

The True Source of Life

Written by By Bill Emmerling Pastor-Gallup Christian Church
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"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.... I am the vine, you are the branches."
John 15:1, 5 (ESV)

In the book of John, Jesus makes a series of "I AM" statements, implying that He is the Great I AM who spoke to Moses at the burning bush. In the Old Testament, YHWH (or Yahweh) is often used with another descriptive word to provide us with greater understanding of the nature of God. Here, Jesus is using an agricultural illustration to point out that he is the TRUE source of Life, particularly eternal life. Every Israelite would have been familiar with vineyards and the awareness that grape vines required the attention of pruning.

Throughout John 15:1-11, Jesus uses the word 'abide' a minimum of 10 times. To 'abide' is to reside, to rest, to live. The idea being conveyed is one of permanent residence, comfort and dependence. Jesus makes it abundantly clear that **ONLY** those who **ABIDE** in Him receive what is needed for life and productivity. Only through Jesus do we receive the necessary Holy Spirit to produce the fruit that we are called to produce. In Galatians 5:22-23 we find what that fruit looks like:

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

²⁴

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Almost all of the aspects of this fruit are relational; this fruit displays itself in our lives as we live with others. It displays itself as we love one another.

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Jesus tells us in John 15 that those branches which do not produce this fruit are cut off from the vine, left to wither without its source of life, and then burned. Judas was an example of just such a branch, betraying Jesus and refusing to return in repentance.

Jesus also tells us that those branches which are fruitful are pruned, that they might produce more fruit. The night Jesus shared this with His disciples, His disciples experienced great fear and grief, Peter went so far as to deny he knew Jesus. They were pruned by their suffering, that they might in turn produce more fruit.

The Father prunes our lives that we might better demonstrate and practice the fruit of the Spirit. If you are experiencing difficult times, even tribulation and suffering, it is not without purpose. The Father is molding and shaping you to be more like Jesus. The Father is using it that you might demonstrate Jesus to those around you, that the world might see how Jesus responds to your circumstances. You are the feet on the ground for Jesus and the Father.

In verse 8-11, we find the reason for this pruning, growth and fruitfulness. We are to bring the Father glory. And we are to experience the JOY of Jesus, by abiding in the love of Jesus, and loving others.

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