

***“Abide In Me!”***  
***John 15:1-5***

**Introduction:**

1. Let's Turn In Our Bibles:
  - To John 15 - Where:
    - Even Though We Start A New Chapter:
      - This Morning - It Is Still:
        - Closely Connected With:
          - The Previous Two!
  - Because - These Are Still:
    - The Final Words Of Jesus:
      - To His Disciples On:
        - The Very Last Night:
          - Before The Passion Of His Cross!
2. Now - Chapter 14 Ends:
  - With Jesus Saying To His Disciples:
    - “Arise, Let Us Go Hence!”
  - Which Shows Us That:
    - There Was No Reticence / No Reluctance:
      - On Jesus' Part To Leave:
        - The Upper Room - Where:
          - In Chapter 13 - We Saw The:
            - Service Of Jesus! And:
          - In Chapter 14 - We Heard The:
            - Sayings Of Jesus!
3. But - As Jesus Continues:
  - In Chapter 15 - To Share With His Disciples:
    - What We Might Describe As The:
      - Significance Of Jesus:
        - We Can't Be Entirely Sure:
          - Where He Said *These* Words!
  - He May Have Still Said Them:
    - In The Upper Room:
      - *As* He & The Disciples:
        - Wrapped Things Up After Their Passover Meal - And *As* They:
          - “Arose” To Go Out Into The Night!
  - Or - He May Have Spoke These Words:
    - *After* They “Arose” And “Went Hence!”
      - So - *As* They Made Their Way:
        - Out Of The City & Toward The Garden Of Gethsemane:
          - Jesus Continued His Conversation With His Disciples!
4. This Seems To Me:
  - The Best Way Of Looking At John 15:
    - Since - Starting In 15:1 - Jesus Announces That:
      - “I Am The Vine!”
  - Perhaps - As Jesus & His Small Band:
    - Of Disciples Left The House In The City:
      - He Pointed Out Some Grape-Vines:
        - Growing In Someone's Garden:
          - Along The Way!
    - Some Even Believe That:
      - They Would Have Passed By:
        - The Temple That Night:
          - That Had A Golden Vine That Decorated The Posts Of Its Main Door!
5. But - Whatever The Source Was:
  - For What Would Become The Last Parable Of Jesus:
    - The Significance Is Still Be:

- The Same!
- And So We Read From:
  - 15:1-5 - These Words:
    - “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. / Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every [branch] that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. / Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. / Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. / I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing!”
- 6. In These Verses - As Well As:
  - In The First Part Of This Entire Chapter:
    - Jesus Is Dealing With:
      - Fruitfulness In The Lives:
        - Of His Disciples!
    - Because - For The Last Three Years:
      - Jesus Had Been Teaching & Training Them:
        - Through All Of His Words & All Of His Works:
          - Not Only To Save Them - But Also:
            - To Commission Them:
              - To Serve Him!
      - And - Jesus Wanted Their Lives & Service:
        - To Be Productive & Fruitful!
          - And - What He Wanted For Them:
            - He Still Wants For:
              - All Of His Disciples!
                - Even Us! Even Today!
  - 7. And So - Starting In 15:1:
    - Jesus Describes:
  - 1. ***The Picture Of Fruitfulness:***
    - Using The Illustration Of A Grape-Vine!
      - Which Were & Still Are:
        - Very Plentiful The Land Of Israel!
      - And Even Though:
        - The Fruit Of The Vine:
          - Was Used For Both:
            - Food & Drink!
        - There Was Great Meaning:
          - Behind These Vines:
            - For The People Of Israel!
        - In The Old Testament:
          - Fruitful Grape-Vines Were:
            - A *Natural* Symbol Of:
              - Life & Blessing From God!
          - When God’s People Were Still Wandering:
            - From Egypt To Canaan:
              - They Were Promised A Land Of Plenty In Deuteronomy 8:7-9!
                - Even A “Land Of Wheat, And Barley, And Vines!” / “A Land Wherein . . . Thou Shalt Not Lack Any Thing!”
            - And Then - When God’s People Were Given Rest:
              - In That Land:
                - We Find In 1 Kings 4:25 That - “Judah & Israel Dwelt Safely, Every Man Under His Vine And Under His Fig Tree!”
            - So - The Grape-Vine:
              - Was A *Natural* Symbol Of:
                - Life & Blessing From God!
          - But - It Also Became:
            - A *National* Symbol Of:

- The People Of Israel Themselves!
- In Isaiah 5:
  - God Himself Calls His People:
    - “His Vineyard” - And Sings To Them A Song!
  - In Isaiah 5:1 - “Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill!”
- And - In Psalm 80:
  - The People Of Israel Are Called:
    - “A Vine” - And Asaph Describes How God Cared For Them!
  - Psalm 80:8-10 - “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. / Thou preparedst [room] before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. / The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof [were like] the goodly cedars!”
- And So - The Grape-Vine:
  - Became A *National* Symbol:
    - Of The Children Of Israel!
  - As Well As A *Natural* Symbol:
    - Of God’s Pleasure & Blessing!
- But - Sadly - That’s Not The Whole Picture:
  - Of The Vine - That We Find In The Old Testament!
    - Because - God Desired & Expected:
      - Fruit From His Vine!
  - But - Instead:
    - According To Isaiah 5:4:
      - God Says - “When I Looked That It Should Bring Forth Grapes” - Instead - “Brought It Forth Wild Grapes!” (Sour & Bitter)
    - And So - He Asks:
      - “What Could Have Been Done More To My Vineyard, That I Have Not Done In It?”
- So - Even Though:
  - God’s People Experienced:
    - The Blessing Of The *Natural* Vine:
      - For Many, Many Years!
  - They Failed To Bear Fruit:
    - As The *National* Vine:
      - That God Intended For Them To Be!
- And - With This Background:
  - In View - And Both The:
    - *Natural* & *National* Meaning:
      - Of The Vine To The People Of Israel - Jesus Makes:
        - This Announcement:
- 15:1 - “I Am The True Vine!”
  - In The Context Of *Nature*:
    - All Natural Vines Are But:
      - Imitations Of His True Nature!
        - As If A Grape-Vine Reflects & Reveals Him!
    - So - Like A Vine:
      - Jesus Is The Very Source:
        - Of All Life & Fruit:
          - In This World!
    - And - All That A Good Vine:
      - Brings To A Vineyard:
        - This Is What Jesus Is:
          - To The World!
    - Though Humble & Tender:
      - In Appearance - The Potential:
        - Of His Life & Fruit:
          - Is Great!

- Jesus Is The True Vine!
- But - Also In The Context Of The *Nation* Of Israel:
  - Jesus Is The True & Genuine:
    - Vine Of God!
  - In That - All Israel Was Not:
    - Jesus Is!
  - So That - All God Sought In Israel:
    - Jesus Fulfills!
  - Jesus Is The One In Whom:
    - All Of The Promises & Blessings Of God:
      - Can Be Found!
  - Because - He - Not Any Nation:
    - Is The True Vine!
- And - He Is The One:
  - That Both The *Natural & National* Vines:
    - Were Just A Picture Of!
      - But Then - Jesus Adds:
- 15:1 - “And My Father Is The Husbandman!”
  - Or - The Vine-Dresser!
    - He Is The One Who:
      - Like A Gardener:
        - Tended To The Vine Of His Own Son - So That He Might Receive:
          - His Fruit Through Him!
  - After All - It Was God The Father:
    - Who *Planned* - For All Eternity:
      - His Son - To Be The True Vine!
    - It Was God The Father:
      - Who *Prepared* The Soil Of The World:
        - For His Coming!
          - “In The Fulness Of The Time!” (Galatians 4:4)
    - It Was God The Father:
      - Who *Planted* Jesus In This World:
        - Through His Incarnation & Virgin Birth:
          - That We Remember & Celebrate Especially This Time Of Year!
    - It Was God The Father:
      - Who *Protected* Jesus As His True Vine:
        - Throughout His Entire Life:
          - From All His Enemies!
        - With The Hedges Of:
          - His Loving Providence!
  - And - This Is The True Significance Of Jesus!
    - 15:1 - “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman!”
      - And - This Is Even The Last Great “I Am” Statement Of Jesus!
        - In Which He Identifies Himself As:
          - The “I Am” God - And As:
            - The One Forever Intended To Be God’s True & Fruit-Bearing Vine!
    - Because - What God Does Not Receive:
      - From Any Natural Vine - And:
        - What God Did Not Receive:
          - From His Natural Vine!
      - He Does Receive & Will Receive:
        - From His True & Heavenly Vine:
          - Jesus Christ!
    - And That Is:
      - Fruit!
    - And - This Is What Jesus Talks About Next:
      - In 15:2-3:

## 2. *The Process Of Fruitfulness!*

- “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every [branch] that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. / Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you!”
  - One Again - As Jesus Often Did:
    - He’s Talking On Two Levels!
    - Both Natural & Spiritual!
  - And Sometimes:
    - Not Everything Spiritual:
      - Can Be Put In:
        - Natural Terms!
    - But - The Meaning Is Still:
      - Clear Enough!
  - Because - In These Verses:
    - Jesus Describes The Process:
      - By Which God Now Brings Forth:
        - His Fruit Through Him!
- Just Like A Natural Vine:
  - There May Be Branches Or Shoots:
    - That Need To Be Removed:
      - Because They Do Not Bear:
        - Any Fruit!
  - This Is What Jesus First Describes:
    - In 15:2 - “Every Branch In Me That Beareth Not Fruit He Taketh Away!”
      - That Is - He Cuts Off & Removes It:
        - From The Vine!
    - But - What Does It Mean That:
      - This “Branch” Was “In” Him?
- It Seems Best To Take It As:
  - Someone Who Attaches Himself To Christ In An External Way:
    - Without Experiencing The Internal Attachment:
      - Of Christ In Him!
  - Since - In Verses 4 & 5:
    - Jesus Describes His True Disciples:
      - As Abiding In Him As Well As Having Him In Them!
- So - The One Who Does Not Bear Fruit:
  - Is The One Who Only Appears To Be:
    - “In” Jesus - In Just A Superficial / External Way!
      - This Was Certainly True Of Judas Iscariot - Who Jesus Probably Had In Mind When He Said These Words!
      - This Is Certainly True Of Others Who May Be A Part Of A Church, But Have No Real Part In Christ!
  - So - This Is A Warning:
    - To Those Who Only Have:
      - An Outward Relationship With Christ!
    - There Will Be No True Fruit:
      - And In The End:
        - God Himself Will Take That Unproductive Branch Away & Remove It Altogether!
- But Also - Just Like A Natural Vine:
  - There May Be Branches or Shoots:
    - That Need To Be Refined:
      - Because They Are Bearing Fruit:
        - And God Wants To Refine Their Fruit!
  - And That Is Why Jesus Then Describes:
    - 15:2b - “And Every Branch / One That Beareth Fruit, He Purgeth / Prunes / Trims It, That It May Bring Forth More Fruit!”
- The “Fruit” That Jesus Is Talking About:
  - Can Also Be Translated:

- “*The Fruit!*”
  - So - It’s A Specific Kind Of Fruit:
    - That Is Being Produced By These Good & Living Branches!
- What Kind Of Fruit Is That?
  - The Kind That Shares The Same Nature:
    - As The Vine Its Connected To!
- And - If Jesus Is The Vine:
  - The Fruit Is:
    - The Nature Of Jesus Himself!
- So - The Nature Of Christ:
  - Will Be Seen In:
    - The Nature Of The Fruit!
- Doesn’t This Anticipate What Paul Will Describe:
  - Later In Galatians - The Fruit Of The Spirit?
    - Which Is Just The Life Of Jesus:
      - Flowing In Us & Through Us!
- This Is The Kind Of Fruit:
  - That God Is After!
    - He Wants Us To Become More & More Like Jesus!
  - Which Is Also:
    - The Desire Of A True Disciple Of Jesus Christ!
      - “O, I Want To Be Like Jesus!”
- And So - To Help Us - What Does:
  - God The Father Do?
    - He Will Purge & Prune Us!
  - And Even Though:
    - This Process May Sometimes:
      - Hurt Us & Humble Us:
        - It Is Ultimately For His Glory & Our Good!
  - So That There Will Be An Even Greater:
    - Harvest Of Christ-Like Fruit:
      - Flowing Out Of Our Hearts!
        - In Quality & In Quantity!
- But - The Underlying Word:
  - For “Purge” Here Is:
    - A Bit Different Than:
      - The Basic Word For Pruning!
  - It Is - “To Clean!”
    - Which Leads Us To What Jesus Says Next In 15:3 - “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you!”
- In Other Words:
  - Jesus Reveals That:
    - God The Father Prunes His People:
      - Through The Word Of His Son!
  - Now - Back In Chapter 13:
    - Where We Saw The Service Of Jesus:
      - When He Washed The Feet:
        - Of His Disciples!
    - In 13:10 - Jesus Said To Peter:
      - “He that is washed needeth not save to wash [his] feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all!”
  - But Here - In Chapter 15:
    - In The Context Of God The Father’s:
      - Pruning & Cleaning Process:
        - Jesus Says - 15:3 - “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
  - I Think This Shows That:
    - There Are Two “Cleanings” In View:

- That We Can Find Elsewhere:
  - In The New Testament!
- There Is The First “Cleaning” Is:
  - The “Cleaning” Of Justification:
    - Where - You Experience The Cleansing & Forgiveness Of Sin:
      - Through Faith In Jesus Christ! Life / Death / Resurrection!
- But Then - There Is A Second “Cleaning” - And Is:
  - The “Cleaning” Of Sanctification:
    - Where - You Experience The Ongoing Process Of Purging / Pruning To Bear More Fruit For The Lord!
- The Cleaning Of Justification:
  - Is A One Time Act:
    - By God For You:
      - By Which You Are Saved & Cleansed From Your Sin!
- The Cleaning Of Sanctification:
  - Is A Continuous Process:
    - By God In You:
      - Through Which You Become More & More Like Christ!
      - And Bear His Fruit!
- And - This Process Of Sanctification:
  - God Accomplishes Through His Word:
    - So That You Might Continue To:
      - “Bring Forth More Fruit!”
  - Is This What You Want?
    - Then Let His Word Dwell In You Richly!
      - Not Just Through Hearing, But Heeding!
  - Because - This Then Leads Us To:

### 3. ***The Point Of Fruitfulness:***

- That We Find In 15:4-5:
  - “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. / I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing!”
  - If You Have This Desire:
    - To Be Fruitful For The Lord:
      - Then - You Need To Remember:
- The Responsibility:
  - That You Have - As One Of His Branches!
    - “Abide In Me” - Jesus Says!
      - “Abide In Me!”
  - This Is More Than Just:
    - An External & Surface Level:
      - “Sticking” To Him - That We Saw In 15:1!
  - It Is An Active Clinging To Him:
    - In Faith & In Fellowship & In Faithfulness:
      - To The Lord!
  - As Christians - We Have A Responsibility:
    - To “Abide” In Him:
      - Constantly & Continuously!
    - Because - Any Fruit That:
      - We Might Bear:
        - Is Not Of Ourselves:
          - But Of Christ!
  - To “Abide” In Jesus:
    - As The True Vine Means:
      - That You First:
        - Spring From Him!
  - And So You:

- Have A Share In:
  - His Life & Nature!
- And As You Grow:
  - You Stick To Him:
    - As Closely As You Can!
  - Knowing That Only Through Him:
    - Will You Find Your Strength!
  - **IE**: As Branches Grow Out Of A Tree!
- And So - To Be Fruitful:
  - The Focus Is Less On:
    - The Fruit - And More On:
      - The Vine!
  - Because - What Does Jesus Promise:
    - In 15:5? "He That Abideth In Me, And I In Him, The Same Bringeth Forth Much Fruit!"
  - So - Your Responsibility Is:
    - To "Abide In The Vine!"
      - While At The Same Time:
        - Acknowledging:
- The Reality:
  - Of Christ In Your Life!
    - 15:4 - "Abide In Me, And I In You!"
      - Now - The First Part Of This:
        - Is Pretty Clear!
      - But - The Second Part:
        - Is Not As Clear!
    - Could It Be A Condition?
      - If You Abide In Me & I In You!
        - Perhaps - But "Abide" Is An Imperative & A Command!
    - So - Could It Be Part Of His Command?
      - "Abide In Me - And - Have Me Abide In You!"
        - How Can We Make This Happen? We Can't!
  - So - I Think We Whould See:
    - The First Part - As:
      - The Responsibility:
        - We Have - To Abide!
    - And - The Second Part - As:
      - The Reality:
        - Of Those Who Have The Grace & Desire To Abide!
    - And - The Reality Is:
      - "And I In You!"
        - Which Means That There Is A Vital Connection Of:
          - Not Only The Branch With The Vine / But The Vine With The Branch!
    - And This Connection:
      - Is The Connection That Counts!
        - This Is The Connection:
          - That Makes All The Difference!
  - You Can Abide In Him:
    - Because - When You Trust In Christ:
      - He Abides In You!
    - You Can Live For Him:
      - And Bear His Fruit:
        - Because - He Lives In You!
      - And - He Can Be Yours:
        - Because - You Are His!
    - This Is The Whole Point:
      - Of Believing In & Belong To Christ!



- To Bear His Fruit:
  - By Becoming More & More:
  - Like Him!
- And - We Must Never Forget:
  - 15:5 - "For Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing!"

**Conclusion:**

1. So - This Morning:
  - Remember:
    - The Picture Of Fruitfulness:
      - That Jesus Used To Teach Us:
        - About His True Significance:
          - To This World & To You & Me Personally!
          - He Is The True Vine!
  - Remember:
    - The Process Of Fruitfulness!
      - Make Sure That There Is More Than Just:
        - An Outward / External Connection:
          - To Christ In Your Life!
      - Because - Without:
        - "Christ In You" - You Have No Life:
          - And There Can Be No Fruit!
      - But - If Christ Is In You:
        - And - You Are In Christ:
          - Let God's Word Prune & Cleanse You - So That:
            - You Might Be Fruitful For Him!
  - And Then - Remember:
    - The Point Of Fruitfulness!
      - Its So That You Might Cling To Christ - Even As:
        - Christ Clings To You!

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