

**Slide 1**

# **“Abide In Me”**

## **JOHN 15:1-8**

### **Introduction**

1. Two weeks ago we looked at something which Jesus said to His disciples on the eve of his crucifixion in response to a question posed by one of His disciples — Judas (not Iscariot) — possibly Thaddeus
2. It is found in John 14:23, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.”
3. Here, Jesus speaks of both Him and His Father dwelling in that person who loves Him and keeps His word.
4. Tonight, in our text, John 15:1-8, there are seven instances in vv. 4-7, in which Jesus our abiding in Him or His abiding in us.
5. It is important that we examine these verses because of what Jesus says we can or cannot accomplish if we are or are not abiding in Him and He in us.
6. As we consider what He says to us, I encourage you to ask yourself where you are in relation to Him.

**Slide 2**

## **I. All Vines Are Not Alike**

### **A. ISRAEL, A FOREIGN VINE**

1. In Isaiah 5:7, the prophet Isaiah tells us that “the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah His delightful plant.”
  - a. In verse 2 of this chapter, he tells us of how God prepared this

vineyard and planted within it “the choicest vine” and “expected it to produce good grapes, but it produced only worthless ones.”

- b. At the end of verse 7, after identifying this vineyard as “the house of Israel,” Isaiah adds that God “looked for justice,” but saw “bloodshed; for righteousness,” but heard “a cry of distress.”
2. God’s message to Israel through His prophet Jeremiah, in Jeremiah 2:21, was “I planted you a choice vine, a completely faithful seed.”
    - a. He continued in that same verse with this question, “How then have you turned yourself before Me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine?” (Jeremiah 2:21b, NASB95).
    - b. In verse 22, He spoke to them of the impossibility of removing the stain of their sin:

“Although you wash yourself with lye and use much soap, the stain of your iniquity is before Me” (Jeremiah 2:22, NASB95).
  3. By the mouth of His prophet Hosea, God declared, “Israel is a luxuriant vine,” but later added, “Their heart is faithless” (Hosea 10:1, 2).

### Slide 3

#### **B. JESUS, THE TRUE VINE**

1. In contrast to Israel, Jesus said to His disciples, “I am the true vine . . .” (John 15:1).
2. This is the last of Jesus seven great “I am” statements which John records for us in his gospel:
  - a. “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).
  - b. “I am the Light of the world” (John 8:12).
  - c. “I am the door of the sheep” (John 10:7, 9).

- d. “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14).
  - e. “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).
  - f. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).
  - g. “I am the true vine” (John 15:1, 5).
3. Here, Jesus is “the true vine” in the sense that He is real, genuine.

**Slide 4**

4. There is a very important passage in the Old Testament, Psalm 80, which brings together two themes — that of the vine and the son of man:

“O God of hosts, restore us  
And cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved.  
You removed a vine from Egypt;  
You drove out the nations and planted it ...  
O God of hosts, turn again now, we beseech You;  
Look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine,  
Even the shoot which Your right hand has planted,  
And on the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself.  
It is burned with fire, it is cut down;  
They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.  
Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand,  
Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.”

(Psalm 80:14–17, NASB95)

5. What Jesus sought to communicate with His disciples that evening is the fact that external qualifications (i.e., Abrahamic lineage) do not set a person right with God, but an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Slide 5**

## II. A Lesson In Viticulture

### A. DIVINE VITICULTURE

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.” (John 15:2–3, NASB95)

1. God is the gardener — He plants and cultivates the vine.
2. Jesus is the vine — the branches derive their life from Him.
3. His disciples are the branches — He produces fruit through them.
4. The role of the Father is twofold (in reverse order):
  - a. First, “every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit” (v. 2b).
    - 1) No fruit-bearing branch is exempt.
    - 2) Though His purpose is loving, the procedure may be painful.
    - 3) It is so that each branch will be even more fruitful.
      - ❑ We might compare this to Hebrews 12:4-11 where the writer speaks of the Lord disciplining His own the way a father disciplines his children. All of this, according to Hebrews 12:10 if “for our good, so that we may share His holiness.”
  - b. Second, “every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away” (v. 2a).
    - 1) He removes the dead wood — these branches have no life in them; they have never borne fruit.
    - 2) This allows the living, fruit-bearing branches to have more room for growth.
5. There is an interesting statement which Jesus makes to His disciples here in

verse 3: “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”

- a. Jesus’ word, the entirety of His teaching, including what He is and what He does has already had its effect in the lives of the eleven disciples.
- b. All of this is equivalent to the life of the vine pulsating through the branches.
- c. In His prayer in John 17, Jesus prays, “Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth.”
- d. In Ephesians 5:26, the apostle Paul tells us that Christ “gave Himself up for” the church, “so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.”

#### Slide 6

### **B. AN IMPORTANT CONDITION OF FRUIT-BEARING**

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:4–5, NASB95)

1. Jesus’ point is clear: No branch has life in itself.
2. It is totally dependent for life and fruitfulness on the vine to which it is attached — thus “the branch . . . abides in the vine.”
3. You and I are continually dependent upon Jesus, we constantly rely on Him for our spiritual life.
  - a. “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men” (John 1:4).
  - b. The water He gives becomes in us “a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14).
  - c. He has “words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

4. He is absolutely essential for our spiritual fruitfulness:
  - a. Earlier, in John 13:26, Jesus said that the Father would send the Holy Spirit in His name.
  - b. The Holy Spirit is God's gift to those of us who obey Him (Acts 5:32).
  - c. His fruit in our lives includes "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Acts 5:22-23).
  - d. Ephesians 5:9, Paul said that "the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth."
  - e. Our ability to "bear fruit in every good work" (Colossians 1:10) is dependent upon our abiding in Him.
5. Jesus also presents us with the alternative: "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned" (John 15:6).
  - a. When we choose not to abide with Him, to make our home with Him, we find ourselves unable to bear any fruit.
  - b. The result is that God takes us away (v. 2), and because we no longer have life in ourselves we like those branches dry up and are cast into the fire.

## **Conclusion**

1. The powerful thing about this passage is that Jesus does not leave us on a negative note.

### **Slide 7**

2. He speaks of two blessings which result from our abiding in Him and His abiding in us.
3. The first has to do with the enrichment of our lives: "If you abide in Me, and My

words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7).

- a. Our lives are enriched because, not only are we abiding in Christ, His words are abiding in us.
- b. As a result, we have the requests which we ask of Him because we ask according to His will (1 John 5:15).

**7a**

4. The second blessing is found in verse 8: “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples” (John 15:8).
  - a. When we bear much fruit, we show ourselves to be disciples of Jesus.
  - b. The greatest glory in our lives as Christians is that by our life and conduct we can bring glory to God.
5. Tonight, can you say that you are abiding in Christ and that He is abiding in you?
6. If not, you are missing out on the opportunity to “know the love of Christ which,” Paul said, “surpasses knowledge,” and to “be filled up to all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:19).
7. If not, you will miss out on the greatest opportunity afforded to you — to finally “stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy” (Jude 24).