

REDEMPTION CHURCH

Life in Christ | The Vinedresser

JOHN 15:1-8

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

In the second week of our current series, *Life in Christ*, we focus on the role of the Vinedresser (God the Father) as we continue our study of [John 15:1-11](#).

Last week we looked at the first phrase of this passage, *"I am the true vine."* This included the [triune nature of God](#) and that we either live: for self, in self-righteousness, or in Christ. We abide in Christ when we: act like Him, operate in the anointing of the Spirit, and excitedly anticipate His return.

Notes:

Notice Christ's humble disposition in John 15. He is the vine, but His Father is the Vinedresser. Jesus isn't a created being, but emanates from the Father, as we see in [1 John 4:14](#).

How does this apply personally?

- We don't love Jesus in lieu of loving the Father.
- We don't ask *"what would Jesus do"* when the answer isn't in full alignment with who the Father is. (Would the Father attend that wedding, bless that action, etc.? Does it align with His holiness and sovereignty?)
- We acknowledge the Father's unbridled authority...

Authority to do what? See v6. As Vinedresser, the Father has:

- An elevated position –He sees beyond the branch and even the tree to take into account the whole forest.
- A grand plan –that we, His little branches (not the vine, not the fruit), bear as much fruit as possible.
- An effective strategy –taking/cutting away and pruning.

"Every branch..." Notice the Father's great concern and care for each and every branch. His elevated position and grand plan do not negate His care and concern for each and every one of us.

"In me..." There are those who seem to be *"in Christ,"* but it's a facade. Think of the parable of the sower ([Mt 13:1-9](#)). Many appear saved, but let the worries of this world snatch them away. The evidence of truly being *"in Christ,"* as Paul writes, is the fruit of the Spirit.

Hebrews 6:7-8

For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.

1 Peter 1:6-7

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:22

Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

NOW WHAT?

We see in verse 8 that is all for God's glory. It's not about us! Submit to the Vinedresser and bear fruit—for His glory and to grow His kingdom. It makes all the pruning worth it!

What does the Vinedresser do with branches that aren't truly abiding in the Vine? He takes them away. Not performance-based salvation, but evidence that salvation has not been completed in them. In v5 we see that those who are truly abiding "*in me*" WILL bear fruit—they can't help it!

If we're "*in Christ*" but aren't bearing fruit, what should we do? We take accountability for being the crop in Hebrews 6:7-8, then wake up and begin bearing fruit again.

What does the Vinedresser do with branches that are bearing fruit? Reading on in v2, we see that they're pruned. The enemy tries to convince us of lies like, "*God likes me just the way that I am,*" or "*Papa God understands my heart—He's ok with...(my sin).*" No! God wants us to grow, so He prunes us. Wisdom stops pushing against this process, and embraces it.

Three types of Christian pruning:

1) **Healthy pruning.** When the branch (Christian) is living and growing. God makes us even more like Him as He convicts and sanctifies us. John 17 shows us exactly how, "*Sanctify them in your truth, your word is truth.*" We remain in Christ by abiding in His truth that: our righteousness is in Christ alone ([Eph 2:8-9](#)); His Word lights our path ([Ps 119:105-112](#)); and the Spirit guides into all truth ([Jn 16:13](#)) and conviction ([Jn 16:8](#)).

Even when things are good, He's still pruning. The Gospel will continue transforming us "*from one level of glory to another.*" This includes **removing suckers** (They look good, but suck the life out of us—our time, money, and energy. If it looks like good, but it isn't producing any Gospel fruit, cut it off!), and **thinning** (Focus in on a few things well, so they receive needed attention and can thrive. Remove *good things* to focus on the best things—what God has called us to. **Caution:** Not an excuse to do less for the Kingdom, but more—in a focused way.

2) **Pruning external damage.** When there's damage that'll ruin the branch or its ability to produce fruit, the area is pruned to make way for new growth. Life will always throw trials at us. 1 Peter 1:6-7 explains they should have this affect on our lives.

3) **Internal pruning.** When part of a branch is diseased it's removed to prevent spread. See Romans 11:22. It might seem harsh to modern ears, but it's not. The Father will cut off those who refuse to repent. [Hebrews 12:3-7](#) shows us how God disciplines (prunes) those whom He loves. Receive it, repent, and bear more fruit!