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## **The True Vine & The Branches (John 15:1-8)**

This is one of the last Messages of Christ to his disciples (John 14:15 -28) – He presented it not as a parable or story but as an illustration to explain the most important truth in our walk with Him. He chose an illustration instead of a parable because of the importance of the message. He made it simple, so you cannot mis-understand it. You may choose to ignore it or even look for other scripture(s) to explain off your actions but you can not deny the truth in this message to us as disciples of Christ.

### **The Message Is For Disciples**

Like a man leaves his will and testament behind before he dies and in it he leaves instructions on how his estate is to be apportioned to the people he loves. The same way Christ left instructions for His own, on how to receive the fullness of their inheritance in God. The instructions were however for HIS OWN. Those who knew him and believed in him. The world can not benefit from these instructions because they can not even begin to understand them. (John 14:22-23).

You may ask, so, does God discriminate? No. He does not. He has given (and he is even giving everyone here today) an opportunity to become His disciples - to become children of God. (John 1:1 - 13)

### **Understanding The Analogy Of The True Vine And The Branches**

Christ is the **True** Vine, The original, authentic Vine. The REAL DEAL! The qualifier - True means that there's a type of vine that is false, the type that brings death. (2 Kings 4:39 - 40, John 10:10). The devil comes to steal to kill and to destroy, but Christ came to give abundant life. The main purpose of the True Vine is to give life; to produce branches that bear fruits (Gen 1:28a).

Christ compared Himself to a vine for our benefit. So we can understand who we are in Him. Christ, like the vine, is the source of our existence. (Acts 17:28, 1 John 4:9). In him we live, breathe and have our being. Without Him we are nothing.

Likewise, the branches are integral parts of the Vine. They are there for one primary purpose - to bear fruits. If you look at a Vine, you see branches woven together and bearing fruits. The core of the Vine i.e. the root is not seen. It is the branches and the fruits they bear that tell of the vine. Our life is hidden with Christ.

Also, It is the root that bears the tree ([Rom 11:18](#)), diffuses sap to it, and is all in all to it in flourishing and fruitfulness. In the same way, in Christ we have all supports and supplies. The branches of the vine are many, some on one side of the house or wall, others on the other side; yet, meeting at the root, they are all one vine; thus all believers, though in place and opinion may be distant from each other, yet we meet in Christ, the centre of our unity. Also, believers like the branches of the vine, are weak, and insufficient to stand by themselves, but are borne up by the root and become part of a strong and virile vine.

### **The Message**

So, what is the message that Jesus had to share with His disciples before his death? It is quite simple - **ABIDE in ME** (John 15:4-7). Really? Is it that simple? Yes! Look at the branch in the vine, what else can it do but to abide. However, the reason why we believe it's not so simple is because we, by nature desire to do the exact opposite. That is why Christ had to spell it out **ABIDE in ME!** Think about how difficult it is for you when you have to wait on your spouse; maybe when she goes out shopping or when he is busy watching his favourite sports game. Every

fibre in us wants to oppose waiting. But this is one of (if not) the most essential instruction to us as believers. Once again, let's take a look at the branch in a vine, for it to bear fruit it must be connected to the vine for nutrients and supply - and that is all it has to do. It waits for what it needs and transmits/uses all it has to bring forth leaves and fruits.

### **Practically, How Do We Abide**

Easy, the same way you received Christ! Remember when you gave your life to Christ, self was set aside. You accepted him to the extent that he revealed himself to you. You submitted to Him, was broken before Him. God appealed to our minds, our hearts and emotions at salvation. Why do we then want to bottle the experience up in our head and just remember it as something that just happened? To abide in Him, we need to constantly accept the same grace that was made available at salvation and trust Him completely. We need to trust God to do the work. We then just become channels for getting the work done. At salvation, God placed us in Christ and sealed us (2 Corinthians 1:21 -22). He also constantly instructs us through the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:27 – 28). We need to continue to depend on Him daily!

*Note: Abiding takes effort! It is not just sitting down doing nothing. It takes conscious effort! Gal 5:17. By abiding, you will have to do things that you normally are inclined not to do.*

### **In Summary, What Does Abiding In Christ Really Mean?**

- Total & absolute dependence on the vine on a continuous basis (24/7). A branch that is not abiding is fit only to be burnt. It is worthless!
- We walk as He walks (1 John 2:6). As a part of the vine, we lose our identity. People should see Christ in us, in our dressing, talking etc. We should reflect God's image!
- We live above sin (1 John 3: 6)
- We bear much fruit - God as the husbandman, the owner of the vineyard prunes when we bear fruit, so we can bear much more. Interestingly, God does not prune until we start bearing fruits.
- We receive all that He has for us and we give our all to Him. He knows exactly what we need and he expects ALL we have in return.
- We receive the promise (John 15:7) - Ask what you will and it will be done to you. God knows that when you abide, your desires will be in line with His desires, so He has no problem trusting you to desire the right thing. That is why Elijah did not have to seek the face of God first before confronting the prophets of BAAL and calling down fire from heaven. God expects us to be connected to Him in the same way so that His power can be made manifest through us.

### ***Pray with this scripture***

*"I will refine them like silver and purify them like gold. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'These are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is our God.'" Zech 13:9*

*Opeolu Babayemi*