

## I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **John 15:1-11**.
- B. Technically, the gospel of John does not contain any parables. But this famous story resembles one in every way. It's actually an allegory. Each part of the story represents something else.
- C. This morning we look at the story of the vine and the branches, focusing on four parts; the Vine, the branches, the Vinedresser, and the fruit.

## II. THE VINE.

- A. First, Jesus said He was the true vine.

Others may come with their promises, but only in X is our spiritual needs fulfilled.

1. God the Father endorsed Jesus (Mt. 3:16,17).  
And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, *and* coming upon Him, [17] and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."
2. Jesus Himself said that He was the Way (Jn. 14:6).  
Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me."
3. The apostles preached JC (Ac. 4:12).  
"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."
4. Jesus is the Savior of all men (1Tim. 4:10).  
For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

- B. Second, we must abide in the vine.

John uses the word "abide" some 11 times in this text, and then says we must continue or remain!

1. Redemption and forgiveness are in X (Col. 1:13,14).  
For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
2. Spiritual maturity is found in X (Col. 1:28).  
And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.
3. Good discipline and stability are in X (Col. 2:5).  
For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.
4. We were baptized into X (Gal. 3:27).  
For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.
5. All spiritual blessings are found in X (Eph. 1:3).  
Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

## III. THE BRANCHES.

- A. First, a branch by itself can do nothing.

A branch cannot produce its own life. It is only good for burning. We must realize our limitations and dependency on X, as the true vine. Obedience is necessary to be a branch, connected to the Vine.

- B. Second, the blessings of being a branch.

These blessings are not automatic, they must be cultivated, but oh what a harvest!

1. One produces fruit (Jn. 15:2).  
"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.

2. One experiences the Father's pruning (Jn. 15:2).  
"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.
3. Prayers are answered by God (Jn. 15:7).  
"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.
4. A deepening love for X (Jn. 15:9).  
"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.
5. A greater joy in one's life (Jn. 15:11).  
"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.
6. A greater love for other believers (Jn. 15:12,13).  
"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. [13] "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

#### IV. THE VINEDRESSER.

##### A. First, the Vinedresser is God the Father.

God is the one who purges, or prunes the branches. God is never closer than when He is pruning you. Sometimes in the course of the pain, we think He is far away, but in reality He is there to help you become a better Xian.

##### 1. God uses the Word (Heb. 4:12).

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

##### 2. God uses heavenly discipline (Heb. 12:9,10).

Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? [10] For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, that we may share His holiness.

##### B. Second, spiritual pruning comes from God.

Pruning is done for two very important reasons:

1. To cut away disease, death, and outside problems.
2. To trim that which is good, so that one can enjoy the best!

##### C. The results of being spiritually pruned are tremendous! Notice the progression here:

No fruit -- Fruit -- More fruit -- Much fruit (Jn. 15:2,5).

**(Jn 15:2)** "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.

**(Jn 15:5)** "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.

##### D. How can we be upset with God when He prunes us?

#### V. THE FRUIT.

##### A. First, fruit is not results.

Results are things that humans produce with hard work. The credit goes to the one who made the results happen. Fruit is that which is produced by a vine. The branch, by virtue of being connected to the vine will bear fruit. It takes little or no effort on the branch's part.

##### B. Second, there are different kinds of fruit in the kingdom.

##### 1. Good works (Col. 1:10).

so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

##### 2. Meeting pressing needs (Ti. 3:14).

And let our *people* also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

##### 3. Doing the things of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23).

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

4. The praise of our heart and lips (Heb. 13:15).

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

C. Third, the fruit born is not for the branch.

We are not producing fruit for ourselves, but for others. The branch does not eat the fruit it produces! Our fruit (and light) is to shine for God and others.

#### VI. **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

A. Those branches that do not remain on the vine, and therefore do not bear fruit are destroyed (15:6).

B. The secret is not to try harder to produce fruit, the secret is to remain in the vine.

C. To be in X, is to be a branch in the vine, pruned by God, producing fruit.

D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.