

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY

"The Gospel of John"

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2019-2020

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Lesson 56: John 15:1-11 "Abide in Me"

15:1ff.

"I am the (A) true vine, and my Father is (B) the vinedresser. (C) Every branch in me that does not bear fruit (D) he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, (E) that it may bear more fruit.

a. "I AM the true vine..."

a. *Isaiah 5:1-5. Let me sing for my beloved, my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. <sup>2</sup> He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. <sup>3</sup> And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. <sup>4</sup> What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? <sup>5</sup> And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;<sup>[a]</sup>*

b. "My Father is the vinedresser" – the "vinedresser" grafts the branch to the vine (the branch cannot graft itself to the vine). The 'vinedresser's' job is to nurture and protect the graft so that it holds through drought, disease, insects and other threats to the connection. Jesus refers to His Father, as the One who gives life to the branch, through the vine!

c. "branch in Me...not bear fruit" – How can a "branch" (believer in Christ) not bear the fruit?

a. *Matthew 13:18-22. "Hear then the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. <sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.*

d. "branch...does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." – the principle of fruit-bearing is that pruning (or dead-heading) produces more and better fruit. Pruning frees the plant to direct its nutrients to the branches which are fruit-bearing. Question: How does God prune us?

- a. **2 Corinthians 12:**<sup>7</sup> So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations,<sup>[a]</sup> a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.
- b. **1 Peter 1:7.** so 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.
- c. **2 Corinthians 6:**<sup>4-10</sup> but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,<sup>5</sup> beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger;<sup>6</sup> by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;<sup>7</sup> by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left;<sup>8</sup> through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true;<sup>9</sup> as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed;<sup>10</sup> as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

Already (E) you are clean (G) because of the word that I have spoken to you.

- a. “Already you are clean” – Jesus’ reference to “clean” speaks of His forgiveness of them, by grace, received in faith.

<sup>4</sup> (H) Abide (U) 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. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; (U) you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that (K) bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in me (L) he is thrown away like a branch and withers; (M) and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If (N) you abide in me, and my words abide in you, (Q) ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> (P) By this my Father is glorified, that you (Q) bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> (R) As the Father has loved me, (S) so have I loved you. Abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> (T) If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as (U) I have kept (V) my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> These things I have spoken to you, (W) that my joy may be in you, and that (X) your joy may be full.

- a. “Abide in Me, and I in you.” – “Remain in the graft.” The strength of the graft is in the cut, which the vinedresser cut into the vine and inserted the branch. Over time, the cut is sealed and scarred creating a seamless connection between the two.
- b. “branch...vine/you...Me” – Jesus draws the analogy to describe a relationship of dependency: the branch is dependent on the vine for its life; as believers are to Jesus!
- c. “apart from Me you can do nothing.” – the branch, by itself, dies because it has no connection to the vine. Unbelievers, while they may be able to do good

works in a civic sense (in the world); without faith in Jesus, their works do "nothing" in God's eyes.

- a. **Hebrews 11:6.** *6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists*
- d. **"gathered, thrown into the fire"** – branches, which have died, are gathered and used for kindling or simply burned as waste
- e. **"ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."** – contextually, the believer asks according to the will of God: Thy will be done (what, when, & how)!
- f. **"bear much fruit and so prove"** – What is the "fruit?"
  - a. **Isaiah 11:1.** *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*
  - b. **Matthew 3:8.** *Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.*
  - c. **Galatians 5:22-23.** But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- g. **"and that your joy may be full."** – Joy is the by-product of a forgiven life in Christ, irrespective of the conditions of that life. Joy accompanies "peace" (My peace I give to you, not as the world gives.)