

JOHN 15:1-5

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.

Clean - clean, pure

This is the same word used in verse 2 for prunes but a different tense.

1. like a vine cleansed by pruning and so fitted to bear fruit.

2. In a levitical sense - clean, the use of which is not forbidden, imparts no uncleanness

John 15:3 (NLT) You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you.

Christ is telling his apostles that they are already clean because of the word or the fact that they have believed the word that He said about Himself that He is the Messiah.

You are a branch that is capable of producing fruit. You have bathed, you are washed.

This is consistent with what Jesus had already told His disciples when He washed their feet:

John 13:10 (NASB) 10 Jesus *said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

So Christ tells them again in verse 3.

3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

And then He tells us what it is that He wants of us...

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.

It is a pretty remarkable word when you consider what He requires of us. He tells us to...ABIDE

Abide - to remain

Our job is to simply remain in Him. In that place of **letting Him lead and we follow.**

In other words, He is telling us to simply **be a branch.** He is going to do all of the rest. As a **vine does everything that is required** for a branch to be viable, to produce fruit to **be of value** the branch just has to remain in the vine.

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.

We are simply to remain in Him.

Let's look at an example:

[Luk 10:39-42 NASB] She had a sister named Mary who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Let's compare what we are seeing out of these two believers.

Martha

- **Distracted with all her preparations.** The word for preparations is **service.** This is interesting considering serving is an important part of our christian walk. But notice what the verse says. It says "**her** preparations" or Martha's service. Was Martha performing service for Him or for herself? Scripture actually says **HER** preparations or service.
- She actually let's us see her heart a bit in her comments "**Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.**" Where is Martha's focus? Martha's focus is on Martha. Another way that we can discern this is from experience. When we are performing our spiritual gift and doing it from a place of complete devotion to Him where is our focus? It's on Him, we aren't concerned about others we are engrossed in what it is that He has for us to do.
- Christ echoes this for Martha: "**Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things.**"
- **Worried** - to be anxious, to be troubled with cares
- **Bothered** - to be troubled in mind, disquieted
- How does this line up with Scripture:

Philippians 4:6 (NASB) 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Matthew 11:30 (NASB) 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

I wonder if Martha would've said that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

MARY

- Notice where we find Mary. **Seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word.** Where is Mary's focus? Mary's focus or gaze is fixed on Jesus.
- **Feet** - a foot (of disciples listening to their teacher's instruction are said to be at his feet). Notice the **humility** that Mary is exercising. Is sitting at someone's feet not a humble place? When we go to Him in prayer or studying His word Mary is giving us a great picture of **where our mindset ought to be.** Humbled, focused on what He has for us and sitting at his feet.
- Notice what Christ says to Martha: "Mary has chosen the good part. In other words both of these sisters are believers but Christ is telling us that there is a **choice**. We can choose to focus on working hard for Him in our own power and try to work out our christian walk in the way we think is right or **choose a better way.**
- The way that Martha has chosen produces Worry, Anxiety a disquiet in our spirit.
- Or we can **"Choose the good part"**
- **Good** - good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy. **(FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT)**

Mary is choosing to honor Him by first focusing on her relationship with Him. By focusing on giving Him her heart.

This is supported in scripture:

[Psa 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.

Jeremiah 29:13 (NASB) 13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

Not with all of your effort, sacrifices or might but your heart.

It is from this place that I believe scripture is telling us that eternal fruit is produced.

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.

Of itself - means from itself

This quite literally means a branch can not force itself to produce fruit. The Vine produces fruit THROUGH the branch.

We do not produce fruit, Christ produces fruit through us.

Can you imagine a branch telling the Vine "Thank you for giving me life and providing everything that I have needed to be healthy and produce fruit. I think I am going to remove myself from you and begin producing fruit by myself."

That would be ridiculous right? But isn't that what the **prodigal son did**? Isn't that what **Satan tricked** Adam and Eve into doing? ***"You don't need the vine you can do it yourself."*** Isn't that **how he tricks you and I** when he guilts us into the belief that we ought to be doing good things for Jesus the way Martha is doing them? **IT'S A BRANCH TRYING TO PRODUCE FRUIT WITHOUT THE VINE IN OTHER WORDS A BRANCH TRYING TO BE A VINE...MORE SPECIFICALLY THE TRUE VINE.**

GOING DEEPER:

John 15:4 (NLT) Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

Notice the severed from the vine comment. This is good for us to talk through:

We know from our earlier study of verse 2 that we can't lose our salvation. If we are assured of our salvation then what does severed from the vine mean?

We know from scripture that God can't be in the presence of sin.

Isaiah 59:2 (NASB) 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

When we sin **fellowship is broken** with Him, when we have broken fellowship with Him **we are severed** from the vine or not abiding in Him. If we are not abiding we are not producing fruit.

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.

To illustrate let's look at Martha again. Martha was **worried** and **bothered** and **focused on herself**.

Worried and bothered comes from relying on self. If I am relying on myself then I am conversely not relying on The Vine if I am not relying on The Vine then I am severed. What causes severing or separation...sin does.

Martha is actually sinning. Martha is working under her own power and offering up her works to Him as a sacrifice that she assumes He is going to accept.

Offering God our own conjured up works is not only unfruitful it is actually sinful.

Genesis 4:2-5 (NASB) 2 Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

Notice what scripture has to say about Cain's offering in 1 John:

1 John 3:12 (NASB) 12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

Our works for Him when done from our own strength are dirty to Him:

Isaiah 64:6 (NASB) 6 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

When we offer Him *our* works not the works the Spirit has compelled us to do He does not accept them. If He doesn't accept them they are not eternal.

YOU MAY HEAR THIS AND THINK...THIS IS ALL REALLY HEAVY. IT IS...BUT I WANT TO REMIND YOU HE SIMPLY TELLS US TO ABIDE.

Psalms 139:23-24 (NASB) 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

Jeremiah 29:13 (NASB) 13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

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.