



## **ABIDE Weekly Devotions: Week One**

By Teresa Anderson

“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 does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.” John 15:1-2 ESV

It's funny how even though we read passages over and over through the years, a certain phrase or meaning will jump out at us when we need it most. I've heard this one told countless times since sitting cross-legged in front of the flannel graph at Sunday School when I was six...and yet today, it's like hearing it for the first time.

“What in the world is a vinedresser?”, I wonder while reflecting on this verse. I discovered vinedresser means “keeper of the vineyard” after reading the same verse in another translation.

It's the gardener or farmer. "Well that makes sense," I decide, as I shove the information to the back of my mind and continue on.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away. Wait. Stop. These words are written in red. Jesus is talking to his disciples during the Last Supper. He has just shared that one among them will deceive Him, Peter will deny Him, and the Holy Spirit will come after He is gone.

The room is a buzz of conversation and confusion as the disciples take in everything their Lord is divulging. Why is Jesus telling us that God is cutting away barren sections? Does this mean He has areas of His life that are producing no fruit? That seems weird. I mean, I know I certainly do...but Christ?

As I keep studying, I realize that we are the branches.  
**You and me.**

If Jesus is the vine, then God is the root. Through the combination of Root and Vine, nutrients and life are pressed and poured through and into each branch. Therefore, if each branch is drinking deeply from the Root, the branch cannot help but produce fruit. But there are some of us who are with the Vine...and yet not drinking from it. As a result no fruit can be formed.



“If,” I wonder, “there is fruit...why would You prune it back, Lord?” To me, a girl who doesn’t garden and has only a black thumb...the concept makes no sense. But as I study further, I realize that this is what gardeners do. They must prune back to help the fruit flourish.

I realize this may be truth in my backyard, but it’s certainly truth in my heart and my life, as well. I think back on all the times I was doing good things and was producing fruit, only to have it cut out of my life. Sometimes I could see the why right away, but most of the time, I’d be left scratching my head and wondering if I had done something wrong.

Instead, I’m sitting here with thoughts swirling around my mind realizing that when one thing was pruned and taken away, another thing grew and began to flourish in a way the other never could have. Once

again, God knew not only what was good...but what was BEST.

So prune away, Father. As I continue to drink heavily from the deepness of Your roots...even when it may not make sense at the time, I trust you enough to know You don't just give what is good.

***You give what is best.***

