

37- I AM the Vine John 15:1-11

A mystery to me is how the leaves of a tree or a grapevine can get the strength to the top of the tree or the end of the vine. Oh, I know it the through photosynthesis and that the water and nutrients are moved up by the sunlight and all that but how does it do it not what does it do is my question. Our God put some amazing mechanisms in place on this earth.

Also have you ever noticed that we only see the outside of the plants and trees while the most critical is almost always hidden? What is the most critical you ask, why it can be none other than the root system without which nothing that we see would have any chance of survival. Without the roots there would be not nuts on the walnut tree, no blooms on the orchids, no grapes on the grapevines. By the way this is another thing that evolution claims just happens by random chance. We know it happened by design of a loving and all wise Creator.

Jesus had just instituted what we know as the Lord's Supper. He then, as He so often did, used the natural progression of things to talk about the vine that they had just partaken of the fruit of at the supper.

I- The Vine and the Gardener:

Joh 15:1 I am the true vine... This is the last of the eight great I AM statements recorded in John. He says He is the true vine.

In the old testament Israel is often referred to as the vine of God, his chosen or choice vine. **Isaiah 5** is a great example of this. God speaks metaphorically and says, **Isa 5:1-7 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: 2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and**

planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. 4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? 5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: 6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. 7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

We see clearly that God expected the vine to bring forth fruit and when it did not He did what He could to make it produce.

Jesus in this analogy become the True Vine that would bring forth the fruit that God desired of Israel.

NOTE: For other places in the OT concerning Israel as the vine see **Ps 80:8; Jer 2:21; 6:9; Ezek 15; 17:5-10; 19:10-14; Hosea 10:1; 14:8.**

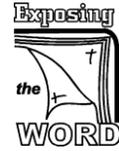
Next we are told that it is God who is the Gardener or the one who cares for the vine. **Joh 15:1b ...and my Father is the husbandman.** The gardener would tend to the soil around the vine and protect it from



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disease and many other things related to the welfare of the vine

II- Pruning of the Branches:

One of the great facts about vineyards is that the vines that are left and not pruned nor cared for will become worthless for fruit production. Please notice also that the pruning is never done to the roots nor the vine, God does not need pruning. It is the branches, you and I, which need it.

What is the reason for the pruning? There is a natural progress of fruit bearing here. First, God wants us to bear fruit. After we have walked with Him and surrendered more of our lives to Him it is for the purpose more fruit.

Joh 15: 2 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.

Then see in verse 5 and 8 that He wants not fruit nor more fruit but much fruit from us. ***5...the same bringeth forth much fruit...8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit...***

There are a lot of reasons why God must prune even the fruitful branches. Many times we get too many branches that drain all the fruit giving vigor and only produce vines. We get our lives so filled with activity and things that look like good things that we have not time nor energy left for fruit producing. Jesus speaking in another agricultural example of seeds said, ***Mar 4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.***

Sad also to say many times he needs to prune because of apathy. The vine lacks performance without any apparent cause and must be cut back to get fruit to bear.

Still the apparent thing here is that regardless of the stage of fruit produced in our lives God's desire is that we always move toward more production.

III- Branches Cannot Live Alone:

If a branches is cut or torn for a tree or vine it will immediately begin to decay. We know this is an axiom, or self evident truth that this is true. It is also true in the spiritual sense as well.

Joh 15:4 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. 5 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.

One thing that leads us to produce more fruit and then much fruit is when we realize that it is not us producing it to begin with. When we learn to trust the vine more instead of us we will see fruit production rise.

We also see a very stern warning as well. ***Joh 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.***

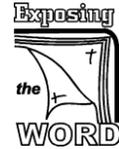
The stern warning is for those who do not accept Christ and abide in Him. Warren Wiersbe says there are three different vines found in Scripture. One is the past vine which we have seen, the nation of Israel. There is also what he calls the future vine or the vine of the earth which the unsaved depend on when they depend on the world. We see the wrath of God on this vine in the future recorded for us in ***Revelation 14:18-19 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19***



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And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

This is the casting into the fire of the vine that is mentioned here.

The third vine that Warren Wiersbe sees is what he calls the present vine. This vine is Christ. Christ tells us to abide in Him. The word abide means to remain in Him. First, this implies that we have accepted Him as Savior. Next, we need to continue to nurture and grow our faith in Him. In addition we see that it also means to continue to love God. *Joh 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

The test of how much we love God is not if we pass along some email that says it is a test of our love, nor the opinion of someone else who would claim to know our heart, the test is the obedience to God's Word and teachings.

IV- Abiding Key to Prayer:

There is still another aspect of abiding in the Vine, answered prayers. We see that in *Joh 15: 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

Jesus also said in *Joh 14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

And again in *Joh 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should*

remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

The purpose of the answer to our prayers is that God may be glorified. We at times when we are not walking with God as close as we should be will ask amiss with our prayers. This is because of the warfare of the human fallen nature with the saved spiritual man. However, if we are abiding in Christ and our mind is centered on Him and His will we will pray the way that God can always answer. Abiding in Christ is the key to right praying.

V- Abiding Joy:

Almost without exception people want to be happy. Many times that the goal of people in life is to do things, buy things, have things that make them happy.

Considering the setting is that Jesus has just attempted to help them understand that He was going to die the words He speaks next have a greater weight to them.

Joh 15: 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

He says the things He had been telling them were so their hearts might be encouraged. Jesus even thought He was going to be crucified, was not going to cease to exist at death, nor would the joy He had. Have you ever thought about what it would have been like to be around Jesus? I think it would have been hard to be down because of the joy of Jesus. He tells them He is leaving them this joy if they will only abide in Him.

So as we see He is the true vine, unlike Israel who produced wild grapes and unlike the vine of the earth that is destined for destruction. He and He alone is the one through which strength, hope, joy flows into our lives as we abide and live our lives in Him.