

JESUS THE TRUE VINE

John 15:1-17
Key Verse: 15:7

#40

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”

Jesus made 7 statements which began with the words, “I am:” (I am the Bread of life; I am the living water; I am the good shepherd; I am the gate; I am the resurrection and the life; I am the way and the truth and the life; and I am the true vine.) These statements reflect his Deity. When God called Moses to go to Egypt and deliver his people from slavery, he told Moses that his name was, “I AM.” He is the God who exists, the God who is. Jesus is God, God who came to deliver all mankind from slavery to sin and Satan. In 15:1-17 Jesus tells his disciples that he is the true vine. We must remain in him in order to bear good fruit. To remain means to stay, to put down roots, to hold on and not let go. To remain means not to leave. Fruit bearing requires patience. It requires waiting. We must remain in Jesus to bear fruit.

* Remain in Jesus the True Vine (1-8)

Jesus said in verse 1, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener...” In verse 5 he again says, “I am the true vine; you are the branches.” In Isaiah 5 Israel is compared to a vine planted by the Lord. He plants this vine because he wants good fruit. The vine of Israel failed to produce good fruit, so God planted another vine. Jesus is the true vine; his church, his body, all believers are the branches. The branches are an integral part of the vine. Still, our Father God who planted the vine wants good fruit. So he prunes the vine. He cuts off sinful habits and thoughts. He cuts off some good things that are not really sinful, but are unnecessary. He wants to make his vine fruitful and he wants the fruit to be good. He prunes with his word. His word hidden in our hearts makes us clean.

In verse 4 Jesus says, “Remain in me and I will remain in you.” We cannot bear fruit unless we remain in the vine. In verses 5-8 he says again that if we remain in him we will bear much fruit. How then can we remain in Jesus? The key is in verse 7. Verse 7 says, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.” We must have God’s word in our hearts and in our heads. We must pray. When we pray and hold on to God’s word we can remain in Jesus. When we remain in him, we will bear much fruit and show ourselves to be his disciples. If we do not hold God’s word in our hearts and do not pray then we are cut off from the vine and are only good for firewood. If we bear good fruit, God is glorified.

* As the Father Loves Me (9-15)

Remaining in Jesus means remaining in his love. Jesus loves his disciples and us with godly love. God loved his Son Jesus. He never stopped loving his Son, even when it looked as if God had abandoned him. Jesus loved God. He never stopped loving God, even when he hung on the cross. Jesus taught us that we show our love for God by obeying his commandments. Jesus set the example by obeying the commandments of God, even to death on the cross. Jesus teaches us the secret of joy. It is obedience to Jesus’ command. What did Jesus command? Verse 12 says, “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

Jesus tells us and then shows us what love is. Love is unselfish. Love is life-giving. Jesus laid down his life for us. He died so that we might live. The obedience that Jesus asks of us is not the servile, blind obedience that a slave gives his master. He said, "You are my friends." Friends of Jesus know what he is doing and why he is doing it because he tells his friends everything the Father has taught him. Friends of Jesus obey him because they know him and love him and understand his heart. Jesus command is "Love one another."

* I Chose You (16-17)

Jesus chose his disciples. They are not volunteers. He chose them and appointed them to go and bear fruit. There are several kinds of fruit. There is the fruit of inner character. Paul describes in Galatians 5: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." There is also the fruit of influence. A Christian life should make a difference in the working place, in the school and in the home. There is the fruit of evangelism. Jesus said, "Go and bear fruit—fruit that will last." All fruit is God's gift in answer to prayer. "The Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."