

## SERMON NOTE: If You Abide In ME

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Bible Ref: John 15:1-15 NIV

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

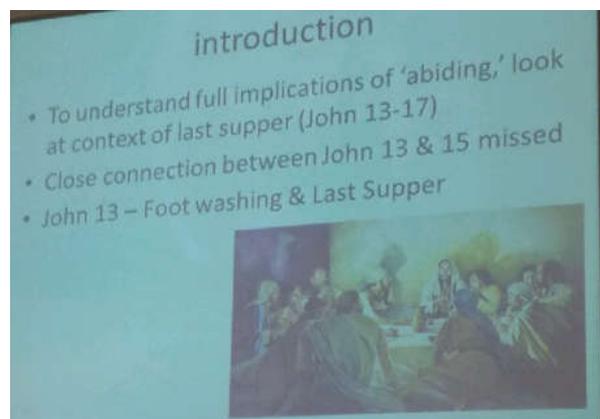
<https://bible.com/bible/111/jhn.15.1-15.NIV>

V15:7

Reference to Ch14:22-16

Jewish Passover Meal is a tradition kept from the Passover time until now.

JESUS gave the bread dipped in bow and gave to Judas, instead of disciple that HE love most. That was also JESUS'S love for Judal, giving him last chance to turn around.



### Structure of John 15

- 1) The True Vine (John 15:1, 5)
- 2) The Withered Branch (John 15:6)
- 3) Its Warning to Us (John 15: 2, 6)



### 1) The True Vine

- Jesus used imagery familiar to Jews – ‘vine’
- In the OT, vine (not fig) a symbol of nation of Israel
- Ps 80:8 *“You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations & planted it”*



### 1) The True Vine

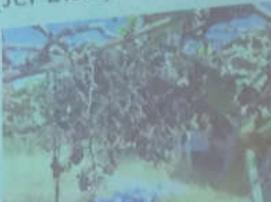
- Israel claims to be the true vine
- Golden vine on front door of Herod’s Temple
- Vine inscribed on coins




New Testament era coin  
“Half Shekel”

### 1) The True Vine

- But Israel turned out to be ‘an empty vine’ (Hos 10:1)
- ‘Rotten/putrefying grapes’ (Isaiah 5:1-5)
- ‘A rotten worthless vine’ (Jer 2:21)
- Israel failed as a nation



### 1) The True Vine

- Parable of Vineyard & Wicked Tenants (Luke 20:9-18)
- Jews’ response - ‘God forbids’
- Jesus’ answer - God has taken vineyard from its ancient tenants & given it to others
- Similar warning in John 15:2 (he takes away) & 15:6 (he casts forth)



### 1) The True Vine

- Jesus claims ‘I am the true vine’ (John 15:1)
- ‘I am the true vine’ one of 7 “I AM’s” in John
- If Jesus is the vine, his disciples are the branches (15:2) => special relationship
- Our relationship => abide/remain in Jesus



**John 15:5**  
I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

JESUS took 12v disciples, to represent the 12 tribes of Israel- the new Israel.

### 2) The Withered Branch

- John 15:2, 6 – Jesus twice mentions ‘withered or dead’ branch => branches that do not bear fruit
- What happens to withered branches?
  - V. 2 – gardener prunes
  - V. 6 – gardener casts forth & burnt
- Who is the ‘dead branch’?



### 2) The Withered Branch

- Dead branch - Judas Iscariot!
- 2 clues:
  - Verb *kathairō* - ‘prune, purge, trim, cleanse’ (John 15:2, 3)
  - John 13:10 – ‘you are not all clean (*katharoi*)’
  - Verb *menō* – ‘live, dwell, lodge, abide, remain’ (John 15:4-7)
  - John 13:30 – Judas expelled from group and went out into the night



JESUS washed the disciples feet symbolises cleansing of us, HIS disciples.

### 2] The Withered Branch

- Judas' break with Jesus did not happen immediately
- Slow process of withering to breaking:
  - Initial break leads to inward withering process
  - Outward withering
  - Final break which leads to need for pruning/cleansing



### 2] The Withered Branch

- Slow process of withering in Judas' life
  - Jesus did not become the king (6:14) Judas expected (**inward**)
  - Jesus publicly disagreed with Judas (12:7) over woman's anointing of perfume (**outward**)
  - Jesus gave Judas choice morsel at Passover (13:26) & opportunity to stop but Judas left (**final break**)



If we are not close to JESUS or GOD, one day we may end up like Judas and left JESUS/GOD for idol/s of the world.

It all happened bit by bit, and it became more and more, and then the breaking point of no turning back like the weathered branches that's only to be cut and thrown into fire to be burned.

### 3] Its Warning to Us

- A spiritually dead Christians is useless to God. We are measured by our fruit.
- 2 types of pruning:
  - Regular pruning (to stimulate growth) => **disciplinary suffering**
  - Drastic pruning (cast forth & burnt) => **final judgment**
- Don't wait till we inwardly withered & die before drastic pruning happens

### Some Lessons

- Abiding/Remaining in Christ is a deliberate, not casual choice
- To be part of Christ (15:4a)
- To draw nourishment & strength (15:4b)
- To be dependent on Christ (15:5c)
- To be fruitful (15:2,5,6, 8)
- To grow in confidence (John 15:7)

Don't miss fellowship, don't miss church attendance... Else we face danger of being cut off.

Abide in JESUS to remain, green, alive, growing and fruitful.

Christian life is not a 100m race, but be a marathon, we just have to be disciplined and persevere through to the end.

### conclusion

- 2 choices before us
- Are we abiding/remaining in Christ? (growing & fruitful)
- Or are we becoming more like Judas? (withering within, dying without, & final break with Jesus)

