



## ABIDE

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✉ CHRISTIAN LIVING, GODLY MIND, LIKE JESUS, REVIVAL 📺 SURVIVING THE QUARANTINE 🕒 1.05K



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**The Oldest vine in the world:** In Hampton Court, UK there is a grapevine that is reported to be the oldest living vine. It is over 250 years old. This grapevine has one root which is 12-foot round, and some of the branches are over 120 feet long. Despite its age the vine still produces 500 to 700 bunches (weighing 485 – 705 lb) of grapes each year. Although some of the branches are 120 feet from the main root, they still bear the sweet and delicious fruit because they are connected to the vine. Each branch is connected directly to the stem and draws nourishment from it.

"I am the vine, you are the branches" Jesus said. It is one of his most popular statements, yet one of His most misunderstood.

Today we will start our journey into what is known as the upper room discourse.

- In John 15, Jesus is still present with His disciples as they leave the rented room and head to Gethsemane.
- At the end of Chapter 14, Jesus said, "Rise, let us go from here" — as if he was calling them to arms.
- Now, on His way to the greatest battle of all time,
- He is giving his disciples (troops) some final words of encouragement, instruction and prayer.
- We will look at seven verses that are some of the best John captured, and we will them apply them to life.

*unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

Jesus starts by identifying roles, and most importantly clarifying His role. This is one of the 7 main statements Jesus makes in John about who He is ("I Am..."). He employs an image to make it clear: vine, vinedresser and branches. As if to say that WHO He is answer the WHAT He will do and HOW he will do it in our life. Let me give you some significant biblical background here.

## 1. Connected

Abiding in Jesus first of all means having a life-giving connection to him.

- A branch is connected to the vine, and a vine to the branch.
- This is what theologians frequently describe as "union with Christ."
- Notice that this connection, this union, is mutual.
- We abide in him and he abides in us (v. 4). If there is no connection, there is no life, no fruit.

So, when Jesus says he is the vine, He is highlighting His Uniqueness: Jesus is the *true* vine.

- There is no other vine, except Him.
- Jews, other gods, or our own work will not have any more access to God except by the one true vine — Jesus.

**1 Timothy 2:5** *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,*

**John 14:6** *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

**Galatians 3:27** *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Most intimate type of relationship.

- We put on clothes
- We put on shoes
- They become extensions of who we are
- They shape our image

## 2. Dependent

But abiding also implies dependence. This aspect of abiding, unlike connection, is not reciprocal.

- The branch is dependent on the vine, but the vine is not dependent on the branch.
- The branch derives its life and power from the vine. Without the vine, the branch is useless, lifeless, powerless.
- Sap flows from the vine to the branch, supplying it with water, minerals, and nutrients that make it grow.
- And believers receive the "sap" of Christ's grace through our life-giving connection to him.
- We are completely dependent upon Jesus for everything that counts as spiritual fruit (v. 4). Apart from him, we can do nothing (v. 5).

This is something that's fairly offensive to a lot of us.

A few things happen when we try to produce fruit apart from the vine.

1. Nothing happens
2. The fruit we bear doesn't look like Jesus fruit.
3. We are empty and exhausted

### 3. Remain.

Abiding also involves continuance. In fact, "abide" (Greek, *meno*) means to remain, or stay, or continue.

- For example, in John 1:38-39, two of the disciples who first encountered Jesus asked him "Where are you staying?"
- They wanted to know where Jesus made his residence.
- The word "staying" is the same word translated "abide" in John 15.
- To *abide* is to *reside*. To abide is to continue, to stay, to remain.

This shows us that another aspect of abiding in Jesus is remaining in Jesus.

This simply means that we go on trusting, that we keep on depending, that we never stop believing.

To abide in Jesus is to persevere in Jesus and his teaching.

This is what Jesus is talking about in:

**John 8:31-32** "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

In summary, to abide in the vine means to be *united* to Jesus (connection), to *rely* on Jesus (dependence), and to *remain* in Jesus (Remain).

### 4. Pruned

Jesus said, "I am the Vine" but The Father is the Vinedresser. (vv. 2, 6-7).

- I will give you what you need for life, but my father is sovereignly in control of all life.
- There may be hardship (heat, wind, fire, flooding) in this life,
- but He will care for you and watch you.
- And as He watches over you,

In all of this, God is "Cutting away" what needed to be cut to bear more fruit.

For Maximum fruit production; to get the most out of us for His sake. To increase their fruitfulness.

What is involved in pruning?

#### 1. Pain.

Pruning always hurts. Sometimes the pain of pruning is because of our sin and can be the result of someone else's sin.

Other times it is simply because we are bearing abundant fruit and God wants us to bear more.

David, a man after God's Heart was "Pruned" so that He could be more fruitful.

**Psalm 119:67**, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word."

Psalm

119:71, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes."

He comes in and adjusts what needs to be adjusted so that we can bear even more fruit.

## 2. His Presence.

God's hand is never closer than when he is pruning the vine.

Those who abide in Jesus choose to stay put for the pruning.

We rest and trust in the work of God and enjoy His presence as He works.

- At times, God takes us through hard things to increase our spiritual growth through test of faith or trials of character.
- We may not be able to control what happens to us, but we can control our response.

## 3. Self Control:

A: Gratitude over grumbling: Recognize the love of the Father

B: Humility over pride: Submit to the Lord's timing

C: Compassion over comparison: Use your pain to comfort others

D: Application over apathy: Press on to know God in the midst of discipline

E: Accountability over isolation: Involve the community in your growth process

F: Hope over despondency: Trust the unseen purpose of God

## Conclusion

Every member of the military begins his or her training with boot camp,

- The intense stint of sweat and suffering by which he or she is made fit for military service.
- If the experience is as horrific as it's often portrayed in popular media, why do so many put themselves through it—voluntarily?
- For one, boot camp is a limited period of time.

Once the training has run its course, a season of reprieve will come.

The strength and ability gained through the training is worth the experience.

Similarly, the Christian can endure discipline knowing the Lord has ordained seasons of trial which will end

**1 Pt. 5:5 "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."**

We can anticipate deeper, richer, and more lasting growth as we trust the Lord through a season of pruning.

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