christian are you willing to come to the True Vine and be part of Him?

1. Remember Jesus is the only way for salvation (**John 14:6**), but we must keep His commandments in order to be part of a fruitful branch.
2. Let us be aware just as God did not spare the natural branches His people, the people of Israel because of their rejection to be reconcile to Him, He will do so with us as well (**Romans 11:16-22**)
3. Once again let us see (**1 Peter 1:3-9**), must be born again see (**Romans 6:4**), friends this is only possible through baptism, "*He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned*"- (**Mark 16:16**), are you willing to come to Him? Lastly, remember what Jesus said, "*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*"- (**John 15:6**).
4. Would you like to be part of the True Vine? The choice is yours. Come as we stand and sing...

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