

John 15a

15:1-11

1 Chapter 14 ended with Jesus telling them it was time to go. Perhaps outside that upper room, or on the way to Gethsemane, Jesus passed a grapevine. Pausing and placing His hand upon that vine He began this passage. *I am the true vine.* We could say that there are many sources from which to derive our life's energy, but Jesus is the true source of life. Yet, the Greek mind may have taken this in a completely different way. The Greeks saw the physical world as a shadow of the real world that was unseen. Every tree was a shadow of a real and permanent tree in another realm. In that sense, Jesus was saying that He was the reality that the grapevine represented. Romans 1:20 His Father is the reality represented by the vine dresser. How much do we learn from the lessons of creation? Do you see spiritual lessons behind the physical world? If we walk in the Spirit we will learn from the world around us.

2 I've done a lot of pruning. We look for branches that will not bear when we prune. They have no fruit buds. The plan in pruning is for the branches that bear fruit to get the most nourishment from the roots, so we cut off non-bearing branches. Notice Jesus said that even those branches were in Him. The branches that do bear fruit we prune so that they will produce quality fruit. Pruning stimulates growth. What do you see this to represent? What is fruit? Lopped off branches? See if your conclusions fit with the passages that follow. Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:8; Matthew 21:19

3 The word 'clean' and 'pruned' are of the same origin. The word Jesus spoke had pruned them. How does the word prune our lives? 17:17; Ephesians 5:26

4 How did Jesus remain in the Father? He took opportunities to be alone with Him in prayer. He relied on His will, direction, and guidance. Everyday His life was an expression of the will of God. Colossians 2:6; 1John 2:6 They had a living vital relationship. It is the only way to bear fruit, the Galatians 5:22-23 kind or the fruit of good works that have their source in Jesus. Philippians 1:11
2 Corinthians 13:5 One way to examine our relationship is to look at the fruit.
Matthew 7:20

5 God has called us into a relationship with Himself that will result in something. Proverbs 11:30; Romans 7:4; Colossians 1:10 It was the case with Jesus also. 5:19 Do we really believe that without Him we can do nothing? Has it really gripped us so that when we want to accomplish anything of lasting value, we see to it that we are in vital connection with Him, that it is His will, and that it is the result of His life in us? Here Jesus begins a number of conditional statements.

They all begin with "if". If this then ... Watch the condition and its promise or curse.

6 Pruned grapevines aren't good for anything. The wood is too soft and not big enough to use for anything useful. If you leave them on the ground they harbor bugs and trip the gardener. The best thing you can do is to burn them. In Israel we saw a vinedresser burning his pile of pruned vines in early March. What are we good for outside of Christ? Our pride and sinful nature take over and enslave us damaging everything we would try bless. Matthew 3:10; 7:19; Revelation 20:15

7 In verse 5 it was Christ remaining in us. In this verse it is His Word. He is the Word. The condition is that we remain in Him and His word us. The promise is that we can ask whatever we wish. If we are in Him and His words in us, we will desire His will. 1John 3:21-22 We get to be a part of His work in the earth for which we will be eternally rewarded.

8 God grants us this privilege of participating in His work in the world. When you express His heart, you are fruitful, and He is glorified. This shows that you are disciples – learners of Jesus. This is the plan for every child of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 We can do everything in a God honoring when we live in Him and His Word lives in us. 1Peter 2:12; John 13:35 Everything done in the fruit of love.

9 What an incredible expression! God has loved the Son throughout eternity, always pleased with Him in everyway. Now, the Son loves us as the Father has always loved Him. Stay there. Don't fight your way out of the love of Jesus. His love will birth love in us. Ephesians 3:18; 1John 4:19 How do you stay in the love of Jesus?– See next verse.

10 To Jesus, the test of love is obedience. He expressed His love for the Father by obeying His instruction. We are encouraged to do the same. That is the safe, fruitful, blessed place to be. Does He love us when we don't obey? Of course, but He must show us discipline. Remain in His love by obeying Him.

11 He tells us to obey so that our relationship can stay healthy. There is where we experience His joy. It is the joy that is His own. It will be a complete and full joy. It is a fruit of the Spirit and a condition of the heart when our relationship with God is as it should be. You may have thought of something else as joy. This is real joy that is deeper than temporary circumstances.