

I AM the Vine - Part 2

Sermon delivered on September 4th, 2016

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Scripture Text: [John 15:1-11](#)

Introduction

Last Sunday we considered the seventh “I AM” statement of Jesus Christ. As we considered the claim of Jesus Christ as the True Vine, we noted three things, namely, Jesus Christ is the Source of Life, Jesus is Source of Fruit, and Jesus is the Source of Joy.

Severed from the True a Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no real life, no fruit-bearing, and no deep and lasting joy.

Today, consider with me - God’s Plan, God’s Provision, and God’s Purpose.

I - God’s Plan is for Us to Bear Fruit

[John 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.

It is God’s plan and will for us Christians to bear fruit, more fruit, and much fruit.

When a farmer or gardener plants a vineyard or a vegetable garden, it is not because he enjoys tilling the soil or pulling weeds or chasing pesky critters like gophers, squirrels, rabbits, and rats out of the garden, right? Farmers plant a vegetable garden because they want to see the fruit.

A vineyard is planted not for decoration or ornamentation, but to produce grapes, to bear fruit. This is the point our Lord makes in the story.

[John 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.

The very purpose of the branch is to bear fruit. That's why God created it. A branch that does not bear fruit is not fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. So it is with our lives. This is why we are placed in Christ. God wants to see fruit in our lives.

[Titus 3:14](#) And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

God doesn't want us to be unfruitful. He wants us to be productive.

All through this account His emphasis is upon the fruit. So the question arises, **What does this fruit stand for in our life?**

1. Inward Fruit

It is not going to be our fruit. It is going to be the fruit of the Spirit. That is the fruit that is developed from inside out.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23: Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

The fruit, in other words, is Christlikeness. And our Lord is indicating that the very purpose of the vine is to produce such fruit.

When a person is saved and abiding in Christ there will be a manifestation from the inside out that he is in Christ and that Christ is in him.

2. Outward Fruit

John 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.

God saved us not to sit, soak and soar. He did not save us just to admire our salvation and keep it to ourselves. He saved us to bear much fruit, to go and tell others about Jesus Christ that they may know the Lord Jesus Christ personally as their Saviour.

Romans 1:13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) **that I might have some fruit among you also**, even as among other Gentiles. 14: I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15: So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. 16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

God wants us to be productive and bearing fruit for the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants us reproducing the Gospel in the world in which we live and the reason that we need to abide in Christ is so that we can bear fruit for the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is God's plan. This is God's will. It is God's plan and will for us Christians to bear fruit, more fruit, and much fruit.

II - God's Provision for Bearing Fruit

Our Lord says, He is going to give you and me provision to bear fruit and the provision to bear fruit is by abiding.

The key word in this chapter is **abide**. The word "abide" is used **eleven times** in the first ten verses. The word "abide" is the simple word, "remain." Re - again. To abide is to do it again and again and again. And what are we to do constantly and consistently if we are to bear fruit?

1. Abide in Christ

Now, do not confuse "**to abide in Christ**" with "**to be in Christ**". These are two different things. It is one thing to be "in Christ," and another to "abide in Him." The one is a matter of His grace; the other of our responsibility.

A person must first be "in Christ" before he or she can "abide in Christ." You cannot abide unless you are in the first place in Christ. We become "in Christ" at the new birth.

[2 Corinthians 5:17](#) Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Believers are in Christ by new birth, by new creation.

[Romans 8:1](#) There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Now, being in Christ, we must abide in Him! To abide in Him is our responsibility. We abide in Christ not to be saved but to bear fruit. Being in Christ and with Christ we have the opportunity to produce much good fruit that lasts forever. And it starts by first of all being in Christ, then abiding in Him.

What does it mean to abide in Him?

To 'abide,' 'continue,' 'dwell,' 'remain' in Christ—by all these terms is this one word translated—has always reference to the maintenance of fellowship with God in Christ.

To abide in Him, then, is to have sustained **conscious communion with Him**. To abide in Christ signifies the **constant occupation of the heart with Him**.

Christian life is a walk in Him.

[Colossians 2:6](#) As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

To abide in Christ means to keep up a habit of constant close communion with Him - to stay with Him, to keep close to Him, to spend time with Him, and to have constant and consistent communion and fellowship with Jesus Christ. This is done **not just on Sundays**. Jesus Christ wants us to do this not only on Sundays. He wants us to abide in Him everyday of the week. Jesus wants us to walk with Him, talk with Him.

There is no short cuts to Christian growth and fruit-bearing. A gardener when he sows the seeds does not wake up the following morning and expect to see fruit. So many times in our Christian lives in this society, we want instant gratification.

We want God to fix our marriage, make us a better man, help our business, help our children, but these things will not happen just simply attending church. These things will take place if we abide in Christ. More than listening to a 45-minute sermon. We must abide in Him daily.

Fellowship with Christ is the secret of fruitfulness. Does that describe you, Christian?

2. Abide in Christ's Word

John 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.

Not only are we to abide in Christ, we must also abide in His word if we are to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Colossians 3:16 **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly** in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

You and I will never bear the fruit of the Spirit, never bring others to Jesus, never know true joy unless we know Jesus Christ and unless we are abiding in Him and in His word.

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law **shall not depart** out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

To abide in His word is not just reading our Bibles and attending church, it includes these things, true, but to abide in His word is to keep His sayings and precepts continually before our memories and minds, and to make them the guide of our actions and the rule of our daily conduct and behavior.

3. Abide in Christ's Love

John 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.

If we are to bear fruit we are not only to abide in Christ, abide in His word, we must also abide in His love.

Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

This does not mean having become a child of God that we can still be separated from the love of God.

Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39: Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If we as His children cannot be separated from the love of God, so what does it mean to abide in Christ, to keep ourselves in the love of God?

What it means is, to keep the love of God before you, to constantly think about the love of Christ for you. Grow in your understanding of what it means to be loved by Christ. Constantly meditate on His love.

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, **being rooted and grounded in love**, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And **to know the love of Christ**, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

What kind of love is Christ love for us?

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: **continue ye in my love**.

We all know that the Father loves the Son and He loves Him dearly and deeply. That is expected since the Son has not done anything wrong against the Father. He has done all the will of the Father perfectly. The Father is well-pleased with the Son.

Jesus speaks several times about the Father's love for Him:

John 3:35 **The Father loveth the Son**, and hath given all things into his hand.

John 5:20 For **the Father loveth the Son**, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

Mark 1:11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, **Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**.

Matthew 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**; hear ye him.

God the Father loves the Son. He is well-pleased with His Son. His soul delights in the Son!

The Son loves us the same way the Father loves the Son

It is amazing enough that the Son loves us, but what is more amazing is, that Jesus Christ loves us the same way the Father loves Him.

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: **continue ye in my love**.

Think about this, the Son not just simply loves us, He loves us the way the Father loves the Son.

John 15:17 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

O, may we be occupied with His love for you and me!

To "abide" in His love, then, is to dwell on it. Do not dwell too much on your weak and poor and inconsistent love for Him, this will only make you miserable. Instead, dwell on, abide in, fixed your heart upon His amazing and wonderful love, that love which "passeth all knowledge," will fill us with praise and thanksgiving and produce love and obedience.

This is God's provision for our growth and for fruit-bearing - we must abide in Christ, in His word, and in His love.

III - The Purpose for Bearing Fruit

What is the purpose of the fruit? What is the ultimate goal in bearing fruit? Why should we care so much that we bear fruit? The answer is, so that we would bring glory and honor to God our Father.

[John 15:8](#) Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

This is the reason that we care so much about bearing fruit, because we care so much about the glory of God.

Why do we want to bear fruit of the Spirit and to see souls saved? So that God is glorified. It is not about glorifying ourselves. It is not about glorifying the church. It is about glorifying the Father.

The chief end of man is to glorify God. The primary purpose of our lives is to bring glory and honor to the Father.

[Colossians 3:17](#) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

I want the Father to be glorified in my life, don't you? The Father is glorified when we bear fruit. And the more fruit that we bear in our lives the more glory we bring to the Father.

“Fruit does not draw attention to the branch, fruit draws attention to the gardener. When people come walking in a garden and then see how beautiful it is they know that someone has cultivated this. Someone has brought this about. People don't go over to root and begin to praise the root. You would give glory to the gardener, the one who has overseen all this. And who has weeded it out and who has round it back and has watered and who has fertilized and who has overseen the entire process.

That is true in the spiritual realm, the glory goes to the One who has brought it about. That is why we want to produce fruit in our lives, not that we could show off. It actually shows off the glory of God who is at work in our lives both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”

- Dr. S. Lawson

Closing Thoughts

Jesus Christ is True Vine. The Father is the Husbandman, the Vine-Dresser. The Christians are the Branches. God's plan for the Branches is to bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit. This fruit-bearing would only come to pass if we are abiding in Christ, abiding in His word, and abiding in His love.

The relationship that God offers us through Jesus Christ is a relationship of fruitfulness. Christians, do you want to be fruitful? If we love the Lord and understand anything about Christian life, our desire is to honor the Lord in whatever we do. We want fruit that would bring glory and honor to Him.

But, you will never bear fruit unless you are rightly connected to Vine. You will never bear the fruit of the Spirit and fruit of righteousness until you are grafted into the vine. You will never bear fruit until you have been born of the Spirit of God and put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

There might be someone here today that is not rightly and truly attached to the Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ. There might be someone here today who do not know that Jesus Christ is in him and that he is in Him. If that is the case I would encourage you to come and be grafted to the Vine by simply trusting Jesus as your Saviour even today.

AMEN!