

vine and branches

John 15:1-8

Write an outline of John 15:1-8, using the following sections as a guide. Look over the verses in parentheses, decide what they say, and then think of a title for the verses and write it in the blank.

I Am the Vine (John 15:1-8)

I. (15:1)

II. (15:2-5)

A. (15:2)

B. (15:3)

C. (15:4)

D. (15:5)

III. (15:6)

IV. (15:7)

V. (15:8)

- ▶ What are the functions of a vine and a branch? Why is this a good analogy for the relationship between Christ and a Christian?
- ▶ What do you think Christ is talking about when He uses the word *fruit*?
- ▶ Based on this passage, give at least two ways a Christian "branch" can remain united to Christ.
- ▶ What does the word *prune* mean?
- ▶ A gardener prunes a branch by trimming it so that more of the nourishment will go into the fruit and not into a large branch. How does God "prune" His people?
- ▶ Christ talks about unfruitful branches that are thrown out. These eventually dry up and are burned. Explain this part of the analogy.

John 15:1-8

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

»mon

Have you ever said goodbye to a friend? Did you keep in touch? Maintaining a special relationship requires commitment and communication. Thank God for being a heavenly Father who hears and answers prayer.

»tues

What happens to an apple that falls from its tree? Separated from its supply of water, it shrivels up. God supplies living water for us when we spend time with Him. Jesus is our living water, John 4:13-14. Ask Him to continue to nurture of your desire to serve Him.

»wed

Independence can be a good goal when planning the future. But how might a feeling of independence hinder your fellowship with Christ? Consider God's promises as you set future goals.

»thurs

Have you ever eaten a watermelon that was harvested too soon? It's usually a pale pink, with a thick rind and bland taste. God desires that we cling to Him—our Vine—as He prepares us for a handpicked task. Pray for a heart that's willing to wait.

»fri

God promises to be your constant companion. Think of some ways to strengthen your commitment to Him. Pick one and ask God for the strength to do it today.

»sat

Spending time with other believers is a dynamic part of spiritual growth. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you a sensitive heart to those in your church on Sunday. Call one of your friends at church just to see how he or she is doing.

Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

— John 15:4

the heart of the matter

When it comes to love, do you automatically think of red and white cards, candy in heart-shaped boxes, and adorable stuffed bears carrying signs saying "I Love You"?

Hearts and flowers and mushy sentiments aren't the only ways to show your genuine love and concern for friends and family. By staying sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance, you'll also be sensitive to people's needs. If there's anyone who knows what people need, it's God. You can ask Him to help you keep an eye out for things you can do for others.

here are some suggestions to get you started:

- ▶ You might want to show a tired mom or dad that you care by taking on the role of resident cook for supper at least once a week.
- ▶ You could pay a younger sibling some attention without being forced or bribed to do so. Why not treat him or her to lunch at a favorite fast-food restaurant—just the two of you?
- ▶ Another idea is to volunteer to be the family chauffeur—have destination, will travel.
- ▶ Think about really talking to God about someone's needs. These kind of conversations with the Lord go beyond the "bless-so-and-so's."
- ▶ If you want a real shocker, offer to do a chore that another family member usually hates to do.
- ▶ For you creative types, what about making a funny card or writing a tongue-twister poem or song that tells your family how much each person means to you?
- ▶ You could take the time to talk to your parents rather than talking at them. Let them know that their opinions matter to you.
- ▶ You might want to maintain an uncomplaining attitude around the house. Instead of complaining, give compliments.
- ▶ If you feel like splurging, take your mom or dad on a "date."
- ▶ Be willing to do favors for someone without thinking, "What's in it for me?"
- ▶ And, lastly, what better way to show your friends you love them than by pointing them to the One who loves them more?