

The Work of the Fruit-bearer

John 15:1-27

- I. HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE TRUE VINE (John 15:1-11)
 - A. Interpretation of the Passage (John 15:1-6)
 1. The vine – Israel (Psalm 80:8, 14-16; Isaiah 5:1-7; Hosea 10:1)
 2. The true Vine – Christ (John 15:1; Romans 2:17, 25, 29)
 - a. To be a Jew by birth alone was not enough. To be in the true Vine, even a Jew had to be in Christ.
 - b. In the Gospel of John, Christ is:
 - 1) The true Light (John 1:9)
 - 2) The true Bread (John 6:32)
 - 3) The true Vine (John 15:1)
 3. The husbandman – the Father (John 15:1; Isaiah 27:2-3, 6); that is, the tiller, cultivator, manager, and owner of the farm
 - a. Husbandman in the Scripture
 - 1) Noah (Genesis 9:20)
 - 2) The Parable of the husbandman (Matthew 21:33-34)
 - 3) The coming Lord (James 5:7)
 - b. The work of the Father (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)
 4. The branches – believers (John 15:2, 5; John 8:37-39)
 5. The false branches – unbelievers (John 15:2, 6; Matthew 3:7-12; Matthew 21:19)
 - B. Application of the Passage (John 15:2-11)
 1. The increase of fruitfulness (John 15:2-7); fruit (John 15:2), more fruit (John 15:2), much fruit (John 15:5, 8)
 - a. By being connected to the vine (Christ) (John 15:4-5) – the branch receives all nourishment and health from the vine
 - b. The branch is the conduit by which the vine bears fruit (Genesis 40:10)
 - c. The branch with more fruit (John 15:2-3) – as a result of purging
 - 1) To purge is to cleanse from impurity (Psalm 51:7; Psalm 79:9)
 - 2) Purging can be accomplished by removing the dead (Matthew 3:12; 1 Corinthians 5:17), the impure (Isaiah 1:25; 2 Timothy 2:21), the unneeded growth (Ezekiel 34:2).
 - 3) The dead branches and the unneeded growth are pruned so that the branch might bear more fruit (Hebrews 12:5-11).
 - 4) Accomplished with the cleansing of the word
 - a) The initial cleansing of salvation (John 13:10; James 1:18, 21; 1 Peter 1:23-25)

- b) The continual cleansing of sanctification (Psalm 119:9, 11; John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26)
- c) The necessity of the word for bearing fruit (Matthew 13:22; Luke 8:15; Psalm 1:1-3)
- d. The branch with much fruit (John 15:4-5)
 - 1) The twofold connection with Christ (John 15:4) – “*Abide in me, and I in you.*”
 - a) He must abide in Christ
 - i. This is the believer positionally placed (standing) in Christ.
 - ii. This is the lot of all true saints of God (Romans 8:1; Ephesians 1:6)
 - b) Christ must abide in him
 - i. This is the life of Christ actively operating in the believer (Colossians 1:27)
 - ii. This is the life of Christ operating through the believer (Colossians 3:1-4)
 - c) His essential union with Christ (John 15:5) – “*I am the vine, ye are the branches*”
 - i. The branch has no life apart from the vine.
 - ii. The branch bears no fruit apart from the vine.
 - (1) Cannot bear fruit of itself (John 15:4)
 - (2) Can without Christ do nothing (John 15:5)
 - iii. What this union is not
 - (1) It is not just salvation, though salvation is required.
 - (2) It is not sinlessness.
 - (3) It is not eradication; that is, the old nature is not destroyed.
 - (4) It is not imitation; it is not us trying to be like Christ in the strength of our flesh (1Corinthians 11:1 is often perverted in modern versions to say *imitators*).
 - iv. What this union is
 - (1) It is our identification with Christ in His crucifixion (Romans 6:3; Galatians 2:20).
 - (2) It is our identification with Christ in His resurrection (Romans 6:4-5; Galatians 2:20).
 - (3) It is the life of Christ lived through us by faith (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:16-17; Galatians 4:19).
 - v. The twofold life illustrated in scripture
 - (1) The purpose of Christ’s coming – John 10:10
 - (a) Life
 - (b) Life more abundantly
 - (2) Water of the Spirit
 - (a) **John 4:14** – “*the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life*” – this is salvation.

- (b) **John 7:38-39** – “*out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*” – this is the sanctification of the Spirit.
- (3) Our relationship to Christ
 - (a) **2 Corinthians 5:17** – “*if any man be in Christ*” – this is salvation.
 - (b) **Galatians 4:19** – “*My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you*” – this is sanctification through the union of the believer with Christ.
- d) This is the only path to much fruit – “*the same bringeth forth much fruit*”
 - i. The hundredfold fruit of the good ground (Matthew 13:23)
 - ii. The fruit that remains (John 15:16)
 - iii. Fruit unto holiness and everlasting life (Romans 6:22)
 - iv. Gold, silver, and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:11-14)
 - v. Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:9)
 - vi. Fruits of righteousness (Philippians 1:11; Colossians 1:10)
 - vii. Never barren or unfruitful (2 Peter 1:8; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 6:9)
- e) The inner workings of the abiding Christ
 - i. Indwelling Spirit (John 7:38-39; Ephesians 3:16; Ephesians 5:18)
 - ii. Indwelling word (John 15:3, 7; Colossians 3:16; 1 John 2:14)
 - iii. Faith (2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17)
 - iv. Love (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Ephesians 3:17-19; Philippians 1:9-11)

2. Blessings of a Life of Abiding in Christ (John 15:7-11)

- a. Blessing of answered prayer (John 15:7)
 - 1) To better know the will of God (1 Corinthians 2:11-16)
 - 2) To pray according to His will (Romans 8:26-28; 1 John 5:14)
 - 3) To receive answers to our prayers (Psalm 37:4; 1 John 5:15)
- b. Blessing of much fruit (John 15:8)
 - 1) By which to glorify the Father (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 10:31; Philippians 1:11; 1 Peter 4:11)
 - 2) By which to be His disciples (John 8:31; John 13:35)

- c. Blessing of sustaining love (John 15:9-10)
 - 1) The love of Christ toward us (John 15:9)
 - a) Patterned after the Father's love to the Son
 - b) Bestowed to the disciples
 - c) Required that we continue in this love (John 13:34; Ephesians 3:19; Ephesians 5:2)
 - 2) The practice of abiding in Christ's love (John 15:10)
 - a) Maintained by keeping the commandments of Christ (John 14:15, 21; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 5:3)
 - b) Exemplified by the obedience of Christ to the Father (John 6:38; John 8:29; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 5:8)

- d. Blessing of fullness of joy (John 15:11)
 - 1) Comes by the practice of abiding in Christ – *“These things have I spoken.”*
 - 2) Allows the joy of Christ to remain in the believer (John 17:13; Romans 5:11)
 - 3) Causes the joy of the believer to be full (John 16:24; Philippians 4:4-7; 1 John 1:4)