

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 15:1-11

Lesson #54

The Vine and the Branches

12/04/2016

Context

- This chapter must be understood in the context of the previous chapter's emphasis on **abiding relationships** with Jesus and his people.

Chapter 13

Attachment

(foot washing - cleansed by Jesus)

"If I do not wash you, you have no part with me."
13:8

Chapter 14

Anointing

(indwelling - a "Paraclete" Spirit)

"He abides with you and will be in you."
14:17

Chapter 15

Abiding

(bearing fruit - vine & branches)

"apart from me you can do nothing."
15:5

1

Context

- This chapter must be understood in the context of the previous chapter's emphasis on **abiding relationships** with Jesus and his people.

John reminds us that the ministry of the Spirit is primarily about a **PERSONAL, INTIMATE, RELATIONSHIP** with God and His people, which leads to Luke's report of the **POWER WITNESS** of the Spirit by the church in the world.

2

Context

- This chapter must be understood in the context of the previous chapter's emphasis on **abiding relationships** with Jesus and his people.



- This chapter must be read with **Judas' betrayal** in mind.

The 12 disciples must have had questions about the behavior and fate of Judas.

3

John 15

"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, 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 ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. ⁹ Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 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 be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

4

John 15

"¹ I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."

- When Jesus identifies himself as the vine, he is distinguishing himself as much more than a Hebrew Prophet.

- "I Am"
 - the door
 - the way
 - the light
 - the bread
 - the truth
 - the life
 - the resurrection
 - the Good Shepherd.
 - the vine



5

John 15

"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;"



The fruitless are removed and burned

Judas

"6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Those who abide are pruned so they will bear more fruit

The other disciples

6

John 15

"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, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."



The fruitless are removed and burned

Judas



Those who abide are pruned so they will bear more fruit

The other disciples

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Pruning

- Literally "**cleaning**" - cutting away all that inhibits fruit production.
- Don't be **surprised** by the "pruners' shears" which cut away things that may look and feel good but do not bear fruit.

2 Corinthians 12:10

"Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

8

"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."

- Abide (**remain**) in me and I in you.
- True faith must maintain a **continuing** attachment to Christ in hard times.
- "**New birth**" brings **Christ's life in us**, while "**abiding**" displays **Christ's life through us**.

9

"6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

- **Judas** and **Peter** both betrayed Christ.
- **Judas** and **Peter** both mourned what their sin did to Christ.
- Only **Peter** would abide to see what Christ would do with his sin.

One of the greatest challenges to our faith comes when we face reasons to lose it.

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What is abiding faith?

- It's not like buying a **ticket for a bus that you ride**.
- It's not like riding a **bicycle that you peddle**.
- It's more like **a garden you tend**.
 - ★ It starts with **planting a seed**.
 - ★ It requires **weeding and watering**.
 - ★ It bears fruit on its own **if it is maintained**.

11

What is abiding faith?

- It **endures** the ups and downs of life.

- ★ The “ups” are when things are going good and we feel we **don’t need faith**.
- ★ The “downs” are when we feel all is lost and **faith will not make a difference**.

12

“7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this is My Father glorified, **that you bear much fruit**, and so prove to be My disciples.”

What is “fruit”?

- ★ The perspective, attitude, and posture of **Jesus**
- ★ displayed in & through the **believer**
- ★ by the power of the **Spirit**
- ★ in obedient response to the **Word of God**.

13

“7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, **and so prove to be My disciples**.”

The mark of a disciple?

- ★ A **confession** of faith in Jesus.
- ★ A **life** that displays the faith, hope, and love, that is seen in Jesus.
- ★ A loving connection with the **Body of Christ**.

14

“9 Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 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 be in you, and that your joy may be made full**.”

What is an inner sign of fruitfulness?

- ★ The **joy of Christ** in our heart - we love the people and things that he loves.
- ★ Our deepest **satisfaction** comes from doing what we were created and called to do.

15

Troubling signs

- A **preoccupation** with the wrong things -
 - ★ **Results** - outward appearances.
 - ★ **Responsibilities** - duty and discipline.

Matthew 23

“27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. 28 So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

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Troubling signs

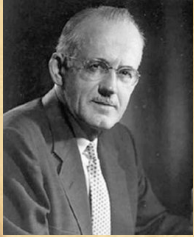
- A **preoccupation** with the wrong things -
 - ★ **Results** - outward appearances.
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John 5

“39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life.”

17

A.W. Tozer



"We take a new convert and immediately make a worker out of him. That is not God's way. God meant that a convert should first learn to be a worshipper, and then his work will have God in it."

18

Troubling signs

- Being **surprised** by the "fiery ordeals" of life in a fallen world or in the hands of the "pruners' shears".

1 Peter 4

"¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³ but to the degree that you share the suffering of Christ, keep on rejoicing,"

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How do we "abide" in Christ?

- Take our **baptism** seriously.
- **Integrate** Christ's Spirit in every area of our lives.
- **Invest** our tangible assets in Kingdom ventures.
- **Fellowship** with others who are following Christ.
- Let the **Word of God** dwell in our hearts.

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