

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.

During the first session at camp there was a **question** that I asked the students to take time to meditate and ponder.

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.

Let's review Verse 4 again:

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.

If I am honest with myself I must admit that I am not abiding in Christ 100% of the time. If I am not abiding in Him at all times then I have to admit that I am an unfruitful branch. But I also know that He produces fruit through me when I Abide, therefore I am a fruitful branch as well.

So what is the answer?

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.

Notice in our verse Christ tells the Apostles I am the vine, and you are the branches. Notice He doesn't designate which branches they are He just tells them that they are the branches.

How much fruit is produced when we are not abiding? "for apart from Me you can do nothing." We produce nothing if we are not abiding in Him. Notice He tells that to the Apostles. Why would He tell them this if it wasn't possible? Because He knew they were going to stumble at times and not abide just like He knows you and I are going to stumble at times and when we don't abide. And then the process kicks in again, taking us away (getting us into the light), repentance or turning back to the light and we find ourselves abiding and back in fellowship with Him.

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.

He also says **"he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit"**.

much - I love that Christ added this word. When we are abiding in Him we grow. We mature we are a branch that is enlarged because of Him. A mature branch doesn't just

produce fruit, a mature branch produces MUCH fruit.

Ephesians 3:20 (NASB) Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Far more - hyperekperissou (hü-per-ek-pe-rēs-sü') - beyond measure, exceedingly

Abundantly - hyper (hü-pe'r) - over, beyond, more than

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Understanding that this is the character of the God that we serve. When we hear Him say that “much” fruit will be produced when we abide we can safely bet that abiding in Him allows us to produce much more fruit than we can fathom.

What a God! These verses in John which for many have been verses of condemnation are actually verses of **hope** and **peace** and **rest**. Hope concerning a God who is pictured as a vine dresser that is carefully and skillfully caring for His branches, His children. What a wonderful and caring Father we serve!

I want to wrap up our time in these verses from John 15 by reviewing what the Bible has to say about this fruit that The Vine produces through us. What does He do with it?

We have been discussing fruit as it relates to us here on this temporal plane. But let's close out by looking at what the Bible has to say about the next plane:

When we yield and Abide in Him the fruit that He produces through us will be rewarded in heaven. The bible discusses rewards consistently:

1 Corinthians 4:5 (NASB) 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.

THE JUDGEMENT SEAT FOR BELIEVERS:

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NASB) 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Romans 14:10 (NASB) 10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

Judgment - bema - only used in the bible when speaking about believers.

Some wonder if this will also be a place of condemnation for our standing or belief in Him. That is the Great White Throne Judgement for those who did not believe. When we believe our sin has been dealt with.

FORGIVEN OUR SINS:

1 John 1:7 (NASB) 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Isaiah 38:17 (NASB) "Lo, for [my own] welfare I had great bitterness; It is You who has kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.

WHAT WILL THAT LOOK LIKE:

1 Corinthians 3:8-15 (NASB) 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 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.

WHEN WILL WE BE REWARDED:

Revelation 11:18 (NASB) 18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

REWARDS SPOKEN OF AS CROWNS:

Five Crowns of Reward

1. Crown of Righteousness (a.k.a. the Watcher's Crown) For loving (longing for) the Lord's appearing (2 Timothy 4:8)

2 Timothy 4:8 (NASB) 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2. Crown of Victory (a.k.a. the Victor's Crown) For spiritual discipline and self-control (1 Corinthians 9:25-27)

1 Corinthians 9:25-27 (NIV) 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict

training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

3. Crown of Life (a.k.a. the Martyr's Crown) For patiently enduring trials and/or death (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10)

James 1:12 (NASB) 12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

4. Crown of Glory (a.k.a. the Elder's Crown) Godly leaders who were good examples to their flock (1 Peter 5:2-4; Matthew 5:19)

1 Peter 5:2-4 (NASB) 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

5. Crown of Rejoicing (a.k.a. the Soul-winner's crown) For leading others to accept Christ by sharing the Gospel of salvation through belief in Jesus (1 Thessalonians 2:19; Daniel 12:3; Proverbs 11:30)

1 Thessalonians 2:19 (NKJV) For what [is] our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? [Is it] not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

Daniel 12:3 (NASB) 3 "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

WE ARE GOING TO STAND BEFORE HIM AND WE WILL BE FULLY KNOWN:

1 Corinthians 13:9-10,12 (NASB) 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away...12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

Have you ever wondered what looking into the eyes of Jesus Christ will be like? You will be looking into the eyes of the individual that knows everything you've been through. Eyes that have seen every hurt, even the hurt you've never shared. Eyes that have seen every disappointment, eyes that have seen every success, every triumph. Eyes that know you better than you know you.

The eyes of the one who breathed life into you, the creator of your eternal soul. The individual that your soul has spent a lifetime desiring to reconnect with Face to Face. What will it be like to look into those eyes?

"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."

- CS Lewis

This will be a time of total and complete understanding of Him and ourselves. Everything is going to **connect**.

What I pray that I hear, I pray that you hear are the following words from Him on that day:

Matthew 25:21 (ESV) His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

GIVING HIM BACK WHAT WAS ALWAYS HIS:

Revelation 4:9-11 (NASB) 9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

Knowing these things I want to encourage you as we finish by turning back to our verses we've studied here.

Don't let Satan cheat you of your reward in heaven by deceiving you into thinking it is up to you and your strength to complete the sanctification process He has started in you as a believer.

Remember He is the author and perfecter of faith not you.

Your job is to simply be a branch connected to the Vine. Just Abide in Him. Let Him direct you and show what it is that He has for you and then obey

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NASB) 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Revelation 22:12-13,16-17,20 (NASB) 12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. 13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."...16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." 17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost....20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming

quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

