



**“I AM the True Vine”
(John 15:1)**

The Allegory of the Vine, the Vinedresser and the Branches

John 15:1-3 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 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. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”

John 15:4-8 “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. 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. 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. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples.” cf. Psalm 80; Jeremiah 2; Ezekiel 15; Isaiah 5:1-2, 7

I. The Means of Our Connection to the Vinedresser

John 15:1 “I am the true vine...”

John 15:1 “...and My Father is the vinedresser...”

Jesus Christ is the vine—the only connection to the Heavenly Father. To attach to anything or anyone else in order to be fruitful human beings is futile and empty! Sadly, some of us have attached ourselves to the wrong vine...

II. The Necessity of our Correction by the Vinedresser

John 15:2-3 “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. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”

Vinedresser Responsibility #1. To make sure the branches are rightly connected to a healthy vine

Vinedresser Responsibility #2. To regularly feed and water the branches

Vinedresser Responsibility #3. To prune the branches as necessary. cf. Hebrews 12:4-11

There is no fruitful correction by the Father unless there is eternal connection to the Father through faith in Jesus Christ.

Branch #1. The Dead Branches That Bear No Fruit

John 15:2a “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away (Greek: *airo*)...”

• **View #1 The fruitless branches are true believers who lose their salvation.**

The problem: John 10:28 — no one can pluck a true believer out of the Father’s hand.

• **View #2 The fruitless branches are true believers who are “lifted up” and encouraged to bear more fruit.**

The problem — John 15:6 — branches (not their fruit) are gathered, cast into the fire and burned.

• **View #3 The fruitless branches are unbelievers (Judas-like disciples) who will be cast in the Lake of Fire.**

Note: a “disciple” (Greek: *mathetes*) is a learner or follower— not necessarily a true believer (cf. John 6:66; 12:4; 13:10; 15:2-3; Romans 11:16-24; Ephesians 3:10; James 2:17; Matthew 7:17, 20)

John 15:8 “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.” (cf. 1 John 2:19; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 8:16).

John 15:6 “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a (lit. the) branch (like Judas) and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire (the Lake of Fire) and they are burned.”

Branch #2. The Clean Branches That Bears Fruit

John 15:2b-3 “...and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”

The Three Kinds of Clean (Living) Branches

1. True disciples that bear some fruit 2. True disciples that bear more fruit 3. True disciples that bear much fruit

The Vinedresser (God the Father) cuts off (Greek: *airo*) those fruitless disciples (false disciples). However, he prunes (Greek: *kathareo*) real — i.e. fruitful — disciples.

Pruning Those Living Branches Who Are Attached to the Vine

1. The Purpose of Pruning

2. The Practice of Pruning

The Vinedresser (God the Father) prunes us in order to...

- ...direct our spiritual growth in the right direction
- ...bring our lopsided lives into balance
- ...prevent the weight of our sin from breaking other branches
- ...keep us small, humble and fruitful
- ...rejuvenate our lives when we become old and sapless trees
- ...allow us more of the Son's light to nourish us
- ...correct or repair the damage that sin has caused us
- ...remove diseased branches and phony disciples from our midst
- ...increase our spiritual productivity and fruitfulness.

a. His Primary Pruning Tool: The Bible

John 15:3 "You are already clean (lit. pruned) because of the word which I have spoken to you."

God uses anything and everything in our lives to drive us to His Word which trims away the things that destroy our ability to bear fruit (Hebrews 12:10-11).

b. His Painful Pruning Method: Our Trials

James 1:2-4 "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

Our response to trials proves what type of branch we are.

c. His Pruning Method: His People

God uses other believers to drive us to His Word for pruning.

Hebrews 10:24-25 "...let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

Corporate Worship = All of us pruning all of us! Small Group Ministry = Some of us pruning some of us!

"Prune my life, Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ: the True Vine in whom I am eternally connected and for whom I will be lovingly corrected."

III. The Fruit of our Connection to the Vinedresser

John 15:8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples." (cf. 1 John 2:19; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 8:16).

The Cornucopia of the Fruitful Christian Life

1. The fruit of good works (Titus 3:14; Colossians 1:10)
2. The fruit of repentance (Matthew 3:8)
3. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
4. The fruit of evangelism 1 Corinthians 16:15)
5. The fruit of praise (Hebrews 13:15)
6. The fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:11)
7. The fruit of joy (John 15:11)

John 15:11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

Joy is the amazing fruit of our believing connection to Jesus, the Vine and as a result of the necessary correction by Our Heavenly Father: The Vinedresser.

• **We Experience His Joy In Us (cf. John 16:20-24)**

• **We Experience Our Joy Made Full.**

"Joy is the flag which is flown from the castle of the heart when the King is in residence there" (Walter Knight).

Joy in the midst of life's circumstances is the proof I am rightly connected to the Vine and properly pruned by the Vinedresser.

Discussion Questions:

1. Before trusting in Christ, in what ways do people attach themselves to the wrong vine?
2. In what ways does the Vinedresser (Our Heavenly Father) most often prune you.
3. What is the most visible fruit of His pruning in your life?
4. What did you get most out of this message?