

# I AM the True Vine

## Sunday, December 14, 2014

### John 15:1-11

#### I. Introduction

The 7<sup>th</sup> and last I AM saying of Jesus in John's Gospel. The first four were spoken publicly to the crowds, the fifth privately to Martha, and the last two privately to His disciples in His Upper Room Discourse.

The context was the Passover meal and he is speaking only with believers!

He is with the disciples EXCEPT Judas! This is important because of Jesus comments in v.3 about the disciples being clean. Compare this with John 13:10!

#### II. The True Vine

Jesus is calling himself not just the vine, but the TRUE vine. Not just a vine or another vine, but the true vine. Why?

The nation of Israel in the OT is described many times as a vine. The vine represented the covenant people of God, planted and tended by him so that Israel would produce fruit.

Psalm 80:7-9

But many times used in disobedience - Isaiah 5:3-5; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezekiel 19:10-15

The nation of Israel was an unfaithful vine, but now Jesus is the TRUE vine!

*"The new concept is that God's vineyard holds one vine and Israel must inquire if it is attached to him. No longer is Israel automatically seen as vines growing in God's vineyard. Men and women are now branches growing from one stock."*  
Gary Burge

His Father is the vinedresser, just as He always has been. The purpose of the vinedresser is to trim or 'prune' and to cut away dead branches.

*"The message is abundantly clear, and an important truth is being emphasized. All through John and the Scriptures, an important distinction is drawn between true and false faith, between true and false morality, between real and phony spirituality. Not all those who were in Israel were the true Israel. It was not birth or proximity that placed them in the kingdom but faith and obedience to God. Only insofar as one is rightly related to the source can fruit be possible. All other branches are cut away."* R. Zacharias

### **III. Two Types of Branches**

#### **1. Branches that bear fruit**

v.2 - This branch is cared for by pruning so that more fruit can be produce for the glory of God.

v.3-5 - This branch must “abide” in the vine at all times because apart from the vine it cannot produce anything. But as we abide in the vine we will produce MUCH fruit.

‘**abide**’ means to continue in a daily, personal relationship with Jesus characterized by trust, prayer, obedience and joy!

*“If our work doesn’t begin with Christ, continue to be sustained by Christ, and end at Christ for His glory, it will not last.” W. Wiersbe*

What fruit look like in our lives?

- 1) Discipleship
- 2) Personal holiness
- 3) Generous giving -
- 4) Praise and worship – Hebrews 13:15
- 5) Using our spiritual gifts

The evidence of true salvation in Christ and communion with Christ is fruit bearing.

#### **2. Branches that do not bear fruit**

v.6 - This branch is “cut away” from the vine and withers. Then it is “gathered”, thrown into the fire and burned.

The person who does not abide in me is an unbeliever who does not have a personal faith in Christ.

‘Fire’ is a common Jewish and biblical symbol for divine judgment.

### **IV. Conclusion**

v.8 – *“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciple.”*

John 5:16,17

Ephesians 2:10 -