

up to?

What is going on – what precedes, what comes after? (Q.1)

Verses 2, 4, 5, 8, 16 – Jesus the vine, and us the branches

Verses 4-7 – remaining or not remaining in Him

Verses 9-10 and 12-13 – remaining in His love... loving one another... loving the way Jesus loved... loving sacrificially the way Jesus loved us, for us to be able to love others. How many times is "love" mentioned?

7. What does it mean to us, to be Jesus' friends, v.15? What does that produce among different Christian believers?

Think about the enormity of being called to be a friend of the creator of the universe. And the values shared with all others who share that same friendship – what that produces.

8. What is the distinction of being chosen and appointed, v.16, by Jesus?

What is His purpose? Chosen and appointed for what? What encouragement does that give us?

9. What is the connection between remaining, v.4 etc, going, v.16, and producing much fruit, v.5/v.8, and the Father's granting of requests in Jesus' name?

In what sense do we remain? In what sense do we also need to go?

10. In practical terms, where do we start and how do we grow, to fulfill being chosen by Jesus and appointed by Him?

Individually – and together

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I AM the True Vine - John 15

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John 15:1-17 NLT – Bible study

1 "I am the true grapevine, and My Father is the gardener.

2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.

3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you.

4 Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in Me.

5 "Yes, I AM the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.

6 Anyone who does not remain in Me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned.

7 But if you remain in Me and My words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!

8 When you produce much fruit, you are My true disciples. This brings great glory to My Father.

9 "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in My love.

10 When you obey My commandments, you remain in My love, just as I obey My Father's commandments and remain in His love.

11 I have told you these things so that you will be filled with My joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

12 This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

13 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

14 You are My friends if you do what I command.

15 I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are My friends, since I have told you everything the Father told Me.

16 You didn't choose Me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using My name.

17 This is my command: Love each other.

Context and explanation

This teaching follows the Last Supper, washing the disciples' feet, predicting the betrayal and Simon Peter's denial of Him; then He explains how He is the Way to the Father, and explains who the Holy Spirit is and how He will become known to them to maintain the link. Then He urges them to stay in close fellowship with Him (even though He will be taken from them) because that closeness is the only way for them to be fruitful – and to be fruitful is the mark of every disciple.

The picture of the vine or vineyard is used as a symbol for Israel, God's covenant people, in the OT, often in a critical sense – read [Psalm 80:8–9](#), [Isaiah 5:1-7](#), [27:2-6](#). Israel's failure to produce fruit resulted in divine judgment, but by contrast, Jesus is the true vine, and His followers are to remain in him and produce much fruit for God.

In the illustration, some branches are not producing fruit, as they should, and are cut off. Others that are fruit-bearing, are Greek *airo* pruned, or lifted up – a term familiar in tree husbandry – so they will produce more. During the year, most pruning during the year trimmed fruitful branches to strengthen them. The weakest vines were trimmed most thoroughly. The fruitless branches would be subject to the most severe pruning and be cut off, thrown away and burned.

Relating this to people, it is a discussion about those who initially profess to follow Jesus and then do, or do not, remain in Him. Jesus spoke about "remaining in Him" much earlier, when He gave the much-misunderstood teaching about receiving Him in "flesh and blood" i.e. in entirety, in the Capernaum synagogue shortly after the feeding of the Five Thousand, read [John 6:55-60, 66](#). Without the Holy Spirit (not yet given at that time) this was a hard teaching to grasp, and most of those thousands did not remain! Following the Resurrection we are told 120 gathered in the Upper Room to pray.

Understanding what is meant by the term remain or abide, Greek *meno*, is the key to understanding this passage and Jesus as the true Vine, or source. To grow as disciples we have to be continuously connected to Christ. The true disciple is characterised by life change and being fruitful – bringing the presence of the kingdom of God and its values. Particularly mentioned here are love, and joy and a vibrant prayer life and unity in fellowship are implied.

In the OT only Abraham, and by implication, Moses, are called "friends of God". "You are My friends" promises every true believer a close, personal relationship with the eternal all powerful Creator of the universe, John 1:1-3 and 10.

Application: questions to guide discussion

1. Who is Jesus addressing, when, and why?
2. What is the difference between being pruned, purified and cut off
Verses 2-3
3. What does Jesus mean when He calls believers to "Remain..."?
4. What does Jesus mean by "I AM the true vine"?
What did this mean to the original hearers? How do we now understand Jesus, the vine, and us as the branches, v.5.
5. What does it mean to produce fruit, or lasting fruit, vv. 2, 4, 5, 8, 16?
Hint: joy and love are mentioned, vv.11 and 12-13. See also v.7, and vv.14-17
6. What are repeated emphases of this passage and what do they add