

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Last Words: Abide in Me

Last time...Jesus told His stressed-out disciples that He will give them His peace.
And the conversation in the upper room ends

This time...The True Vine, the Husbandman, and the branches
Jesus is leaving
Another Comforter is coming and staying
Jesus exhorts His disciples to...stay with Him: "Abide in Me."

We are now in John 15
[v1-8]

v1 true vine...husbandman:
 Jesus and His 11 disciples are walking (without Judas)
 from the upper room (within the gates of the city) where they celebrated

- the Passover
- "the Last Supper"/Communion

 to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus has appointments with

- Satan
- Judas

 They would have to pass by the Temple and its gates on their way
 On the Temple gates were golden clusters of grapes, signifying God's promise
 that Israel would be a fruitful vine
 Note: Num 13:20, 23

 Always teaching in terms the people would understand, Jesus,
 perhaps pointing to the golden ornamental grapes on the Temple gates as
 they passed by (which would be hard to miss),
 says to the 11:

 I AM...Ex 3:14, His 8th and final "I AM" statement of His ministry
 All recorded by John in the Gospel, written to the Church

 the true vine...linked to His 7th "I AM" statement in Ch 14:6;

- NOT the/a false
- the fruitful Vine thru Whom God's promise to Israel will be kept

 My Father is the husbandman...

- the vinedresser who cultivates the vine and branches
- the owner and caretaker of the vineyard

Israel is the land, the vineyard

Ps 80:8

Is 5:1-7

Hosea 10:1

Jer 2:21

v2 Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit...every branch that beareth fruit:
What is the expectation a husbandman has of a vineyard and a vine?
Fruit

The vine produces the fruit (in clusters)

The branches bear/carry/display the fruit

The husbandman is the owner/vinedresser/caretaker that manages the vineyard

- the development, growth, and health of the Vine and its branches
- the productivity of the branches
- the quality of the fruit

The husbandman does that by

- removing the worthless branches...not bearing fruit but “stealing” nutrients from the Vine that should go to fruit-bearing branches
- pruning/cleansing the fruit-bearing branches so they will bear even more fruit

When a husbandman plants a vine, a very prolific plant, it often produces a big crop the first year

If he does not prune it after the first crop, it may well produce another big crop the second year...but, given its doubled size, the nutrients of the vine are “spread thinner” than the prior year

The vine produces many clusters...and although it might look good, the fruit produced is smaller and of poorer quality than the prior year's, such that the fruit may even not be useful/profitable

In addition, because the nutrients of the vine were being taken by so much fruit, the branches could not retain the nutrients for the strengthening they need

Therefore, to maintain the

- health of the vine and its branches...balancing branch growth and fruit bearing
- quality of the fruit
- profitability of the crop year after year

the vinedresser MUST prune the branches

And the pruning is radical

- 90-98% of 1st year's growth
- 75-90% of 2nd year's growth

God the Father, the God of all nations (Jews and Gentiles, Rom 3:29),
no respecter of persons, is the Husbandman

Jesus Christ, God the Son, Israel's Messiah and the Savior of the world
(John 3:16-18, 1 John 4:14) is the True Vine;
In Him is life, and the life is the light of men (John 1:4)
He is The Way, The Truth, and The Life, no man comes to the Father but
by Him (John 14:6)

Israel, thru whom (AIJJD) will come the Savior of the world, is the vineyard

In the immediate context

- Judas is a non-fruit-bearing branch that will be taken away and burned
- The 11 are fruit-bearing branches that will be pruned...
denial, scattering, fear of men, their faith strenuously tested

In the broader context of Jesus' continuing work thru the 11, people "attached to"
Jesus are the branches

Jesus, The True Vine, has a nature – fruit-bearing (Gal 5:22-23)
People, the branches have a nature – not fruit-bearing
Rom 3:10, 23
Rom 7:18
Gal 5:19-21

Those "attached to" Jesus (in Me, John 1:4) that do not bear fruit

- do not have Jesus' nature
- do not love Jesus (Ch 14:15, 2 John 6)
- do not seek the Lord
- do not abide in Jesus (v4, 6)
- do not follow/walk with Jesus, are not His disciples (v8)

are removed

The removed branches have only their non-fruit-bearing nature
They

- worship the wrong God, the wrong Jesus
- worship the right God, but the wrong way (Thyatira)
 - religion vs relationship
 - striving to be pleasing to the Father by their works i.e. striving to produce fruit of themselves
- are not born-again, spiritually dead (John 3:3-8, Sardis)
- don't know they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked (Laodicea)

Those “attached to” Jesus (in Me, John 1:4) that do bear fruit

- have Jesus’ nature
- love Jesus
- seek the Lord
- abide in Jesus
- follow/walk with Jesus, are His disciples

are purged to bear much more fruit

- pruned
- cleansed

The pruned branches have both their non-fruit-bearing nature AND the nature of the Vine (Gal 5:17)

They are born-again and in right relationship with Jesus

The Father has begun a work in them and will be faithful to finish it (Phil 1:6)

The pruning and cleansing by the Husbandman is to

- decrease their nature
- increase the Vine’s nature (John 3:30)

v3 ye are clean through the word:

The husbandman also washes/cleanses the branches and grape clusters to remove the dirt that impedes the sun’s work (photosynthesis)

Note: The Sun of righteousness (Mal 4:2)

The Word of God is pure

Prov 30:5 Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him

Ps 119:140 Thy word *is* very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it

The fruitful people are washed by the pure water of the Word (Eph 5:26)

Ps 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word

Ps 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee

The 11 are clean by the words of Jesus, the Living Word

John 13:10-11

1 was removed

John 13:27, 30

btw...speaking to the 11 that have been cleansed, Jesus is saying they are going to be radically pruned; every fruitful branch will be also.

v4

Abide in Me:

Abide = “stay”, “continue”, “remain”

Jesus has said He is leaving

Jesus has promised Another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who is coming
and staying forever

Jesus is exhorting His disciples (those walking with Him) to stay in Him

The Greek word translated “abide” is also used in

John 12:46

John 14:16

John 15:10

Acts 20:22-24

Acts 27:31

1 Cor 3:14

1 John 2:27-28

The same Greek word but translated “continue” is used in

John 8:31-32

2 Tim 3:12-14

The same Greek word but translated “remain” is used in

John 15:11

John 15:16

Heb 12:24-29

The same Greek word translated “abide” and “continue” and “remain” is used in

1 John 2:24

Abide in Me...stay/continue/remain in Christ, in relationship with Jesus Christ
relationship: two willing volunteers, both more concerned about the other
than Self

branch cannot bear fruit of itself:

A branch cannot bear fruit on its own, it MUST abide in the vine to be fruitful

A branch cannot strain and strive to produce fruit by itself

The fruit is not of the branch but of the vine

Fruit is not a work of the branch, it is a work of the Vine

But by the branch abiding in the vine, the life of the vine is in the branch and
the vine produces fruit on the branch

The purpose of the branch is to bear/carry/display the fruit produced by
the Life of the Vine (John 14:6)

A fruitless branch serves no purpose, is worthless

A branch cannot

- detach itself from the vine
- be separated from the Vine
- be independent of the Vine

and live and bear fruit; it will wither and die

We cannot bear fruit...

fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit of Truth,
the life and nature of the Vine...

except we abide/continue/remain in relationship with Jesus

If we do not abide/continue/remain in relationship with Jesus (John 14:15),
what value are we to the Father Who expects fruit in our lives?

Why do we gather in fellowship on Sunday mornings, Tuesday nights,
Wednesday nights, Thursday nights, and some Saturday nights?

To be cleansed by the washing of the pure water of the Word
To be pruned of the things of the world and Self
That we would bear more fruit pleasing to the Father

Those who do not take advantage of the opportunities to fellowship will not be
as fruitful as the Father desires, they are leaving blessings and rewards
“on the table” in these deceptive and momentous days

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good
works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the
manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the
more, as ye see the day approaching

v5 in Me and I in him...without Me:

The True Vine and abiding branches are...one

The True Vine in the branches and the branches in the True Vine

Without that One-ness there is no fruit

Apart from Jesus, separated from Jesus, out on our own they/we can do...nothing

By that One-ness comes much fruit

Gal 2:20a I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but
Christ liveth in me

v4 bearing the fruit of the indwelling Spirit of Christ

Ch 14:12

Phil 4:13

v6 If a man abide not in Me:
 The branch that abides not in Jesus (as commanded by the Father ie unbelief)

- 1 Tim 4:1
- 2 Tim 3:1-5
- 2 Thes 2:1-3
- 1 John 2:18-19

is thrown out
 is withered...saves his life but loses it (Matt 16:25-26)
 is gathered up
 is thrown into the fire and burned

Note: Ezk 15 tells us vine branches are even worthless for burning

v7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you...ask what ye will:
 If we abide/continue/remain in Christ and His words/sayings/commandments
 abide in us (John 14:26, Phil 2:16, 1 John 1:1),
 we can ask what we desire and it will be done

Ps 37:3-6...since in our relationship with Jesus Christ, we are more
 concerned for/love Him than Self
 Matt 6:9-10...as Jesus the True Vine taught us to pray
 Matt 26:39...like Jesus the True Vine is soon to pray
 John 14:12-14

v8 My Father glorified...bear much fruit:
 Jesus' Father, our Father, is glorified when we bear much fruit,
 when we display abundantly the nature of His Son the True Vine
 The fruit of the True Vine, the fruit of the indwelling Spirit of Christ,
 is the purpose of God in our lives

And in abiding/continuing/remaining in Christ, we are His disciples

The reason for a husbandman to have a vineyard and a vine is: fruit
 Israel is God's vineyard (Is 5:1-7)
 But they were unfruitful (Is 5:8, 11-12, 20, 21, 22, 24-26)

“Wild grapes” of an unfruitful nation that departs from God is evil
 (strange and empty vine)

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|----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| • murder own children | \ | |
| • Gov't in rebellion against God | \ | Ps 94:20-22 |
| • sorceries..."legal" drugs | / | |
| • call good evil and evil good | | |
| • great hatred (Hosea 9:7) | | |

Hmmmmmm....

Israel will be a fruitful vine, just as God promised...by The True Vine

- Is 43:19...the Church (Jew and Gentile),
grafted in (Rom 11:17-25)
- 70th Week of Daniel
 - The 2 Witnesses
 - The 144,000

Application

Jesus is the True Vine

We are the branches

The Father expects fruit

Are we fruitful?

We are called to live in intimate relationship with our Lord

We need some pruning and cleansing by the Husbandman this morning

Am I abiding in Christ...or not?

Fruit: fruit of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21) or fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:21-22)

Examine the fruit of our life

- carnal or spiritual?
 - walking in the flesh is fruit-less
 - walking in the Spirit is fruitful
- Self or Jesus?
 - “no good thing” or “well pleased”

fruit is the Vine's “seed house”

Seed of the Woman (Gen 3) and Seed of Abraham (Gal 3)

Seed of the Word of God (Parable of the Sower)

Soils 1, 2 & 3 are barren

Soil 4 is fruitful

On our FB pages, who is the object of our posts – Self or Jesus?

Are we using Social Media to cultivate a following of our own or are we witnessing of
Jesus Christ, the True Vine, The Way The Truth and the Life?

Does our Father want to prune the technology in our life, which attacks fruitfulness,
so that we would bear more fruit (relationships)?

Is Jesus Christ on display in our life for others to see and hear?

Never, occasionally, sometimes, usually, or always?

Am I Christ-like...love, mercy, grace, longsuffering, peace, contentment, joy

Be diligent and steadfast in our relationship with Jesus
Don't get lazy or complacent
Don't weary in well-doing (Gal 6:7-9)...obey/love/submit

Every relationship takes effort
It takes effort to

- pray
- read the Word
- study the Word
- obey/live the Word
- to test all things by the Word
- deny Self, pick up our cross, and follow Jesus

But the effort glorifies our Father in heaven and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Is 34:16a Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read

Abide in Me

Abide/stay/continue/remain in relationship with Jesus Christ

Coming and going
On again off again
Hot then cold
Neither hot nor cold...lukewarm
Seeking the Lord only when in trouble
is NOT abiding, is NOT fruitful
will be refined by fire

1 Cor 3:10-17

Unrepentant Thyatira, Sardis, Laodicea in the Day of the Lord

Only by abiding/continuing/remaining will we be faithful to the end and finish well
and hear Jesus say "Well done, good and faithful servant..."