

Pastor Jim Jackson, 5/24/26
Days With Jesus, Day 45—The Branch That Stays
John 15:1-11

Jesus is the VINE

Finishing the last supper, Jesus uses the vineyard metaphor to describe a believer's relationship with God. With Judas gone, Jesus calls himself the life-giving Vine to his disciples. Though they're 'in him,' chosen, and names are written in heaven, they are warned to continue to believe, or they could choose to unbelieve and spiritually die (John 6:70; 14:1; Luke 10:19, 20). *God chooses to save and keep us, but we must choose to believe and stay!* Salvation is a gift of God's grace, but He allows people to participate, as repentance and belief are *their* responsibility (Mark 1:15; Eph. 2:8, 9). Belief isn't 'work,' it's trust, and trust is a continual choice (John 3:16; 6:26-29; Rom. 4:4, 5). *Jesus is the Vine that always keeps the branches alive!*

Believers are the BRANCHES

Believers are pictured as branches who are nourished from the Vine and pruned by the Vinedresser. This means if the branch dies, the fault lies with the branch, not the Vine, and that abiding with Jesus is *voluntary*. *Never leave the Vine because the Vine will never leave you!* Any believer connected to the presence and power of God will have life and joy. As opposed to happiness—which is fleeting—joy lasts and is evidence of abiding in God's love. Joy isn't emotion-based and is available in any circumstance (James 1:2). *Our joy is directly related to our priority: Jesus, Others, Yourself!*

The Father is the VINEDRESSER

God, as the vineyard Owner and vinedresser, expects a return on His investment. The same choice God allows people to make to believe, is the same they have to unbelieve. No one can fall from a place they never were, deny a person they never knew, or apostatize from a faith they never had. So, true believers can unbelieve and can be truly lost, never to return. *You can't 'lose' your salvation, but you can deny it and suffer the loss of it* (Rom. 11:13-23; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Heb. 3:12-19; 6:4-12; 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; Rev. 2:26; 3:5; 22:19). God's work in election and salvation is guaranteed. Believers can't be separated from God's love or fall out of His hand, as His power sustains them to thrive and bear fruit (Luke 8:11-15; John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:38, 39). *We're called to be faithful and fruitful, so God is glorified, and we are satisfied!*