

Walking In The Way Of Jesus; John 15
A study to consider the impact of Easter

8:30 service: Roy and Marisa Banks (NLT)

10:30 service: Kristy Dunavant (NLT)

John 15:1-27 NLT

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

⁵ "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. ⁷ But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. ⁹ "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! ¹² This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. ¹³ There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. ¹⁶ You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. ¹⁹ The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. ²⁰ Do you remember what I told you? 'A slave is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you. ²¹ They will do all this to you because of me, for they have rejected the one who sent me. ²² They would not be guilty if I had not come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Anyone who hates me also hates my Father. ²⁴ If I hadn't done such miraculous signs among them that no one else could do, they would not be guilty. But as it is, they have seen everything I did, yet they still hate me and my Father. ²⁵ This fulfills what is written in their Scriptures: 'They hated me without cause.'

²⁶ "But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. ²⁷ And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.

Reminder of John 14:31 "Arise, (get up) let us go from here." (we are going somewhere else)

As we discussed last week, let's consider the process of walking in The Way with Jesus. Jesus and His followers probably walked by many vineyards during the days of ministry training. They would primarily walk from town to town and village to village. These disciples or apprentice of Yeshua were accustomed to grapes on a vine. I do not know the path that they walked to the garden located at Gethsemane but the conversation recorded in John 15 was an illustration that would have been vivid in their minds.

An analogy based on a familiar reality.

- Jesus is the True Vine.
- Father God is the vinedresser.
- Followers/disciples of Jesus are the branches of The Vine.
- The vitality or life source of the branch to bear fruit can only come from The Vine.
- The vinedresser prunes, removes branches, and piles them up for burning. The goal is the best grape production to display the quality of The Vine.

Count the number of times that the word “abide” is used in this passage. The NLT uses the word remain. The Greek in this passage means to be kept or to remain, hence the term “abide”. Both words “abide” and “remain” are used equally in most translations.

(Special point of study and meditation: Verse 7 of Chapter 15, what is the context of “you will ask what you desire”. Consider the context of this statement.)

Abiding is the vitality or life source of relationship.

Consider the aspect of constant connection.

Do we even believe this is possible?

I mean, on a very personal level, do we really believe that we can live our lives in Jesus with a constant connectivity?

This is one of those deeper considerations that really flushes out the reality of our perspective.

God's view of us VS Our view of God and how we see ourselves.

Abiding or constant connection is a game changing perspective and experience.

What if, when we first wake up, we simply acknowledged our connection with Jesus?

A simple acknowledgement like this; “Jesus, You are my vitality and life source. I cannot do anything of eternal value without Your help. I am in need of Your help and assistance. I am inadequate to produce fruit on my own. I am desperately dependent on You today. Help me to constantly stay connected with You by the Spirit of Truth within me.”

1. Love is a fruit or the evidence of abiding and connectivity.

We can love on a human love level but we cannot love as God loves without His help. Agape (ag-ah'-pay) is the Greek word used in this section of verses. It is the most powerful, noblest type of love which is considered sacrificial love. Agape is more than a feeling as it is an act of the will, a decision that is made on behalf of someone else or others.

2. Obedience is a fruit or the evidence of abiding and connectivity.

3. Joy is a fruit or the evidence of abiding and connectivity.

Consider a branch that was never part of the vine, hypothetically speaking. It looks like a branch but it does not have the life flow or vitality but it has a ton of information about the vine, the branches, as well as the vine dresser?

A teacher, sage, or rabbi would want to prepare his disciples or followers for the real-life application of his teachings. The teacher would want the apprentice to learn all aspects of what might happen moving forward in life.

Yeshua wanted His disciples to understand the reality of what it means to follow in The Way.

Phileo (fil-eh'-o) love that involves feelings of warmth or affection toward another person

Strong terms:

- Hate
- Persecution

I don't feel like these are two concepts that the average church in America talks about or prepares people to face. Yeshua made it very clear to his apprentice followers. “They hated Jesus without a cause.” You need to be prepared to experience painful rejection and ridicule.

John 15:26-27 NKJV *“But I will send you the Advocate (comforter, encourager, counselor)—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry.*

Are you living in the vitality or life source that can only come from our Lord Jesus?

Are you acknowledging, to yourself, the reality of constant connection to Jesus through the presence of the Holy Spirit?