

John 4:23-24 (NASB) 23 "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- Why is truth so important? **Acts 1:1 (NASB)** 1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach,
- Truth is so important in teaching because if it is really truth it can be lived.
- **We have an enemy** - what is his desire? To deceive. To deceive us into thinking we need to rely on ourselves for our salvation and once we become believers to then rely on ourselves for our sanctification. He wants your soul, he'll settle for your mind. How does he get your mind? By distorting truth.

JOHN 15:1-5 (NASB)

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so 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, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

BRANCH

The first thing we need to address with this section of scripture is whom He is speaking to.

- He is talking to the Apostles on the night before He died...minus Judas. So He is speaking to believers.
- Another way we know He is speaking to believers is because He says "Every branch in Me". One cannot be "In Him" if they haven't believed in Him.
- Finally we also see in verse 5 where Jesus expressly states who He is speaking to (Apostles) are the branches.

Why is it important for us to establish who the branches are? Because we notice that He continues on by saying "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, "He takes away". This statement has been interpreted in different ways.

- Some have interpreted that this means you can lose your salvation. A branch was "in Him" and now they are taken away.
- Others have interpreted that those who haven't produced fruit were never believers to begin with (false believers) and they are taken away...Judas is an example used.
- There is another interpretation and we will review that today.

IN ME MEANS TO HAVE BELIEVED IN HIM

John 17:21 (NASB) 21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

1 John 5:20 (NASB) 20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Colossians 3:3 (NASB) 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

I especially like the last verse here in Colossians. That we are hidden in Him. **Hidden** here literally means to be "**concealed**". *In other words when God looks at us what He sees is not us **He sees Christ**. He sees Christ blood after we have believed.*

I think a great picture of this is when the Children of Israel are getting ready to leave on the night of the very first Passover when God was going to pass through their camp:

Exodus 12:11-13 (NASB) 11 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste--it is the LORD'S Passover. 12 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. 13 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

When God goes through the camp **what does He look for?** He looked for the **blood of the lamb** on the door posts. There was absolutely **no other requirement** when He went through. Everyone who was inside was **quite literally hidden** from the destroying angel.

This is a picture of how God views us when it comes to our standing with Him...**it is not us, it is not our works it is the blood of the lamb on the door posts of our hearts.**

So "Every branch in me..." means to be so a part of Christ that we are we are hidden inside of Him covered with His blood.

ETERNAL SECURITY

The next idea we need to understand in order to understand this passage is Eternal Security. If we are **In Him** when we **believe in Him** is there now any way that we can no longer be in Him?

Scripture is clear that we cannot lose our salvation:

John 3:16 (NASB) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

John 10:27-29 (NASB) 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

John 6:37-39 (NASB) 37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

He gave us the Spirit for many reasons, but one of those reasons was as a promise to us.

Ephesians 1:13 (NASB) 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NASB) 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

Sealed - ownership and security, together with destination,

- to set a seal upon, mark with a seal, to seal
- since things sealed up are concealed (as the contents of a letter), to **hide**, keep in silence, keep secret

Colossians 3:3 (NASB) 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Remember the Jewish people hidden behind the blood on the door posts?!

The word Pledge could have a financial meaning in the Greek. Listen to the definition:

Pledge - arrabōn (är-rä-bō'n) - an earnest

- money which in purchases is given as a pledge or **downpayment** that the full amount will subsequently be paid.

The Holy Spirit is equated to earnest money from Christ for us in this passage. A promise or a seal that we are His. He has ownership of us. Would Christ turn over something that He has already purchased?

DID YOU REALIZE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF IS TESTIFYING TO OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE BELIEVERS?

Romans 8:16-17 (NASB) 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

God's Standard is perfection. How easy is it to be perfect or Holy as He is Holy? How well have you done this week at being perfect?

2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away

... said another way "Every believer who is safely and securely hidden in me that does not bear fruit"...

Means that there are believers who, by choice, may not show any fruit. I think in order for us to understand what is being said here we must take a minute and understand what is meant by the word "fruit" when Christ says that here.

It is important for us to not define fruit by what we want, or other Christians want to define fruit as but what the bible defines fruit as. Here is the definition of fruit from the bible from the greek word (karpos) that is used here for fruit:

Fruit karpos - (kär-po's)

1. that which **originates** or comes **from something**, an effect, result
2. The invisible power of the Holy Spirit in those who are brought into living union with Christ (Jhn 15:2-8, 16) produces "the fruit of the Spirit,"

Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

So looking at Galatians we see that the fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace etc. Notice what

Paul says at the end of verse 23, "against such things there is no law".

What does the law help us do? The law helps us make something that might be subjective it makes it objective right? Because we have a speed limit posted I can know how much over the speed limit I am going. If it is 55 and I am going 65 I know and the policeman who pulls me over knows that I am going 10 mph over what the law states.

But what is there to measure my love, my joy, my goodness, my faithfulness etc.? Paul tells us...there is no law. Why? Because these are all HEART BASED SUBJECTIVE THINGS to which you and I are unable to judge. The only way that you and I are able to judge and determine these things is through other's works so unfortunately we tend to equate these works with fruit.

But God has a different measuring scale and He is the only one who is able to truly measure our fruit:

Jeremiah 17:10 (NASB) 10 "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

Proverbs 21:2-3 (NASB) 2 Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.
3 To do righteousness and justice Is desired by the LORD more than sacrifice.

Psalms 44:21 (NASB) 21 Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.

So to be sure to clarify this. **True Fruit** is fruit that **comes from the Spirit** and the Spirit's fruit is love, peace, patience etc and these are genuine love, genuine peace fruit comes from our **hearts**.

Psalms 51:16-17,19 (NASB) 16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise...19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

Which in turn means what? Our motives for doing these works or fruit mean everything when God is determining our fruits:

So what can we really boil this down to? Fruit is really not Fruit unless it comes from a genuine place in the heart. **VITAL TO UNDERSTAND FOR OUR SANCTIFICATION!!**

Why do we do those things for Him? Are we internally or externally motivated to do them?

We will find out one day soon:

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 (NASB) 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

So our fruit is quite literally going to be rewarded in heaven but it will only be those fruits that are done genuinely through a heart that has been motivated by The Spirit.

I do want to make sure to end with an important note for this session. We can possibly drive ourselves crazy by constantly evaluating our motives. We are not to do this. There is

only one who inspects the fruit produced by the vine through the branches. It is the **Vine Dresser (verse 1)**.

And who is the Vine Dresser? Christ tells us it is God who is the Vine Dresser. Nurturing the Vine and inspecting the fruit.

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away;

Paul illustrates this for us in the following verses:

1 Corinthians 4:3-5 (NASB) 3 But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. 4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. 5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

Hebrews 12:2 (NASB) 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

He takes them away - airō (ī'-rō) - to raise up, elevate, lift up

"What happens to unfruitful branches? Jesus said the branches that don't bear fruit are "lifted up" (Jn 15:2). They are not cut off – that is a bad translation that would've made no sense to a Mediterranean listener! A viticulturalist would never throw away a branch for that would be like amputating part of the vine. Unfruitful branches are lifted out of the dirt and re-dressed so they can be nourished by the sun. Sticking with that metaphor, the reason why some Christians are barren is that they're facedown in the dirt and not looking at the Son."

- Paul Ellis