

John 15:1-10
Abiding and Flourishing in God's Vineyard
(Pt. 1)

INTRO: Genuine believers will joyfully bear much spiritual fruit if they remember two things:

1) We must _____ **the source of all fruitfulness.**

(John 15:1a, 4-5, 7)

2) We must welcome the Master Gardener's _____.

(John 15:1b-2)

John 15:1f Sermon Outline

I) *The Extended (Garden/Vineyard)* _____.

A) **God the Son is the** _____.

(John 15:1a; 8:58-58; 1:1-14)

- Israel as the Vine/Vineyard

(Isaiah 5:1-7; 27:2-6; Ps. 80:8-16; Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10)

Practical Implications of this Biblical Metaphor (*I am the true vine.* John 15:1a, 4-10)

I) *The Extended Garden/Vineyard Metaphor* (continued)

B) **God the Father is the** _____.

(John 15:1b-2; 6)

Practical Implications of the Biblical Metaphor (*My Father is the vinedresser*)

Please take 15 minutes this week to review the application-orientated helps.

For Further Reflection/Application: *Lord help us to be effectually doers of the Word!*

How do believers grow and flourish in the Lord in God's Vineyard?

We're re saved by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9). Amen! We are not saved by our own merit; nor are we kept safe by Christ because of our ongoing obedience as believers. Amen! Hallelujah! (Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 8:1) With that said, believers are saved unto ("for") "good works" (Eph. 2:10) which "God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." In view of this Divine purpose and the clear teaching of Christ in John 15, pray for me and your church family to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Christ in all respects, bearing FRUIT in every good work;" (per Col. 1:9-12). Pray for us to remain totally dependent on Christ (may He be our joy, our peace, our strength, and our song etc). Note the lyrics of the modern hymn, "In Christ Alone." What other songs go well with today's message?

Genuine believers will bear much fruit if they remember two things. What two things were highlighted during today's introductory sermon? What role does God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit play in our spiritual life and in our ongoing sanctification?

For believing disciples, what is the relationship between God's favor/blessings/growth/ (us flourishing spiritually) and Jesus Christ? What are some of the practical implications of the biblical metaphor - Jesus is "the True Vine" and we are the (fruit bearing) "branches"?

What is the relationship between "faith in Christ" and justification (Rom. 3-5)? What is the connection between "abiding in Christ" and our progressive sanctification? (see Gal. 2:20; John 15:2b, 4-5, 20:31; 2 Cor. 5:7; Phil. 4:13) The fruit of faith/love is obedience (John 14:15/15:10).

Prayerlessness is often an indicator that we are trying to bear fruit without relying on Christ (and the Holy Spirit). Why is it a huge mistake to try and do kingdom work in human strength/wisdom (alone)? Colossians 1:29 shows us what it looks like to be biblically balanced.

"Apart from Him we can do nothing!" and "glory to God alone!" are twin truths.

Talk about some of the practical implications of God the Father serving as the Master Gardener (the Vinedresser/Vine-grower)). Why should this truth bring believers joy (John 15:11; 1b-3)

What is the relationship between the Refiner's fire, Fatherly discipline, Providential trials/tribulations and FRUIT/Good Deeds/spiritual growth/Christian flourishing? (Read John 15:1b-3; Hebrews 12:6-11; James 1:2-4; Romans 5:1-5). *When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design/Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.*

Review from John 14 sermons: "Trust Me and Find Comfort in this:" 4) *Another* (Divine) HELPER is on His Way! (*John 14:16-27*; Romans 8:5-17) 5) "I will give you My peace." (*John 14:27*) Ask the Helper to help you make the glory of God and the joy of Christ the supreme delight of your life! (John 14:28-31)

Israel's past, present, and future are addressed in Romans 9-11. How is King Jesus directly related to Israel's future salvation/restoration/the coming Kingdom? (Hosea 3:5; Matthew 23:38-39; Revelation 19-20)

“The expression union with Christ refers the believer’s solidarity or association with Christ, by the Holy Spirit and through faith, by virtue of which believers partake of his saving benefits...Note John 14:20. For those “in Christ” this union or solidarity is all-encompassing; it extends from eternity to eternity. They are united to Christ not only in their present possession of salvation but also in its past, once-for-all accomplishment (e.g., Rom. 6:3–7; 8:1; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5–6; Col. 3:1–4), in their election “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4, 9), and in their still future glorification (Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 15:22).). Accordingly, we may categorize, being “in Christ” is either predestinarian, or past/redemptive-historical—the union involved in the once-for-all accomplishment of salvation—or present, looking towards Christ’s return—union in the actual possession or application of salvation (*ordo salutis*). Another way of distinguishing these different aspects of union is “the eternal, the incarnational and the existential” (S. Ferguson)... Present union with Christ, then, may be considered as marked by four interrelated aspects: 1) mystical, 2) Spiritual, 3) vital, and 4) indissoluble. Both mystical—a standard, classical designation—and spiritual are subject to misunderstanding. In view is not a mysticism of ecstatic experience at odds with or indifferent to reasoned understanding. Rather, union with Christ is a mystery in the NT sense of what has been hidden with God in his eternal purposes but now, finally, has been revealed in Christ, particularly in his death and resurrection (Rom. 16:25–26; Col. 1:26–27; 2:2). Certainly, the full dimensions of this revealed mystery are beyond the believer’s comprehension. Involved here as much as in anything pertaining to salvation is the hallmark of all true theological understanding: the knowledge of Christ’s love “that surpasses knowledge,” the knowledge of what in its depths is beyond all human knowing (Eph. 3:18–19; cf. 1 Cor. 2:9)... Similarity is not identity, but especially this inner-Trinitarian analogy shows that the highest kind of union that exists for an image-bearing creature is the union of the believer with Christ as he has now been exalted. “The greatest mystery of creaturely relationships is the union of God’s people with Christ, and the mystery of it is attested by nothing less than this, that it is compared to the unity that exists in the Trinity” (John Murray). Mystical union is spiritual, not in an immaterial, unsubstantial sense but because of the activity and indwelling of the Holy Spirit (see John 14). To avoid misunderstanding, using Spiritual, capitalized, is advisable...Spiritual union stems from the climactic and intimate relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit. Because of his resurrection, the incarnate Christ (“the last Adam”) has been so transformed by the Spirit and is now in such complete possession of the Spirit that he has “become life-giving Spirit” (1Cor. 15:45) and as a result, “the Lord [= Christ] is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17). As Spiritual, then, mystical union is also inherently vital. It is a life-union (cf. “... the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus ...,” Rom. 8:2). Christ indwelling by the Spirit is the very life of the believer: “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20); “your life is hidden with Christ in God,” “Christ who is your life” (Col. 3:3, 4). Finally, union with Christ is indissoluble. It is rooted in the unconditional and immutable decree of divine election “in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). The salvation eternally purposed for believers “in Christ” is infallibly certain of reaching its eschatological consummation in their future resurrection-glorification” in Christ (Rom. 8:17). This hope, especially as it involves the enduring, unbreakable permanence of their union with Christ (Rom. 8:38–39), finds quite striking expression in the WSC (answer 37): “The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.”

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