

I. Intro

A. Text Reading: **John 15:1-6**

¹I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. (John 15:1-6)

B. Recap: “*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life!*”

1. Secular Humanism
2. Religious Pluralism
3. Christian Hedonism

C. Context

1. A very near and present God.
 - a. Will not leave you as orphans. (**Jn. 14:18**)
 - b. Preview of mutual abiding (**Jn. 14:19-23**)

¹⁹“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. ²⁰At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (Jn. 14:19-23)

D. Preview

1. Revelation (**v. 1**)
2. Invitation (**v. 3-5, 9-11**)
3. Ultimatum (**v. 2, 6**)

II. Body

A. Revelation: I AM (**v.1**)

¹ *I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. (Jn. 15:1)*

1. Familiarity with the “I AM” language of O.T. (**Exodus 3:14.**)
 - a. Reveals the character and divine nature of God (was, is, is to come)
 - i. I AM “the Bread of Life” (**Jn. 6:35**)
 - ii. I AM “the Light of the World” (**Jn. 11:12**)
 - iii. I AM “the Door of the Sheep” (**Jn. 10:7**)
 - iv. I AM “the Good Shepherd” (**Jn. 10:11**)
 - v. I AM “the Resurrection and the Life” (**Jn. 11:25**)
 - vi. I AM “the Way, Truth, Life” (**Jn. 14:6**)
 - vii. I AM “the True Vine (**Jn. 15:1**)

2. Familiarity with the Vineyard Typology

¹ *Now let me sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. ² He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. ³ “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. ⁴ What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? ⁵ And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain on it.” ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His*

pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help. (Is. 5:1-7)

- a. The vinedresser is the Well-Beloved (God) who is intimately involved with His handiwork and expects no less than fruitfulness.
- b. Israel is the vineyard (v. 7)

3. Jesus' revelation as the True Vine (**Jn. 15**) snatched the spotlight off the recipient and placed it squarely on the source of grace, power, and life abundant.

¹I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. (Jn. 15:1)

- a. You are branches (vessels) with the potential to bear incredible fruit.
- b. The Father is the Beloved Vinedresser God who orchestrates the outward circumstances for our good.

²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (Jn. 15:2)

B. Invitation: Mutual Abiding (v.3-5, 9-11)

³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. (Jn. 15:3-4)

- 1. Characters in the Metaphor
 - a. **Vinedresser**: The Father (the pruner & protector)
 - b. **Vine**: Jesus is the True Vine (the source, power, life)
 - c. **Branch**: Everyone who believes the word that was spoken is a branch.
- 2. The Call To Remain

⁵"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5)

- a. If you rest in Christ, Christ will rest on you.
 - i. He'll empower you.

3. Results of abiding.

a. Much Fruit. (v. 5)

⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (Jn. 15:5)

- i. This is the desire of the Father.
- ii. This is the glory of the Father

⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (Jn. 15:8)

b. Much Love (v.9)

⁹ As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love (Jn. 15:9)

- i. The way that the Father loves the Son, that's how Jesus loves you.
- c. Much Joy (v.10-11)

¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. (Jn. 15:10-11)

- i. We've been made to experience pleasure.
- ii. The greatest pleasure we could ever experience is in connection with the Vine.
- iii. Ps. 16:11: *In your presence is fulness of joy...*

C. Ultimatum: Fruit or Fire (v.2, 6)

² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (Jn. 15:2)

- 1. Fruitless branches get cut off, while fruitful branches get cut back (pruned).
 - a. The Vinedresser (The Father) knows how to orchestrate circumstances (often painful) to bring about the most fruit imaginable.
 - i. Heb. 12:6: *For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*

- ii. **Heb. 12:11:** *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

*He cuts fruitless branches off and cuts fruitful branches back to encourage growth in areas that were previously unrealized.

- 2. Every fruitless branch who refuses to abide is cut off and then cast in the fire.

⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. (Jn. 15:6)

- a. This challenges our American version of Christianity where you come to the alter one Sunday, get plugged into the vine and then you get to live the rest of your days the way you want to.
- b. The life of a Jesus branch is a life marked by (remaining) abiding in the vine.
- c. Every other type of branch is only fit for fire.

III. Conclusion

- A. Hard Saying Point: *Every branch that appears to be connected ain't really connected.*
 - 1. There are some branches that appear to be connected, but prove not be so.
 - a. No fruit.
 - b. No evidence of abiding in their lives.
 - c. Cut off and cast into fire.
 - 2. One of the greatest illustrations of Life in the Spirit.
 - a. Abiding produces incredible results.
 - 3. One of the greatest illustrations of the Life of a Disciple.
 - a. Every abiding branch not only bears fruit, but remains for the painful pruning.
 - b. Fleshly temptation to encourage ourselves to make sure we have fruit.

- i. Works.

- B. The Grace for the Hard Saying

- 1. Remain in the Vine, endure pruning, but you are already clean.
 - a. Same word for pruning (verb form) in verse 2 as clean (adjective form) in verse 3.

²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (John 15:2-3)

- i. Prune (kathairo): *v.* to cleanse something, to purge something, to prune something.
 - ii. Clean (katharos): *adj.* to be cleansed, purged, pruned, etc.
 - b. Play on words: He that is already clean gets cleaned.
- 2. We are granted salvation by grace through faith (on the front end).
 - a. Those who have this grace of being pruned on the front end, stick around (abide) to be pruned thereafter.