

I am Jesus

Today we are wrapping up a series called, "I am Jesus".

"I am the vine, you are the branches, if you remain in me and I in you, you'll bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing." **John 15:5**

When you contextualize the statement as to when it was said, it begins to take on a whole new level of significance for us.

If you knew that you were going to sit around a table with your friends and family and it would be the last time you speak to them before you die, what would you say? Jesus thought that statement was very important.

Why is being connected to the vine so important?

The vine is what connects the branch to the soil.

- The soil is where the nourishment is.
- The soil is where the water is.

We want to be connected to the true vine, because when we do so we will bear much fruit.

"I am the true vine." John 15:1 This implies that there are false vines that we can connect to.

We want to stay connected to the true vine and bear much fruit.

Why is it so important to stay connected to the true vine?

1) Staying connected, produces fruit.

Jesus said, *I am the vine, you are the branches, if you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing."* **John 15:5**

What kind of fruit are we talking about? In Galatians 5:22-23, it says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Sometimes we find ourselves connected but it just doesn't seem like there's fruit. Growing fruit takes time. It starts with a seed, then a small tree, then fruit.

Jesus said, *"If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit."* He didn't say you MIGHT bear fruit. He said you will bear, not just fruit, but much fruit.

We must remain connected. We must trust God, and His timing. We continue to pray. We continue to remain in Him.

When we remain in Him and He in us, then we bear much fruit. We have to stay connected to the vine.

2) Being disconnected produces nothing.

Remember Jesus said, "*Apart from me you can do nothing.*"

"If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."

John 15:6

When we are not connected, we produce nothing. ANYBODY is capable of ANYTHING when you're disconnected from the vine.

3) How do we stay connected?

"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love."

John 15:10

It starts with obedience, simple obedience. God leads but we fail to follow.

God's been telling us to do something for a long time. He's been confirming it through His word. People have been telling you over and over, "You should do this, you should do this," and you're like, "I can't do this."

We've got to do what Jesus says. You want to stay connected to this vine, do what Jesus says. He says, "*If you keep my commands, you'll remain in my love.*"

You might have noticed that everything I spoke of refers to the church. Paul made this statement: "*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*" **1 Corinthians 12:27**

If you want to be connected to Jesus, you must be connected to HIS BODY, the church.

The second thing, you've got to love like Jesus loves. Jesus said this, "*My command is this, that you would love each other as I've loved you.*"

John 15:12

He added that "*as I love you*" because if He just said, "*Hey, I just want you to love each other*", we would get to decide what the word LOVE means. We could define love however we want.

Jesus had dealt with a constant problem. His disciples have been wondering who was the greatest. They've been talking about it on the way to Jerusalem.

At the Passover meal they were arguing about who's going to be the greatest. *"A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. "*
Luke 22:24-26

Then when they get to dinner, Jesus puts a towel around his waist and washes their feet. He actually shows them what it looks like.

Then in dramatic fashion over dinner He says, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you'll bear much fruit, but apart from me, you can do nothing. If you want to remain in my love then keep my commands."*

In other words, "do what I say, what I'm going to tell you is love each other as I've loved you."
"Greater love has no man than this, that he would lay down his life for his friends."
John 15:13

When we stay connected, all of a sudden fruit starts to happen. We can begin to love each other as He loved us. As we do that it drives us back to the vine.

Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in your life?

Keep in mind that Paul wrote *"the fruit of the Spirit"* (singular), not *"the fruits of the Spirit."* The Greek word for *"fruit"* is singular. It is contrasted with the *"works"* (plural) of the flesh in **Galatians 5:19-21**. In short: **one fruit, with nine qualities. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness Gentleness, Self-control.**

Because as Jesus said when we remain in Him and He in us we will bear fruit, much fruit. Jesus said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you'll bear much fruit, but apart from me you can do nothing."*