

John 15

Jesus speaking to his disciples before his death.
The Passover. (he is the lamb of God)
Knowing that, having loved his own, he loved them unto the end.
And so he had some things he wanted to tell them.
And he began by becoming a servant, and washing their feet.
Because he wants them to serve one another.

The commandment which he gave them was to love one another.

But as he gave them those commandments, he reminded them again that not all of them were clean. Though he washed them.
He that ate bread with him would lift up his heel against him.

And likewise he told Peter that he would deny him thrice.

And so they were troubled.
He is going away, and his own disciples are going to betray and deny him.
They can't go with him, he tells them.

But he tells them not to let their heart be troubled.
Because he is going to his Father, to prepare a place for them.
And so one day he will return to receive them unto him.
They will be physically reunited.
And in the mean time, he is going to send from his Father another Comforter for them.
The Spirit of truth, that may abide with them for ever.
And as he is in his Father, and his Father in him, so he is in the Spirit and the Spirit in him.
And the Spirit is going to come and be in them.
So that they are in him, and he in them.

The Spirit of truth. And so then they will know, he told them. They will know the truth.
This is what he has been pointing them towards.
This is the fulfillment of the word that they have heard.
That the grace and truth of God that is in him, might be in them.
Grace for grace.

And so though he is no longer going to be in the world. Though the world will see him no more.
Yet they will still know him. he will be in them. He will manifest himself to them.

And so although they are troubled at what he has told them, they shouldn't be. He's told them these things before they come to pass, that they might believe.
This is just the next step toward fulfilling the word that they have believed. So let them continue to believe. Not be troubled. But as they have believed in God, to believe also in him.

Verse 1

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

This passage is often taken out of context.

In OT prophecy, the vine is Israel.

Song of Solomon 7:12 Let us get up early to the **vineyards**; let us see if the **vine** flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

Christ will wed the church on earth, here the marriage supper will be held, when he returns to see how the vine doth flourish, how Israel is reviving, the tender grape, the tender grass of the field.

Isaiah 5:1 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a **vineyard** in a very fruitful hill:

2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest **vine**, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 What could have been done more to my **vineyard**, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 *For the **vineyard** of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel*, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

So the vineyard, and the plant, the vine, is the house of Israel.

But they weren't bringing forth the right fruit.

Wild grapes.

Jeremiah 2:21 Yet I had planted thee a noble **vine**, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange **vine** unto me?

There was a problem with a false vine. A strange vine.

Not the true vine.

"I am the true vine."

True Israel will only be those of Israel that are in him.

So there are OT prophecies that relate the vine to Christ.

Genesis 49:8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?
10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.
11 Binding his foal unto the **vine**, and his ass's colt unto the choice **vine**; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:
12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

Psalms 80:1 To the chief Musician upon ShoshannimEduth, A Psalm of Asaph. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us.
3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.
4 O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?
5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.
6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.
7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.
8 Thou hast brought a **vine** out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.
9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.
10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.
11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.
12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?
13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.
14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;
15 And the **vineyard** which thy right hand hath planted, and the **branch** that thou madest strong for thyself.
16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.
17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.
18 So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.
19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

The vine of the LORD that he made strong for himself will be replaced by a man that the LORD will make strong for himself, the son of man.

“I am the true vine.”

It is in him that Israel will be saved.

He just mentioned that, implicitly, in what he said about going and coming again.

He's not going to do that now, but he's going to his Father that is greater than him, and coming back.

And when he does he will cause his face to shine, and they will be saved.

If they are in the true vine.

If they trust to the old degenerate plant of a strange vine, the OT system, Judaism. The Jewish religion.

As the priests and scribes and Pharisees.

Then they won't be of the true vine.

That's what he's telling them here.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

Verse 2

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.

His Father, as the husbandman, cares for the vine.

And his goal is what every husbandman's goal is: that it should bring forth fruit.

And so every branch that doesn't bear fruit, he takes away.

If a branch isn't going to bear, cut it off, don't waste the vine's energy on that branch. Save it.

And those branches that are bearing fruit, you also trim. You don't cut them off, but you purge them, remove everything superfluous, that they may bring forth more fruit.

So the takeaway is going to be, that they need to be bringing forth fruit.

Verse 3

John 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

So he said that the Father purges those branches that do bear fruit, that they might bring forth more fruit.

And then he tells them that they are clean, through the word that he has spoken.

And so it is his word that is central to that purging.

As he's told them, he's telling them these things that they might believe.

And so they have been made clean, by the word that he has been speaking to them.

So remember how he washed their feet, and said that they were clean, but not all?

Judas wasn't clean, even though Christ physically washed him.

But they are clean, through the word that he has spoken.

It is the word that is that water of life, that cleanses them.

That they might bring forth fruit.

Verse 4

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

And so let them abide in him.

As he said before, "if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

He's told them that there is yet more for them to hear.

That the Holy Ghost is going to teach them.

So they are clean, but the Father will continue to purge them still, that they might bring forth even more fruit.

So they need to continue in his word, to abide in him, until they know that that truth. Until they receive that Comforter.

Otherwise they won't bear fruit.

He is the vine, and they are the branches, and the branch can't bear fruit without the vine.

And as he told them, those that don't bear fruit, they are cut off by the Father. He cuts them out of the vine.

So if they want to be part of the vine, the true vine, then they need to abide in him, and receive the cleansing and purging sent by the Father.

Otherwise, they'll be cut off. Just because they are of Israel, they aren't part of the true vine, and so that won't do them any good. Only the true vine will be saved when he returns.

So until then, they need to abide in him. Not go back to the old vine, to the OT, to Judaism.

Because there they can't bring forth that fruit.

It is only through the NT, through the Spirit, through the word.

Verse 5

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

And so those that abide in him will bring forth fruit.

And they will bring forth much fruit.

Because as he has told them, his Father will purge them.

He will cleanse them. He will wash them with the water of the Spirit, by the word.

But without him, they can do nothing.

If they try to start their own little religious sect and keep working miracles without him, or go back into Judaism and just try to incorporate a few of his teachings, then they will be total failures. They won't bear any fruit.

Without him, they can do nothing.

So stick with him, and be purged, and bring forth much fruit.

Verse 6

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Those that don't abide in him, won't bear fruit.

And so as he said, his Father will cut them off.

They will be cast forth as a branch, and will wither.

And then men will gather them and burn them.

And that is exactly what happened.

Those that didn't bear fruit, we saw Christ offend them during his ministry.

They were cast forth.

And they withered.

And in the end, in 70 AD, the Romans came, and men gathered them, and cast them into the fire, and burned them.

They kept trying to make someone their king.
But in the end they lost it all. They were destroyed, and their nation burnt with fire.

So Jesus tells his disciples to abide in him, to abide in his word, and wait for that purging from the Father, so that they will bring forth fruit through him.
Because the degenerate vine is now being cut off, and it will be burnt up.
There is nothing more for them in Judaism. That tree is never going to bear fruit. Those branches that don't come to him and abide in the true vine.

There is a lot of false teaching from this passage, about the so-called "Christian life".
So we have to ask: Should a Christian today be abiding in the vine?
No.

Not unless you are a Jew. You are part of the old vine.
And you are waiting for Christ to send the promise of the Father, so that you can be purged.
Then while you are waiting, abide in the true vine.
But of course there is no need, because the Spirit has now been given. And so we can bring forth much fruit now. No need to wait.

This was a specific command to a specific group of people at a specific time.

The only other references to the vine in the NT, after the gospels, is in James, where he is writing to the twelve tribes,
and in Revelation 14, where it is talking about the 144000 out of all the tribes of Israel which were redeemed from the earth.
It talks about the vine here, and then it doesn't talk about it again until Christ is coming back to redeem Israel.
And only those that will be redeemed, are those that are in the true vine. Like the 144000, which keep the commandments of God *and* the faith of Jesus Christ.

Verse 7

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.

If they continue in his word. If they abide in him, and his words abide in them, they will ask what they will, and it shall be done unto them.
In other words, they will ask for complete cleansing, complete purging, to know the truth that will set them free, to bear much fruit. And they will receive it.
They will receive the Spirit, and be washed clean, and bear much fruit.

Verse 8

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

So they will ask to bear fruit, and in that, his Father will be glorified, so when they ask, it will be given them.
When they ask for cleansing, when they ask for the word, for the truth, for the Spirit of Christ, for the Comforter, it shall be done unto them.
So shall they be his disciples.

To the glory of his Father.
If they abide in him.

Verse 9

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

So here is what it means for them to abide in him. To continue in his love.
He has loved them, just as the Father has loved him.
They've partaken of that love of God. Continue in it.
How?

Verse 10

John 15:10 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.

So he told them to continue in his love. To continue to have him love them.
And how do they do that?
By continuing to do that which he loves, and his Father loves.
To keep his commandments.
To continue in his word.

When they keep his commandments, they abide in his love, just as he has kept his Father's commandments, and abides in his love.

So in telling them to abide in him, and abide in his love, he's simply telling them to continue to follow his word.

Verse 11

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

He's told them not to let their heart be troubled.
He is telling them these things so that his joy might remain in them.
So that these events won't take their joy from them.
But that they'd continue in his word, in his love, in his commandments, in his joy.
So that in the end, their joy might be made full.
That when it is done, they might receive the fullness of joy.
He's told them to keep his commandments, that their joy might be full.

Verse 12

John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

And he reminds them what that commandment is, that he gave them last time in chapter 13.
That they love one another, as he has loved them.

He gave them an example, how they should serve one another.
And now he will give them an even greater example.

Verse 13

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Here is how he has loved them. With the greatest love. No man has a greater love than this.
This is the ultimate sacrifice. To lay down his life for his friends.
And so they are to have unbounded love for one another, just as he has had for them.

Verse 14

John 15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

So he's laying down his life for his friends.
And who are they? Who are they for whom he lays it down? Who are his friends?
They that do whatsoever he commands them.
They are, if they keep his word, his commandment, and love one another.

Verse 15

John 15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

He hasn't called them servants. He calls them friends.
A man doesn't lay down his life for his servants.
A man lays down his life for his friends.
And so they are to be made free, as he said.
And so he hasn't called them servants, but friends.
A servant doesn't know what his lord doeth, he stays out of his business, just does what he is told, and isn't told any more than he needs to know.
But he has treated them as friends. He has told them all things that he has heard of his Father.
He's made it known unto them, before it comes to pass.
And so he calls them his friends. If they hear his word, and keep his commandments.

Verse 16

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.

He calls them friends. But yet he reminds them that he has given them commandments, that they should serve him.
They are his servants, and he is their Lord.
They call him Master and Lord, and they say well, for so he is.

They've not chosen him, and ordained him.
As superiors, or even as equals, as friends.
But he, as their superior, has chosen and ordained them.

And he has ordained them, that they should go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain.

They aren't going to be branches that are cut off, and wither, but he's chosen them that they might bring forth fruit, and that their fruit would remain.
That they would abide in him.

And that as a result of that, as a result of the fact that they are bringing forth fruit that remains, his Father might bless them.

That as he purges that which bringeth forth, that it might bring forth more fruit, so whatsoever they would ask the Father in his name, he would give it them.
Give them that purging, that cleansing, that washing, that water of life, that grace, that Comforter.

And so he's chosen branches that will abide in him, that will bring forth that fruit, that they might receive that from the Father.

Verse 17

John 15:17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

He has chosen those that will abide in his love, and bring forth fruit.
That will receive whatsoever they ask of the Father.
And so they should love one another.
Because that is but to love those that he has chosen.
Those that he has ordained.
Those that bring forth fruit that remains.
Those that ask anything of his Father in his name.

And so he tells them this, not just to reassure them and boost their ego. But so that they will love one another.
Not so that they'll think, "I was chosen." But so they'll think, "These are chosen." And will love them.

Verse 18

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

You see, he loves them, but he's going away.
And they are here to be his representatives.
And so they need to abide in his love, by expressing his love to one another.
Because they want to know his love. They need to know that love.
And they certainly aren't going to get it from the world.
The world is going to hate them. It hated him.
And so to receive love, they need to love one another.
And in so doing they know that he loves them. Because they are keeping his commandment.

Verse 19

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

So the world would love his own. But they're not of the world. He's chosen them out of it.
And so now those that he has chosen are their own.
And so as the world loves his own, they should love their own.
As the world hates them, because they aren't of the world, they should love one another, because Christ has chosen them out of it.

Verse 20

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

He told them this in chapter 13. When he washed their feet. The servant is not greater than his lord.
And so they should do as he has done, and serve one another.

And by the same token, that the servant is not greater than his lord, just as they should treat one another as Christ would treat them, so the world will treat them as it would treat Christ.
They will be persecuted, as he has been persecuted.

But those that kept his saying, will keep theirs also.
Those that have received the word that he has spoken in the gospels, preaching grace, will also receive the word if its fulfillment found in the rest of the NT.
If they've received the word of Christ, they'll also keep the word of his apostles, those that he had chosen.
And if they persecuted Christ, they will persecute them.
If they loved Christ, then they should love one another.
And if they hated Christ, they will hate them.

Verse 21

John 15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

So if and when persecution comes on them, for his name sake.
When men want to persecute Christ, and so persecute them.
They will do it because they don't know him that sent him. They don't know the Father.

But they have known the Father. So let them love one another.

Verse 22

John 15:22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

They didn't know the Father. So they couldn't be charged with hating God.
They had other sins, but they had not had this one.
They were in condemnation already, but now they have no cloke for their sin.
Now they openly hate God's word. The Son has come and spoken to them. They've heard of the Father. And they've hated him.

Verse 23

John 15:23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

They've seen and heard the Son.
And he that has seen the Son hath seen the Father.
And so when they've hated the Son, he that hateth him hateth his Father also.

And so they'll hate them to.
They shouldn't expect acceptance from the world.
But they should love one another who have been chosen out of it.

Verse 24

John 15:24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

So first he said that if he had not spoken to them, they'd have not had sin.
But now they have no cloak for it.
Because they heard his word, and rejected it.

And again, if he had also not done the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.
But when they rejected the word, even the works did not convince them.
Having heard, they rejected it, and cast off their sin's cloke.
And having seen, they hated. They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.

Verse 25

John 15:25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

The Jews, the religious, those that had the law, they hated Christ.
Why?
Without a cause.

They ended up fulfilling the word of God, which they would not keep.

Psalms 69:4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty...

Psalms 69:9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Without a cause, they hated both him and his Father. They reproached him because they would reproach his Father.

He came declaring light and life and grace and truth.

And against all logic they rejected it.

He was coming for their good, to fulfill the law, and give them grace.

To translate them from darkness to light. To bring them salvation.

And yet they hated him.

Insane.

How insane to choose the darkness of this world over the grace of God?

But they hated him, with no rational basis, without a cause.

Verse 26-27

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

They have hated and persecuted him, to the fulfillment of the scriptures.

And in like manner they will hate and persecute them.

Because when he has finished these things, and gone to his Father,

and when the Comforter is come, whom he will send unto them from the Father,

he will testify of him, and they will bear witness.

The Spirit of truth, which they have hated, which proceedeth from the Father, whom they have hated, will come to those who he has chosen, and testify of him.

And those that he has chosen will also bear witness, because they have been with him from the beginning.

They have seen it with their eyes, they have seen the works, and will bear witness to the works, along with the testimony of the Spirit of truth.

But as they have hated the Word of truth, and the works that they've been shown, so they will hate the Spirit of truth, and the testimony of those whom he has chosen.

And so if they have persecuted him, they will also persecute them.

But if they have kept his saying, they will keep theirs also.

Because they will not be speaking of themselves, just as he has not spoken of himself.

But the Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father, will testify.

And as those that have received the Son's testimony of the Father, will also receive the testimony of the Spirit of truth.