THE TRUE VINE

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**TEXT: John 15:1-11**

**INTRODUCTION**

The last verse in chapter 14 tells us that Jesus and the Disciples are about to leave the upper room

They are headed to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will pray His great High Priestly prayer and will later be arrested by the mob led by Judas

Apparently, Jesus teaches the truths which make up chapters 15 and 16 in route to the garden

In this chapter, Jesus is pictured for us as **the True Vine**

I can imagine Jesus and these men going through the darkened streets of the city and then passing beyond the walls into the surrounding countryside

During this time of year (mid-April) the Grape Vines would have been in blossom

As Jesus walked with his Disciples, He pointed out those Vines and used it to teach an object lesson to His men

His desire was to teach them about the most vital relationship they would ever have in their lives,

And that’s the one with Jesus and His Father

We might ask ourselves, *“Why was Jesus giving them this Lesson then?”*

The answer is simple: They needed it!

These men have just been informed that Jesus is going away …

But that He Plans for His Work to continue,

And that it’s to continue through them and their lives

**John 14:12 – *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father”***

They needed to know that the Lord was going to be working In and Through their lives

This morning, we are 2,000 years removed from that night, but the work of the Lord marches on (doesn’t it)

God is still working through the followers of Jesus Christ to accomplish His will in the world today

Many of us may sit here and wonder How … are we supposed to do the work of the Lord … and How can we produce fruit in our lives

Well, the answer is found in these verses

This passage is all about becoming a genuine Disciple and about how to bear fruit for the Glory of the Lord

Let's take a few minutes this morning to view this portrait of **Jesus: The True Vine** and see how we can become more like Him

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. HIS “PERSONALITY” – vs. 1-3 …**

As a noun, the word *Personality* describes the combination of the characteristics and qualities that form an individual's distinct character

In Christ’s description of Himself as the Vine we see this very Distinct Character

(Also keep in mind that Jesus is speaking to True Believers here, (**v.2** - ***“In Me”***) This passage has nothing to do with losing someone’s Salvation)

As we look at His Personality, we first see …

**A. His ‘Genuineness’ – v. 1 a**

He describes Himself as ***“the True Vine”* – v. 1a**

The word ***“true”*** here, is used in the sense of something *Real* or *Genuine, the only One of its Kind*

He is Truly what is symbolically represented by a Grape Vine

When Jesus tells us He is the Vine, He is talking about the Stem of the Grape Vine

Think about a Grape Vine (Describe a Grape Vine)

The Stem of the Grape *Vine* conveys the nourishment to all the Branches

All the nourishment from the soil most pass through the main Stem, or the Vine, first

What Jesus is saying is … that He will continue to

Nourish and Sustain His Disciples … **- v. 5**

… just as the Roots and Stem of a Grape Vine produce the energy that nourishes and sustains its [branches](https://www.gotquestions.org/vine-and-branches.html) while they develop their fruit

Jesus wanted them to know that, even though He was going away, they could stay closely connected to Him

Just like the Branches of a Grape Vine are connected to its Stem

Our desire to Know and Love Him and the Energy to Serve Him will keep us going as we ***“abide”*** (**v.4**) in Him

That is … As we Stay Connected (Think about that)

The 2nd Thing we see here is …

**B. The ‘Gardener’ – vs. 1 b, 2**

**v. 1 b - *“My Father is the husbandman”***

The word ***“husbandman”*** refers to the Vine Dresser

Again, the *Gardener* if you would

The one who has the responsibility of caring for the Vineyard

Jesus says that the Heavenly Father is the Gardener

The Gardener is intimately involved in everything that goes on in the Vineyard

**v. 2** zeros in on 3 Specific Duties of the Gardener in regard to the Vine

**1.** Protection

That is, the Gardener provides the Watchfulness and Protection for the Vineyard

In **Matthew 21:33** Jesus spoke a Parable – ***“There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, … and built a tower,”***

In this He is talking about His Protective Care

Aren't you glad that God doesn’t miss a thing?

**Proverbs 15:3 – *“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good”***

**2.** Purifying

The Gardener Purifies his vineyard

**v. 2 - *“taketh away”***

This means to *lift up* or to *raise higher*

That is, the Gardener will take a Branch that has fallen from the Trellis and has become unfruitful and lift it from the ground back among the other Branches giving it a better chance to be productive

On a personal level, this means that when we get to a place in our Christian lives where we are unfruitful and barren, the Lord will reach into our lives, disturbing our slumber and He will lift us up in an effort to challenge us and shock us back into growth

Has the Lord been challenging areas of your life?

**3.** Pruning …

… Is the Process the Gardener uses to remove things

Remove things from the Branches that sap its vitality and strength

Things like sucker branches, useless buds, misdirected shoots, fungal infection, rot, etc.

Anything that Consumes Life but produces no fruit must go!

So, it is in the life of the Believer

When we allow things into our lives that hinder our walk with the Lord, then we are in danger of a Pruning

Pruning by its very nature is painful, and it isn't always easy to cut the junk from our lives,

But if We don’t, the Lord will!

Listen to the Advice in [**Heb. 12:1**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+12%3A1)**; II Cor. 13:5**

***“…let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”***

***“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”***

How is this Pruning accomplished?

By the Word of God

Look at **v. 3** …

***“Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you”***

The Word of God is …

-- Like a Mirror

It reveals the problems

**James 1:23, 24 – *“For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:” “For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was”***

-- Like a Knife

The Word of God cuts to the heart

**Hebrews 4:12 – *“For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”***

The question is this, has the Lord been speaking to you through His Word?

If so, have you been heeding the admonitions from the Lord?

If not, then I challenge you to allow the Lord to Prune your life with His Word

**GOD’S “PERSONALITY”**

**II. HIS “PURPOSE” – vs. 2-8**

There are 3 things seen here in regards to the Purpose of the True Vine

First, the Purpose of the True Vine …

**A. Is to ‘Produce Fruit’ – v. 2**

***“Every branch in Me that bears Not fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bring forth more fruit”***

The Grape Vine has but one Purpose: to Produce Fruit

The Grape Vine exists for that Purpose alone

Without the fruit, the grape vine and all of its efforts are wasted

The True Vine has a singular purpose as well, and that is to Bear or Produce Fruit

Next, the Purpose of the True Vine …

**B. Is to ‘Bring Glory’ – v. 8**

***“In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples”***

The reason the Vine desires to Produce fruit is so that the Vine Dresser might receive the Honor / Glory

When fruit is yielded in a vineyard, the vine, the branches, the soil, even the fruit doesn’t get the credit

All the glory passes on to the Gardener

So, it is with the Lord Jesus

Everything He does is for the Glory of the Father

This ought to be the same desire of every child of God

That is … to (so) live our lives, that every waking minute is bringing Glory to the Father in Heaven

**I Corinthians 10:31 – *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”***

There is something wrong in someone’s life when there is no desire to bring Glory and Honor to God

Who Loves us, Sustains us and Cares for us

Then the 3rd Purpose of the True Vine …

**C. Is to ‘Supply the Life’**

Notice this Truth

The Vine itself does not bear the fruit!

The fruit comes from the Branches

The Branches have the obligation of bearing the fruit

The Vine supplies its Life to the Branches and they take that Life and use it to bear fruit

Let me Share with you some Truths about Fruit Bearing

**1.** The Qualifications

-- The Branch most be *Attached* to the Vine

If the Branch expects to Bear Fruit, it must be attached to the Vine

**v. 2** says that those who are ***“in Him”***

**John 14:20 - *“At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you”***

He’s speaking of those who are saved

If you are not in the Vine, then there is no way for you to share in the Vine's life

This is all about that vital union between the believer and the Lord Jesus Christ, the True Vine

We need to recognize our standing this morning

I’ve been Crucified, Buried and Resurrected with Him, I’m now seated in Heavenly Places – **Rom. 6**

(That is … If we are in the Vine)

-- Then, the Branch most *Abide* in the Vine **– vs. 4,5**

We must maintain a close Connection with the Vine if He is to live through us producing fruit in our lives

This is only accomplished by ***“abiding”*** in Him!

Staying closely Connected

How does one Abide?

Prayer, Studying the Word, Deny self, Drawing near to God! Living a Selfless Life

As we Abide in the Vine, the more His life can flow through us to produce the fruit He desires

Is there any wonder why so many Christian’s lives are fruitless and barren?

How would you describe your life this morning?

Are you bearing any fruit for the Lord?

-- The Branch Must also be *Available* – **v. 5**

Fruit bearing is a passive activity on the part of the Branch

If the Branch will simply Abide in the Vine,

Then the Vine will do what it takes to produce the fruit

I don't know about you, but I find that truth liberating!

I’m not required to do anything but Abide

It’s the Vine's responsibility to produce the fruit in my life

That frees us from having to work and labor to get His approval

If we will yield, He will live through our lives!

When we speak of fruit, what do we mean?

What will be produced in our lives when we yield?

How will we know if fruit is being produced?

There are three basic fruits the Lord bears in the lives of His children, They are …

-- Sanctification

That is, we *Become* more like Him

**Romans 6:22 – *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life”***

**Philippians 1:11 – *“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God”***

**Colossians 1:10 – *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;”***

-- Spirituality

That is, we *Behave* more like Him

**Galatians 5:22,23 – *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,” “Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”***

-- Souls

That is, we are *Burdened* like Him

**Romans 1:13 –*“Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) …***

***… that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles”***

Paul wanted to see Souls Saved

**2.** The Quality & Quantity (of Fruit Bearing)

These are not the Branches' responsibility!

When we are Abiding in the Vine and He is reproducing His life in us, we can rest assured that the fruit that is produced is honoring to the Lord

However, God anticipates a steady progression in the level of our fruitfulness

Notice **vs. 2, 5** & **8** - No fruit, Some fruit, More fruit, Much fruit!

The closer we Abide in the Vine, the more fruit He can yield through our lives

**3.** The Quandary - **v. 6 …**

I’ve heard people use this verse to prove someone can lose their salvation (But that’s not the case)

Not every Branch abides in the Vine as it should

It is still attached, but for whatever reason, it has ceased to draw life from the Vine's fulness

As a result, it becomes fruitless and withered

When this happens, there will be 3 results

-- Loss of Fellowship with God – ***“cast forth”***

The relationship is still there (Father / Child)

The Branch still possesses the same nature as the Vine,

But, for whatever reason, it’s no longer getting its nourishment from the Vine

-- Loss of Vitality – ***“and is withered;”***

Dried up! This describes a lot of Christians today

It wasn’t always that way, but now the Branch seems to be without life

There’s weakness where there used to be power

There’s emptiness where there used to be fullness

-- Loss of Reward – ***“burned”***

**I Corinthians 3:15 *– “If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire”***

When this life is over, we will find out those who were saved but unfruitful

They will experience the loss of reward

Many think they will be content just to get to Heaven,

But that’s not how it will be

The only one’s who will hear ***“well done”*** are those who were Fruitful Branches

**HIS “PERSONALITY”**

**HIS “PURPOSE”**

**III. HIS “PROMISES” – vs. 7-11**

Those who Abide in the True Vine can rest assured of certain Precious and Sure Promises!

**A. An ‘Unhindered’ Prayer Life – v. 7 …**

**John 14:13, 14** said the same thing

Why? When we are Abiding as we should be, and when we are drawing our life from Him …

Then His will … will be our will

That is, every time we pray and everything we pray for, will fit perfectly within His will and He will grant our requests

**B. An ‘Unending’ Love – v. 9 …**

Jesus loves all men equally

But those who are Abiding in Him have entered into a special, intimate relationship with Him

That is … you will Know Him in ways that others, who can’t be bothered won’t

This is the Promise of the Vine to the Branches!

Why do you think John was called the Beloved Apostle?

Why do you think David was called ***“a man after God’s own heart”***

**C. An ‘Uncommon’ Joy – v. 11 …**

Joy is not happiness, which depends upon happenings

But it is a deep settled inner peace

It’s a deep settled assurance and confidence in our relationship with the Father and with His Son that fills our heart with ***“joy unspeakable and full of glory”***

… Which ignites the heart to serve God

**CONCLUSION**

Jesus is the True Vine

His desire is to live through your life so that you might bear fruit unto the Heavenly Father

As we close, there are a few questions that need to be asked

**1.** Are you ***“in the Vine”***? Have you ever been saved and grafted into Jesus?

**2.** Are you ***“abiding in the Vine"***? Are you drawing your strength from Him so that He is able to produce fruit through your life?” Are you Connected?

**3.** Are you bearing His fruit today? Or are there areas that need Pruning?

**HIS “PERSONALITY”**

**HIS “PURPOSE”**

**HIS “PROMISE”**