

John-33
“Abide In The True Vine”
John 15:1-8 (NIV)

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a moment and welcome our first-time guests and those who are watching online!

If you're just joining us, we're in the Gospel of John.

Jesus is in the last hours with His disciples, He's sharing as much as He can with them...and it's hard for them to understand everything He's saying...

Last week PM (I won't talk about the platypus) walked us through the Third Person of the Trinity.

One God who has revealed Himself to us in three distinct Persons...Father, Son & Spirit.

The Father is not the Son...the Son is not the Holy Spirit...but they are all God.

God the Father **GIVES**

God The Son **ASKS**

...And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—Jn 14:16 (NIV)

God The Spirit **HELPS**

....he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither

***sees him nor knows him. But you know him,
for he lives with you and will be in you-Jn
14:15–17 (NIV)***

God the Father loves you, and He wants you to be saved...God the Son paid the price for your sin on the cross, and God the Holy Spirit is offering you a new life...a purpose filled life!

So if you were not here last week or missed any of the series you can catch up on any of it on our youtube channel...it really is one of my favorite series.

This week we are in John 15, one of my favorite passages in the entire bible...It has reminded me in dark times to stay connected.

Before we get into the text let's just go back a little, throughout John's Gospel, Jesus makes seven distinct, self-revealing "I am" statements,

pointing directly to His unique divine identity and redeeming mission:

- *"I am the Bread of Life" John 6:35*
- *"I am the Light of the World" John 8:12*
- *"I am the Door" John 10:9*
- *"I am the Good Shepherd" John 10:11*
- *"I am the Resurrection and the Life" John 11:25*
- *"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" John 14:6*

Now, in John 15:1, we arrive at the **seventh and final "I am" declaration:**

"I am the True Vine."

Let me just say that you were never designed to produce spiritual fruit by yourself.

Your strength, your life, your purpose, and your fruitfulness are found in staying connected to Jesus.

Church, today I want to take you to one of the most powerful teachings Jesus ever gave His disciples.

John 15:1-8.

1. Jesus is the Source

Jesus identifies Himself as the true vine and God the Father as the gardener or vinedresser, meaning all spiritual life and strength come directly from Him

Jesus says:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.”

This is not just another illustration.

This is a revelation of who Jesus is.

Jesus is saying, “If you want life, if you want strength, if you want fruit, if you want to survive the storms, you have to stay connected to Me.”

Jesus doesn't say:

“I am the occasional vine.”

He doesn't say:

“I am the emergency vine.”

He doesn't say:

“I am the vine you call when everything else fails.”

He says:

“I AM THE TRUE VINE.”

And somebody needs to hear this today:

Jesus is not simply part of your life. Jesus is the source of your life.

- You can have money and still be empty.
- You can have success and still be broken.
- You can have relationships and still be lonely.
- You can have a house and still not have a home.
- You can have religion and still lack relationship.

Story of TD1 mom

But when you are connected to Jesus, there is something inside of you that the world cannot manufacture:

Because Jesus is the source.

In John chapter 15, Jesus speaks directly into our exhaustion. He offers an entirely different paradigm for what it means to live the Christian life.

He wants us to know that spiritual life, righteousness, and effective service do not originate within us.

It flows exclusively from our continuous, faith-and-love connection to Jesus Christ, the True Vine.

Consider the heavy atmosphere in that room. Judas Iscariot had just gone out into the night to carry out his infamous betrayal (John 13:30).

Jesus is speaking these words not to a hostile crowd of Pharisees, but to His closest earthly friends during their intimate final hours.

If you notice in John 14:31 Jesus tells His disciples “Rise, let us go from here.”

They are now heading to the garden of Gethsemane.

The remaining eleven disciples were bewildered, anxious, and deeply grieved.

Jesus had just told them plainly that He was leaving them (John 14:2), preparing them for His pending crucifixion, His resurrection, and His subsequent departure to heaven.

Knowing how disturbed and abandoned they would feel, Jesus gave them this tender metaphor of the True Vine as a lasting word of comfort.

He wanted those eleven men—and believers of all time—to know that **He was not going to abandon them.**

Though they would no longer enjoy His visible, physical presence...His spiritual reality and living energy would continue to nourish and sustain them.

Just as the hidden roots and trunk of a grape vine continuously pump life-giving sap into the branches, Jesus' unseen power would flow into His people to sustain their souls and mature their fruit.

Story of The trees at my house

2. Abiding is Essential

Believers are the branches and must stay connected to Jesus, because a branch cannot bear fruit by itself and people can do nothing apart from Him.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." — **John 15:1, 4**

We live in a culture that tells us to "look within" to find strength, truth, and purpose. But Jesus completely debunks that philosophy.

Our source of spiritual life and fruit is not within ourselves; it is outside us, in Christ Jesus.

We should depend on Jesus for everything, starting with our physical existence:

"For in Him we live and move and have our being..." — Acts 17:28

And extending to our eternal redemption:

"For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are

reconciled, shall we be saved by his life."
— Romans 5:10

No one can live rightly or serve God effectively until they are connected to Jesus Christ in a genuine faith-and-love relationship.

Alyse reminded us just a few weeks ago of Jesus' 6th I am statement.

... "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. — John 14:6

He is our only bridge to the Father who gives life and produces in us a fruitful harvest of righteousness.

What happens when we are:

1. Self-Reliant ---> We become the dying branch that is cut off from the root "God"
2. Faith-Love Connection ---> Continuous flow of Christ's living power

3. The Necessity of Pruning

The Father prunes productive branches—removing dead weights and hindrances—so they can grow and produce even more spiritual fruit.

"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 15:2

There are **two different things** happening in this verse:

God removes what is unfruitful.

“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away...”

God is concerned about fruit. He doesn't want us merely to *look connected* to Him; He wants our lives to produce evidence of that connection.

Fruit represents what flows from a life connected to Christ—**love, obedience, patience, character, holiness, compassion, faith, and the work of the Holy Spirit.**

God prunes what is already fruitful.

“Every branch that does bear fruit he prunes...”

This is where it gets uncomfortable.

Sometimes God cuts things out of our lives, not because we're doing something wrong, but because He sees something greater ahead.

Pruning isn't punishment.

Pruning is preparation.

A gardener doesn't prune a dead branch to make it fruitful. Dead branches are removed. But healthy branches are pruned **because they have the potential to produce more.**

That means there are seasons when God says:

- “I'm cutting this relationship back.”
- “I'm removing this distraction.”
- “I'm changing your priorities.”
- “I'm dealing with this attitude.”
- “I'm stretching your faith.”
- “I'm asking you to let go.”
- “I'm taking you deeper.”

And we may cry, **“Lord, why are You cutting me?”**

But God is saying:

“Because I see fruit in you that you haven't seen yet.”

When a tree is being pruned, it can look worse before it looks better. Branches are cut away. The tree may look bare.

It may appear as though something has been lost.

But the gardener understands something the tree cannot see:

The cutting is connected to the coming growth.

Some of us are asking God for **more fruit**, while resisting the **pruning** required to produce it.

We want more anointing—but not more surrender.

We want greater influence—but not greater obedience.

We want more fruit—but don't want God touching the areas that need to be cut.

But Jesus says:

“He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

So don't despise the pruning.

- **If God is cutting it, let Him cut it.**
- **If God is removing it, let Him remove it.**
- **If God is correcting it, let Him correct it.**
- **If God is stretching you, let Him stretch you.**

Because the Gardener knows what He's doing.

And here's the promise:

The branch that survives the pruning will produce more fruit.

The season you are in may feel painful, but it isn't pointless.

Jesus is distinguishing two kinds *of branches attached to the visible structure of the vineyard.*

And we need to understand what Jesus was teaching us in these passages:

Jesus taught in **Matthew 7:16–20** that a tree is known by its fruit: **"By their fruit you will know them."**

This is a powerful statement because Jesus is teaching us that **what is inside a person**

eventually becomes visible through the way they live.

You cannot always tell what is happening beneath the surface of a tree, but eventually the fruit tells you what kind of tree it is.

In the same way, people can say the right things, look the right way, and even know Scripture—but **their consistent fruit reveals what is truly taking root in their heart.**

This is especially important because Matthew 7 is dealing with **false prophets and spiritual discernment.**

Jesus essentially says:

“Don't just listen to what they say. Watch what their lives produce.”

What does their life produce?

- Love or hatred?
- Humility or pride?
- Truth or deception?
- Forgiveness or bitterness?
- Obedience or rebellion?
- Peace or constant chaos?
- Servanthood or self-promotion?
- The character of Christ or the character of the flesh?

Church I want you to understand something, when the Father sees a genuine, fruit-bearing branch, He holds the pruning shears with intentional care.

Pruning is painful, but it is never punitive for the believer. We often think pruning means something is wrong.

But sometimes pruning means: God sees something greater in you.

The gardener cuts away things that are preventing greater fruit.

Pruning is not punishment; it is preparation.

When God trims away a season, a comfort, or an opportunity in your life, He isn't rejecting you—He is investing in your spiritual growth.

4. Apart From Jesus You Can Do Nothing

John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Jesus' illustration of the vine and branches is no thoughtless generality or casual literary device. It is **absolute, stark reality**.

Without a vine's sap, a severed branch cannot even keep its leaves green, let alone grow a single cluster of grapes.

In the same way, no believer can achieve anything of lasting spiritual value independently of Christ:

- You can organize events in human strength, but you cannot transform a heart.
- You can force external rule-keeping, but you cannot produce genuine holiness.
- You can build a reputation, but you cannot build the Kingdom of God.

"Apart from me you can do NOTHING"

means zero eternal value produced in human self-sufficiency.

***"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."
— John 15:7–8***

Some of you may be asking, PB what is the fruit? I'm glad you asked.

When Christ's spiritual life flows freely through a believer, the byproduct is unmistakable. The fruit we produce is that of the Holy Spirit:

"...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." — Galatians 5:22–23

This fruit manifests as:

- **Internal Transformation:** Christlike character, quiet confidence under trial, and pure motives.
- **External Impact:** Effective service, sacrificial love for others, sharing the gospel, and work for righteousness.

If you still look like your old self, then ***Houston
We Have A Problem!!!***

When a branch produces heavy, sweet fruit,
passersby don't praise the branch—they praise
the Vinedresser who cultivated the soil.

The garden doesn't get the glory, the gardener
does.

We do go into the garden and thank you for
your fruit, no we praise the gardener.

When our lives overflow with Spirit-led love and
service, the world gives glory to our Heavenly
Father.

Worship Team

Jesus gave us the metaphor of the True Vine on the darkest night of His earthly life to assure us of an eternal truth: **His unseen presence will never leave us.**

- He is the **True Vine**—our sole source of spiritual life and righteousness.
- The Father is the **Vinedresser**—trust His pruning shears in your life.
- We are the **Branches**—completely dependent on Him for everything, from our physical breath to our eternal salvation.

Most weeks we ask what is the Holy Spirit saying to you...but today I want to leave you with some reflective questions for you to think about throughout the week.

Where are you trying to self-generate? Are you attempting to produce patience, peace, or ministry results out of your own willpower instead of abiding in Christ?

How are you receiving the Father's pruning? Is there an area where God is cutting back good things so that better spiritual fruit can grow?

What does daily abiding look like for you this week? How can you anchor your heart in His Word, rest in His love, and pray continuously as you go about your daily work?

Take time to spend with the Holy Spirit asking Him to help you in these areas.