

I AM the True Vine (Part 2)

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[0:00] Amen. The last one we're going to look at.

And our focus, of course, has been this beautiful analogy that Jesus gave us. The analogy, or parable, if you will, of the vine and the branches.

Where Jesus said, I am the true vine and you are the branches. Beautiful analogy. In one of his sermons on John 15, Andrew Murray included the following poem that I think encapsulates all that Jesus says in this text.

Here's how the poem goes. 'Tis only a little branch, a thing so fragile and weak. But that little branch hath a message true.

To give, could it only speak. I'm only a little branch. I live by a life not mine. For the sap that flows through my tendrils small is the lifeblood of the vine.

[1:35] No power indeed have I the fruit of myself to bear. But since I'm part of the living vine, its fruitfulness I share.

Dost thou ask how I abide? How this life I can maintain? I am bound to the vine by life's strong band.

And I only need to remain. Where first my life was given. In the spot where I am set. Upborn and upheld as the days go by.

By the stem which bears me yet. I fear not the days to come. I dwell not upon the past. As moment by moment I draw a life which forevermore shall last.

I bask in the sun's bright beams. Which with sweetness fills my fruit. Yet I own not the clusters hanging there. For they all come from the root.

[2:39] A life which is not my own. But another's life in me. This, this is the message the branch would speak. A message to thee and me.

O struggle not to abide. Nor labor to bring forth fruit. But let Jesus unite thee to himself. As the vine branch to the root.

So simple. So deep. So strong. That union with him shall be. His life shall forever replace thine own. And his love shall flow through thee.

For his spirit's fruit is love. And love shall thy life become. And forevermore on his heart of love. Thy spirit shall have her home.

Beautiful poem. And I don't know if you caught all of it. But that's exactly what Jesus is teaching in John chapter 15.

[3:39] Let me read the text then. John chapter 15. Or chapter 15 rather. Starting with verse 1. Follow along as I read. Jesus said, I am the vine.

You are the branches. He who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit. For without me you can do nothing. If anything, anyone rather, does not abide in me.

He is cast out as a branch. And is withered. And they gather them and throw them into the fire. And they are burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you. You will ask what you desire.

And it shall be done for you. By this my father is glorified. That you bear much fruit. So you will be my disciples. As the father loved me, I also have loved you.

Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. Just as I have kept my father's commandments. And abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you.

[5:05] That my joy may remain in you. And that your joy may be full. Now we'll stop right there. Now this passage that I've read to you.

Is generally grouped together. In what Bible scholars call the upper room discourse. Generally considered to start in verse or chapter 13.

And run all the way through chapter 17. But in reality. What John records in chapters 15 and following. Or up through chapter 17.

This part does not take place in the upper room. And we know that because of the last sentence of chapter 14. If you look at it there. Where Jesus says arise.

Let us go from here. From where? From the upper room. And so from this point on. Jesus and his disciples are somewhere else. And we don't really know where they are.

[6:06] Exactly. The Bible doesn't tell us. And you know. We don't know where Jesus was. And his disciples were. When he was teaching. For example. This particular lesson.

The vine and the branches. But we do know this. They ultimately showed up at the Garden of Gethsemane. We know that from chapter 18. Now I think it's safe to conclude.

As I mentioned last week. Safe to conclude. That Jesus taught these truths. And the truths that follow here. Up through the end of chapter 17. He taught them to his disciples.

As they were walking along. As they were making their way. Meandering. Meandering. So to speak. Through the city streets of Jerusalem.

And around the temple. And ultimately to the Garden of Gethsemane. I think he taught them these truths. As they went. On their way. Now the traditional site. Of the upper room.

[7:02] Is on the western side. Of the city of Jerusalem. On the opposite side. Of where they are ultimately going to end up. On the side. Side of Mount Zion. And so.

We might speculate. That after they left. The upper room. They would have walked. Through the city. And down. Kind of a valley. The Tyropoian Valley.

That separates. The temple mount. Proper. From the rest. Of the city. And as they came up. The slope of that valley. They would have. Then walked around.

The walls. Of the temple. Proper. And would have walked. Right by the. The main gates. To the temple. And I mentioned. Or described. Those gates. Last Sunday. And then.

Leaving the city. They would have walked. Down. The Kidron Valley. Which would have. Literally been. Blanketed. With vineyards. And ultimately.

[7:56] Cross over. The brook. Kidron. And then. Walk up. The slopes. Of the Mount of Olives.

And ultimately. They would have. Arrived. At the Garden of Gethsemane. There. On the Garden of Gethsemane.

Or. Excuse me. The Mount of Olives. All right. So. Just thinking about that. I think we could imagine. That. Jesus. Would have had the group. Pause.

At a number of places. Along the way. I think it's safe to imagine that. As he was teaching them.

Along the way. And. He did that. In order to take full advantage. Of his surroundings.

And. We know Jesus. Did that. In his teaching. In his preaching. He would always use his surroundings. To use as living illustrations. For his preaching. And.

So. I think we can imagine. He did that. And as he was doing that. He was teaching them. Some amazing truths. Because. You see. Very shortly. Before the day is out.

[8:52] Jesus is going to be arrested. There in the garden. Of Gethsemane. Judas is going to lead. The Roman. Guards there.

To arrest him. Very shortly. Then Jesus is going to be. Tried. And he's going to be convicted. On. The grounds. Or charges. Of blasphemy.

And before. The next day is over. By the middle. Of the next day. Jesus is going to be dead. He's going to be.

Crucified. Upon the cross. And so. What was the amazing truth. That he taught his disciples. Here. In the first part. Of chapter 15.

It's important to get that. Not just to understand. The great I am. Statement itself. But to understand it. As we've been doing. With all of these statements. To understand it. In its context.

[9:47] What Jesus taught. Around. This statement. What was it? Well. With. The analogy. Of the vine. And the branches. Jesus taught them.

Vividly. That just as. A branch. Is utterly. Dependent upon the. The vine. For everything. Specifically.

Life. Nourishment. Growth. Fruit. Fruit. Of any kind. As that is the case. With the branch. Of the vine. The true believer.

The true. True disciple. Follower of Christ. Depends. Completely. Upon. Jesus. For everything. Life. Spiritual life.

Nourishment. Growth. And. Fruit. And so. The analogy. Is pretty clear. To see. See how it is applied. To our lives. And the key. To it all.

[10 : 45] Is. To learn. A lesson. From the branch. That's the key. To the whole thing. Learn a lesson. From the branch. What can we learn. From the branch. What does the branch. Teach us.

Well. Simply this. The branch. Has boiled it. All down. To one. Thing. Just one thing. To be fruitful. I just. Stay put. Right here. That's the lesson. From the branch. He's boiled it. All down. To that. I just.

Simply. Abide. In the vine. You say. It can't be that simple. It is. Just that simple. Now. The objective. Then. Of my sermon.

Last Sunday. And this Sunday. Is for all of us. To learn. What the branch. Has learned. To kind of. Flesh that out. To see. How that applies. How that works out.

[11 : 38] In our lives. And to do that. We're. We're just kind of. Taking a walk. Through the vineyard. All right. That's what we've been doing. And. The first thing. We did. Was. Identify the persons.

Of. The vineyard. That's where we began. There are three. Identified here. The vine plant. Of course. Which is Jesus. Root.

Stem. And branch. The whole thing. It's Jesus. The vine dresser. Of course. Is God. The father. And the vine. On branches. Well. In the vineyard. There are two types.

Of branches. Identified here. In Jesus parable. There are fruit bearing branches. And non fruit bearing branches. That is. There are true branches. Of.

That abide in the vine. And there are false branches. That do not abide in the vine. And they represent. For us. Two types. Two types. Of disciples. Of disciples. Of Christ. That is true disciples.

[12 : 35] And false. Disciples. Those who are actual. Possessors. Of salvation. And those who are. Simply. Professors.

Of salvation. In Christ. The next thing we did. Was. Clarify. The processes. Of the vineyard. That would be the next. Logical step. And in Jesus analogy.

There are two. Processes. Here. That is. The vine dresser. Which is God the father. Has the right. To expect fruit. From his branches.

He has every right. To expect that. And to find that. And. And so. He purges. All. Purges out. Takes away. All fruitless branches.

And throws them. Into the fire. To be burned. And he prunes. All fruitful. Branches. That is. Cutting away. Anything. In the branch.

[13 : 30] That would restrict. The potential. For ever. Greater. Amounts of fruit. That's what the vine dresser. Does. That's the process. Of.

The vineyard. And of course. The analogy. Illustrates. What the heavenly vine dresser. God the father. Does. In his vineyard. And it's very simple. To make that connection. So. Now we're ready. To move on. In our little examination. Our little tour. Of the vineyard. And third. To verify. The produce. Of the vineyard. To verify.

The produce. Of the vineyard. The fruit. The fruit. Now. You. Have certainly noticed. That. Production.

Of fruit. Is the crucial. Factor. In the vine dressers. Decision. Either. To purge. Non-fruit. Bearing. Branches.

[14 : 24] And to prune. Fruit bearing. Branches. It's the fruit. That matters. To the vine dresser. Doesn't it? That's the all important thing. And so. Since fruit.

Is what the vine dresser. Expects to find. In his branches. Taking drastic steps. When he does not find it. And since you and I. Assembled here today. Represent the branches.

Hopefully. Most. If not all. True branches. But maybe some. Here this morning. False branches.

Since that is the case. Then. We had better know. What the fruit is.

Don't you think? We'd better find out. What that is. And more important. Than that. We need to verify. Whether or not. It is there. In our lives.

Right? You can say. Yes. That's right. All right. Thank you. Very obedient. Congregation. All right. So then. Since we're just thinking.

[15 : 21] Logically here. What is the fruit. God expects to find. And must find. What must he find? What does he expect to find?

And I covered this. Briefly last Sunday. But I want to spend. A little more time. On that this morning. In the first place. And I want to reiterate this. The fruit. Here. Is not. Souls. One to Christ. It's not. Souls. One to Christ. And you say. How can you say that pastor? That just doesn't sound right. Well.

Number one. There's nothing in the text. To suggest that. And that's a pretty good place. To go first. There's no. Application. Made. That way.

With. This. Parable. But number two. Let's not forget. That the salvation. Of souls. Is the fruit. Of the Lord.

[16 : 15] His fruit. We might even put it this way. It's the fruit. Of the gospel. That's the fruit. The gospel. The proclamation. Of the gospel. Produces.

Souls. Are saved. By grace. Through. Faith. The gospel. Is the power. Of God. To salvation. For everyone.

Who believes. And third. In the context. Of witnesses. For Christ. And that's what we're talking. About here. It's obedience.

To the great commission. That is the fruit. Let me say that again. I'm not sure you got it. It's obedience. To proclaim.

The gospel. To every creature. In the world. That's the fruit. Not the souls. One to Christ. That's his fruit. All right. It's the good work.

[17 : 11] It's the good work. That is the fruit. As we're going to see. Just consider Noah. For an example. I think that would be a good. Probably a prime. Example from scripture. Noah. The Bible says.

Was a preacher. Of righteousness. For 120 years. He preached for 120 years. How many souls. Were saved in 120 years? Not any. Not any.

Is that Noah's fault? No. Noah was faithful. He was bearing the fruit. Of the good work. He was a preacher. Of righteousness.

Now he did get his family. In the ark. And so we ought not. To be too hard on Noah. He got all his family. In the ark. But I would assume. From the text. That they were already.

Say. They're already. Believers. But he preached. For 120 years. Before the flood. Was sent. And not one soul. Was saved. Not much fruit.

[18 : 06] Noah. Well. Let's just make. Another. Comparison. How about. William Carey. Anybody. Anybody. Here know.

Who William Carey. Was. Lived in the late. 1700s. Early 1800s. Is the. Considered. By most. The father. Of modern missions. William Carey.

Wrote his famous. Treatise. On missions. Entitled. And get this title. Inquiry. Into the obligations. Of Christians. To use means. For the conversion. Of the heathen. That's quite a title. It sounds like. A title. Of my dissertation. Founder. Of the. Baptist. Missionary. Society. Became. The first. Of their. Missionaries.

When he. And his family. They sailed. For India. And during. His. Time. His life. Because he spent. His life. There. During his life. In India. He made. Six. Translations. Of the entire.

[19 : 01] Bible. And translated. The New Testament. And other portions. Of scripture. Into 30. Additional languages. And here's. William Carey. He had preached. His famous sermon.

Expect great things. From God. Attempt great things. For God. And yet. In seven years. It was seven years. Before he saw. His first.

Soul. Saved. In ten years. Only 25. Were saved. Not a whole lot of fruit. But yes.

Fruit. His faithfulness. Was his fruit. His obedience. To the great commission. That was his fruit. It's not. Souls. Saved. So. If not. Souls. One. To Christ. The Bible. Speaks. Of the fruit. Of the believer. Number of places. In scripture. For example.

[19 : 56] And you don't need. To turn to these. In interest of time. I'll just read them. In Matthew. Chapter 3. Verse 8. The Bible says. Therefore. Bear fruits. Worthy. Of repentance. There's some fruit.

Talked about there. Fruit of repentance. What proves. Your. Your repentance. Your turning from sin. And turning to Christ. Bear fruits.

Of that repentance. The Bible says. In Philippians. Chapter 1. And verse 10. And you may approve. That you may approve. The things that are excellent.

That you may be sincere. Without offense. Till the day of Christ. Being filled. With the fruits. Of righteousness. Which are by. Christ Jesus. Or Jesus Christ. And so they're. The fruits of righteousness. Righteousness is a fruit. Right living. Being right. Righteousness. Is a fruit. Colossians. Chapter 1. And verse 10.

[20 : 51] You can just jot these down. And look at them. In your own leisure. But the Bible says. That you may walk. Worthy of the Lord. Fully pleasing him. Being fruitful. In every good work.

So good works. Is a fruit. It's a fruit. Not the results. Of the good works. That's God's fruit. Fruit. He's the one that bears that fruit.

But the good works. Is fruit. Obviously. From the Bible. Hebrews chapter. 13. And verse 15. The Bible says. Therefore by him.

Let us continually. Offer up. Offer the sacrifice. Of praise. To God. That is. The fruit of our lips. Giving thanks. To his name. And so we could say.

We could lump several things in there. Worship. Worship is. The fruit. True worship. Thanksgiving. Praise. Under the Lord. Is the fruit. But perhaps.

[21 : 45] The classic passage. Of course. And I mentioned this last Sunday. The classic passage. That identifies. The fruit of the believer. is Galatians chapter 5. And verse 22. And 23. But the fruit of the spirit.

That is the fruit produced by the spirit. Is what? Love. Joy. Peace. Long suffering. Kindness. Goodness. Faithfulness. Gentleness. Self-control. Against such. There is no law.

And so. Very clearly. When you put all those together. And especially. The Galatians passage. The fruit. That God the Father. expects to find. Is.

The very life. Nature. Character. Of Christ. Manifest. In your life. That's the fruit. And so. Being fruitful. Is. Manifesting. Christ. In our lives. It's. Christ. Likeness. In. Your life. Now. As you consider.

[22 : 41] Your life. Right now. I mean. Just. Think. For a moment. What you love. And how you love. The way you live.

Each day. The way. You think. Each day. The way. You act.

Each day. Just. Examine. Your own life. Do you honestly. See. The nature. And character. Of Christ.

Manifest. In your life. Every day. The grace. Of repentance. Thankfulness. Righteousness. Personal holiness. Good work. Fruit of the spirit. What are they? Love. Joy. Peace. Longsuffering.

[23 : 39] Kindness. Goodness. Faithfulness. Gentleness. Self-control. Do you see those things? Now. Let me. Say something. Very serious. To some of you. Possibly. Here today.

If you. Cannot. Verify. That's what we're doing here. Verifying the produce. Of the vineyard. If you cannot. Verify. This. These kinds of. Fruits. In your life.

Consistently. Appearing. In your life. And yet. You're a professing believer. And yet. At the same time. Uncommitted. To biblical. Christianity. Except on Sundays.

Unconcerned. About living. In faithfulness. To Christ. Unaware. Of any real. Fruit. Spiritual fruit. That you could just. Really identify. Unconscious. Of any real. Hunger. And thirst. That you have. For Christ. And for his word. Then.

[24 : 39] You should. Have. Every. Reason. To question. The validity. Of your salvation. Because. Listen. The truth is. The spirit.

Never fails. To produce fruit. In a true branch. Never fails. To produce. True fruit. And branches. That do not. Bear fruit. Fruit. Jesus.

Says. Very clearly. Will ultimately. Be taken away. And burned. In the fire. That's judging. Folks. That's hell. But now.

Let me. Be quick. To say. That. These are not. Fruits. You can simply. Decide. To produce. Having said.

All of that. As we examine. Our own lives. And I hope you examine. If you don't see. The fruit there. Then. Then. You need to repent. Be saved. And yet.

[25 : 34] At the same time. The fruits. That have been described. In scripture. Those fruits. You can't just simply. Decide. That you're just going. To start. Producing them. That is yourself.

Hosea 14. 8 says. From me. Comes your fruit. And Jesus said. In verse 4. Here in our text. That the branch. Cannot.

Cannot. Bear fruit. Of itself. I don't know. How you could. Anyone could. Misunderstand that. The fruit. Or the branch. Cannot. Bear fruit.

Of itself. All right. So. Then. How do I bear. The fruit God expects. To find. In my life. How do I bear that? That's a pretty important question. Well.

It's simple. Satisfy. The principle. Of the vineyard. That's number four. Satisfy. The principle. Of.

[26 : 29] The vineyard. Look. At. Verses. Four. And five. Again. And look at them. Very closely. Abide.

In me. You see that there. This is Jesus speaking. These are red letters. Jesus is talking to us here. Abide in me. He says. And I. In you. Do you see that? It's very important. The rest of what he says. In those verses. He. Either. Repeats. What he has said. In those. In that phrase. That first sentence. Or he expands upon it. Puts it all together. Abide in me. And I.

In you. As the branch. Cannot. Bear fruit. Of itself. Unless it abides. In the vine. Neither can you. Unless you abide. In me. I am the vine.

[27 : 25] You are the branches. Here it is again. He who abides. In me. And I. In him. Put those two together. Abide in me. And I.

In him. Bears much fruit. For without me. You can do nothing. Nothing. This key. Here. We must satisfy.

The principle. Of the vineyard. And listen. Here's the point. You cannot. Bear. The fruit. God expects. To find. In your life. By mere determination. Get that down.

You say. I don't understand that. Well. You're going to. Here in a minute. Hope. You cannot bear this fruit. By mere determination. That is. You cannot. Discipline.

Fruit bearing. Into your life. Like saying. Okay. Lord. I'm going to start. Bearing fruit. Today. This is going to be. Day one. I'm going to start.

[28 : 25] Bearing fruit. From. I mean. From now on. It's WWJD. What would Jesus do? In case you'd forgotten. About that one. And so.

I'm going to. Smile more. At angry people. I'm just going to do that. I'm going to be. More gracious. More patient. With ornery people. Meet those people.

Every day. Don't you? And so. I'm just going to do. What Jesus would do. I'm going to. Bear the fruit. The righteousness. Of Christ. In my life. And I'm going to be. Patient with these people. And I'm going to.

Be gentle. With people. Who annoy me. I'm just. Starting today. I'm going to. Bear fruit. I'm going to. Discipline that. Into my life.

And a lot of other things. That we could add. You know. One of the big problems. In. The church. Today. We're all guilty of it. It's.

[29 : 22] Forced. Forced. Fruit. Did you think. That. That. Is what you needed to learn. From this analogy.

I guarantee you. It is. Problem. Today. Is forced. Forced. See. We need to understand. What Jesus. Is teaching us. That's. That's important.

Unless. You are. Abiding. In him. You cannot. Bear. Bear. Fruit. Of yourself. You cannot.

Just sit down. And say. Now. This is what I'm going to do. For Jesus. Today. And tomorrow. And next month. And this year. I'm just going to do this for him. Let's.

Look. Here. At what Jesus said. About. Fruit. Bearing. It begins. And this is very important. It begins with.

[30 : 21] In a sense. A. Past. Reality. Now. I would say. Past. And ongoing. Reality. That is.

It begins with salvation. True salvation. Begins there. In fact. Verse 3. Tells us. That. I believe.

Verse 3. You are already clean. He said. He's speaking to the 11. Disciples. Judas is not there. You're already clean.

Because. Of what? Because of the word. Which I have spoken. To you. I think what he's saying. There's twofold. In the first place. He's talking about.

A reality. In their lives. They're born again. They're true. Followers of Christ. They've been saved. By his grace. Through faith. They're already clean.

[31 : 19] That's clear. By the way. The word clean. There in the text. Is the. The. The noun form. Of the word. Purged.

Which. Some translations. Render. Cleansed. It's the same word. Or pruned. Rather. I'm sorry. Not purged. But pruned. It.

It means. To cleanse. And so. Jesus. Turns. To his eleven. And says. You're the branches. You're already clean. That means. There's. A reality. In your life. You're already. Saved. But. He's also saying. That the pruning. Is not over. Because. Just like. In a vineyard. The pruning. Comes every year. The pruning. Comes every year. In our lives too. But it begins. At a certain point.

It begins. With. The word of God. Faith. Cometh by hearing. And hearing. By the word of God. It begins. By receiving. The truth. Of the gospel.

[32 : 13] And trusting. In Jesus Christ. As your Lord. And Savior. It begins. With the born again. Experience. And that's accomplished. By the word of God. And by the way. The pruning. Also.

Subsequent prunings. Are also accomplished. By the word of God. So. I would say to you. Very clearly. First of all. If you want to understand. What it means. To abide in Christ.

And you want to know. How to produce the fruit. That God expects to find. And if he doesn't find it. He's going to purge you. If you want to find that out. Then understand. That it begins.

With a past. Ongoing. Reality. Of salvation. Number two. Because we have to move from there. It continues.

With. A. Present. Ongoing. Responsibility. Yeah. There is a responsibility. And when it comes to.

[33 : 12] Abiding. In Christ. Our responsibility. Is. Twofold. It is. First.

Active. And it is. Second. Passive. That is. First of all. It's.

Doing. And. Secondly. It's. Letting. Doing. And letting. And that's what we understand here. From the first sentence in the text. We must.

Abide. Actively. First of all. Jesus said. Abide. In me. By the way.

That's a command. Abide. He used. He used an imperative verb. It's a command. That is. It's a. An active thing. That is.

[34 : 07] He's given a command. He expects to be obeyed. And so you. Must do something to obey. All right. That's very clear. It's an active thing. It requires an act of the will.

It's something you do. What do you do? Well. The word. Abide. Menno. In the Greek. Means. To remain.

Some of you might have it. Translated that way. Means. To remain. Or. Let's put it in. Maybe a little more. Modern. Vernacular. Stay. Put.

Somewhere. And where. Where are we commanded. To stay put. In Jesus. In Jesus. We're to stay put there. In him. What.

What. Could that possibly mean. Well. I think it's clear. That it means. That we are to. Maintain a healthy. Living. Active. Connection. With Jesus.

[35 : 01] That goes way beyond. Just something we may do. On Sundays. And maybe Wednesdays. If it's your habit. To come on Wednesday. To maintain a healthy.

Living. Active. Connection. With Jesus. That is. We must. Decide. To do. Certain. Things. That. Will expose. Us.

To Christ. Keep us. Exposed. To him. Exposed. To his life. Exposed. To his teaching. We must. Keep. In contact.

With him. Is the point. This active side. Expose ourselves. To his word. We are to.

Relate. To him. In prayer. We are to. Relate. To one another. In the body. Of Christ. And everything. Else. Now listen. Everything.

[35 : 54] Else. Beyond that. Is the fruit. That's the fruit. We don't produce. The fruit. All we do. Is abide. All we do.

Is stay put. With him. With Jesus. Stay put. With him. And all that that means. To maintain. A healthy. Living. Active. Connection. With Jesus Christ.

And everything. Else. Is the fruit. The fruit. That naturally. Comes. From abiding. In him. See. It's really versatile.

Isn't it? But this is only. Part of what it means. To abide in Christ. And if this.

This is the only part. You do. Then. Then it's not going to work. There's a second part. We must also. Abide.

[36 : 48] Passively. We must abide. Actively. That's a doing thing. Abide in Christ. But we must also.

Abide. Passively. That's. A letting. Thing. A letting. Jesus said. Abide in me.

That's. That's active. And I. In. You. That's. Passive. I. In.

You. See. You and I. Can choose. To do things. For Jesus. But we do not have the power to do them. We don't have the power to do them.

The. Empowerment. The. Enablement. Enablement. Comes from Jesus. Abiding in you.

[37:48] Me. You. Abiding in us. That is. Acknowledging him. This is. This is. More. Conceptualized.

By maybe the word. Acknowledge him. That's. That's. The passive thing. I acknowledge him. In all I do. I. Trust him.

Yield. To him. Rely. Upon him. Rather than self. Rely.

Upon. His strength. Rather than our strength. That's a. Problem. Most of us have. In this abiding thing. Is. We're too strong for it.

Well. We think we are. And. Christ's strength. Cannot. Be manifest. Except.

[38:47] In our weakness. See. This is. To. Abide. Passively. And so. To bear fruit. The fruit. God expects.

To find. We must abide. In Christ. Actively. And passively. A doing. And a letting. And I want you to notice. Again. How he weaves. These things. Together. Here. I don't want to be redundant.

But look at verses. Four and five. Again. Abide in me. And I in you. Those. Two come right together. There. It's not one. Or the other. It's both. Because.

He says. As the branch. Cannot bear fruit of itself. Unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you.

Unless you abide in me. I am the vine. You are the branches. He abides in me. And I in him. Bears much fruit.

For without me. You can do nothing. What did he say? Without me. You can do nothing. Now. I looked it up. In other.

[39:41] Dominant. Or popular. Or popular. Translations. Because. Kind of awkward. English. You can do nothing. That's not the way. We would normally put it. We might put it this way.

You cannot do anything. That's not what he says. You know. Every. Popular translation. That is. Accurate.

Translations. That we have available. To us today. That we use today. Like. New American Standard. The. Even the. Or the. New King James. The King James. The ESV. Even the NIV. Has it. Can. Do. Nothing. And it does not say. You cannot do anything. Because. The fact is. You can do all kinds of things.

Without Jesus. Did you know that? We do it every day. You can do all kinds of things.

[40:38] In fact. Everything. That is done. In the. Church. From. Greeting people at the door.

Singing in the choir. Leading worship. Working in the nursery. Teaching a Sunday school class. Serving as a deacon.

Leading as an elder. Preaching as a preacher. All those things. Can be done without Jesus. Problem is.

They amount to nothing. Nothing. We know what nothing is. Don't we? Zero. Zip.

Nada. Thanks. I got you. Zilch. Did you think of that one? How about this one? Zero with the edges trimmed off.

[41:42] Nothing. Not anything. And so here is the point. That we need to draw from this. Activity. Without passivity. Equals dead works.

Dead works. Works that. In God's eyes. And in light of eternity. Amount to nothing. Of any value. Though they may be praised here.

In this life. May be thought of highly here. In this life. With God. They're nothing. They're nothing. No matter how much they.

May seem to accomplish. Activity. Activity. Without passivity. Equals. Dead. Works. Reminded of that story.

Back in. Second Kings. Chapter six. That Elisha. And his school of the prophets. And the Bible. Tells us. Very briefly. That the school.

[42:40] Was. Having some. Growth problems. And. That is. They were kind of. Bursting at the seams. They didn't have enough. Places for. The students to live. And so. Elisha took. His students down.

To the river Jordan. And they were going to. Cut down trees. And build some. Dormitories. I guess. In a sense. And so. They're out there. Cutting down those trees. And one of the students.

Is there. And he's swinging that axe. And the axe head. Flies off. And falls into the river. Jordan. Sinks. And he loses it. And he cries out to Elisha. He said.

I've lost. The axe head. And it was borrowed. You say. Well what's the point of that story. Well I think a great application. For that is.

How we can. Lose. The cutting edge. Of God's power. In our lives. When we begin. To work.

[43:35] And serve. In our own strength. Now it's not included. In the story there. But I can imagine. Christians today. Some Christians today.

Including this Christian. At certain times in my life. Out there. I've lost the axe head. But I'm still swinging the handle. Still swinging that handle. And you know.

I'm just sweating all over. And bark is flying everywhere. And people are looking around. And saying. Man. What a servant of the Lord. Just look how hard he works.

The problem is. I can't cut any trees down. And you and I. Cannot bear fruit. If.

It's activity. Without passivity. If it's just simply. Doing without letting. You. Relying. By the same token.

[44:33] Passivity. Without activity. Equals disobedience. You can't go that side. And just say. Let go and let God. Kind of thing. Because God has called us.

To do some things. And if we don't. Do them. If we're just simply. Going to let go. Let God do it. And just sit back. Let God do it. Then we're disobedient. And so.

It must be. Both. You see. And that's why. Both are. Included there. Abide in Christ. That's the command. It's a command to obey. It's a doing thing. And I.

In you. That's a letting thing. A yielding. An acknowledging. Christ's. Rights. To be our strength. To be.

In control. And so. We're learning. How to bear the fruit. God expects to find. And the way to do that. Is to satisfy. The principle. Of the vineyard. Which is to abide. In Christ. And it begins.

[45:29] With a past. Ongoing reality. It begins. With salvation. Genuine salvation. You can't go anywhere. Until that has happened. And then. It continues. With a present. Ongoing responsibility.

To do. And to let. And then finally. Abiding in Christ. Results in. I don't. Use the word.

Future. But it also. Is ongoing. Possibility. An ongoing. Possibility. Jesus mentions. Four. Distinct. Possibilities. That result. From abiding. In him. That is. Maybe better. Put this way. Abiding in Christ. Makes these things. Possible. We don't have time.

To flesh them out. But here they are. All four of them. A higher. Prayer life. A wider. Testimony. Of Christ. A deeper.

[46:24] Love. The love. Of Christ. Love. For Christ. Love. For one another. Deeper love. And forth. A fuller.

Joy. All four of those. Are right here. In this text. And I'll just. Identify them. And. We'll be finished. Verse seven.

If you abide in me. And my words abide in you. You will ask. What you desire. And it shall be done. For you. That's an incredible promise.

So you can just ask. For whatever you want. Right. Well not. Anything you want. But if you abide in Christ.

And his word abides in you. You will always ask. For the right thing. And it will always be. In keeping with God's will. And those are the prayers. That are answered. Higher.

[47:25] Prayer life. Higher in prayer. Wider in testimony. By this. By this. The father is glorified. That you bear much fruit.

So you will be. My disciples. Or really more literally. Proved to be. My disciples. It will be observed. By all around you. That you are. A true disciple. Of Christ. A wider. A wider. Testimony. A deeper. Love. As the father loved me. I also. Have loved you. Abide in my love. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments.

You will abide in my love. It's always interesting. How. In. Many places in scripture. How love and commandments. Are. Always tied together. If you.

[48:28] Keep my commandments. You will abide in my love. Just as I have kept my father's. Commandments. And abide in his love. A. Deeper. Love.

Higher. In. Prayer. Your prayer life. Ask. You will ask. And it will be done. I will give it to you. A. Wider. Testimony. Of Christ. You abide in him. And. And it. Will be. Prove. You're one of my disciples.

A. Deeper. Love. And a fuller. Joy. Verse 11. These things. I have spoken to you. That my joy. May remain. In. You. And that. Your joy. May be. Full. Full. That your joy.
[49:30] May be full. These are the things. Made possible. Now. And ongoing. Into the future. For those who abide in him.

In closing. This passage. With all of its rich truth. Rich truth.

That. Is. For. The true branches. Is. Clearly. The. The dominant. Focus. Is. What.

God's. True disciples. Need to learn. About abiding in him. How true disciples. Need to boil it all down. To one. That. That one thing. Abide in him.

Stay put in him. And everything else. Will be fruit. And yet. I would say. That this passage. Is also a warning.

[50:32] A warning. To some of you. Possibly here this morning. A gracious. Act of mercy. I would say.

Where God. Is calling. False. Disciples. To repent. To repent. Perhaps. Your heart.

Confirms that. To you. I can't get into your heart. Perhaps. Right now. Your heart.

Is confirming. That reality. Then you need to repent. Just repent. Of your sin. And. Come to faith. In Jesus Christ.

Thank you.