

Day 9



Read: John 15:1-2

Jesus, speaking to His disciples over dinner hours before He would be tried, beaten, and killed, declares that He is the true vine. This means that Jesus is the real, genuine, and final vine. In the Old Testament, God's chosen nation of people, Israel, is called God's "vine" or "vineyard" (Psalm 80:8-16 and Jeremiah 2:21). While Israel often fell under judgment for not bearing proper fruit, Jesus fulfilled all of what God's people could not be or do. Then, He gave His life, dying so that bad fruit would be forgiven and the good fruit His life produced would be attributed to our account.

What good news! A bunch of branches that do not belong have been grafted into the fruit-bearing vine that is Christ. Now, rather than needing to produce fruit on our accord, God is the good gardener who helps us bear more fruit. Notice, however, in verse 2 that our fruit-bearing is made possible by the Father's pruning. Bearing the fruit of obedience will not always be easy and comfortable. Many times, God cuts to produce more growth. Because we are in Christ, we can trust that the scalpel in the Father's hand is like that of a good surgeon: cutting in order to heal.

So, LEAN IN. Why? Because in Christ, you are already in.

PRAY

- **Adore:** Pray a prayer of praise to God for taking branches that do not deserve to belong and connecting them to the vine that is Christ. Confess your unworthiness while thanking Him for His grace.
- **Ask:** Pray this hard prayer: "Father, I trust that you love me. Prune the parts of my life that need pruning so that I can be more fruitful for your glory."
- **Act:** Chances are, you can think of one area that needs to change in your life. Talk to another brother/sister in Christ: ask them to pray for you and get their advice on how you should take the next step in the pruning process.

-Matthew Cothran