



Chapter 15: Jesus, the True Vine

Introduction:

John 15 teaches that life in Christ is sustained by abiding in Him. As we remain in Jesus, the Father makes us fruitful; Jesus commands us to love one another, and the Holy Spirit strengthens us to bear witness even when the world opposes us.

Highlights: John 15

- Jesus the vine and believers the branches
- If we abide in Jesus, we will bear fruit (verses 1-8).
- Jesus reminds us to love one another (9-14)
- Jesus calls His disciples friends (15-17)
- Since the world hates Jesus, it would hate us too (18-25)
- To abide, love, and overcome the world's hatred, Jesus promises help through the Holy Spirit (verses 26-27).

The background of the allegory

In the Old Testament, Israel is often pictured as God's vine or vineyard, planted and cared for by Him but often failing to produce the fruit He desired. When Jesus says, "I am the true vine," He shows that fruitfulness is now found in Him, not in ancestry, religious tradition, or human effort apart from Him.

- Israel was pictured as God's vine, but privilege, ancestry, and possession of the Law could never substitute for the faithful fruit God desired.
- Jesus came calling people to abide in Him, not merely in ancestry, religious tradition, or human interpretation.
- Pruning points to the Father's careful work in fruitful branches, removing what hinders greater fruitfulness. The branch itself has life only as it remains joined to the vine.

Love, fruitfulness, and opposition

These questions help us connect the vine-and-branches image to the Father's work in our lives and to the kind of fruit He seeks from His people.

- How does God tend to the branches that bear fruit and to the branches that do not?
- What is the fruit that the Father desires to see in our lives?

How do we abide?

- His words abide in us (v. 7).
- His love shapes our obedience (vv. 9–10).
- His joy remains in us (v. 11).
- His Spirit bears witness to Him (v. 26).

Purpose for our life

- What is the purpose of our lives according to John 15? What kind of fruit does Jesus want to see in us?
- Galatians 5:22-24 and 2 Peter 1:5-8 describe additional fruit qualities of Christian character.
- To remain in His joy and overcome hatred, we depend on the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

Summary

The lesson closes with three simple responses to John 15: hear Jesus' words, wear His character, and share His life with others.

- • Hear Jesus — His words abide in us.
- • Wear Jesus — His character becomes visible in us.
- • Share Jesus — we bear witness to Him.

Questions

- What do we produce when we abide in Jesus?
- How does God ensure our productivity?
- Why did Jesus refer to his disciples as friends?
- What did Jesus instruct his disciples to expect after he left?