

Abiding - Not Striving

March 23, 2014

John 15:1-11

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

Jesus is the true and only vine (source of life), there is no other.

The Father is the vinedresser, the gardener, the caretaker. The Father cares for, grooms, prunes, nourishes, waters, protects the branches and their union and growth in the vine.

John 15:1-11

2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

A branch which does not bear fruit is a branch which is not surrendered to the life of the vine. Father has no interest in collecting a lot of branches; He wants branches that produce fruit. He takes away non-producing branches so they don't take away life and nourishment from the fruit-bearing branches.

A branch which does bear fruit is pruned by the Father to produce more surrender to the life of the vine, producing more fruit.

John 15:1-11

3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

It is the Word of God, full of God's life and power, which transforms us by renewing our minds.

Romans 12:2 *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..."*

John 15:1-11

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

Abiding (to remain, continue) ***in Christ has four components:***

- ***awareness*** - the reality of His presence is always in the heart and mind
- ***communion*** - spiritual communication and engagement with God's person and presence
- ***dependence*** - active drawing upon the life and strength of Christ
- ***surrender*** - submissive and obedient to the flow of His life

John 15:1-11

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Whoever abides in Christ in surrendered communion has the promise of producing much fruit in God.

Fruit is born by abiding, not manufactured by trying. Fruit is born supernaturally by relationship, not manufactured by effort. Therefore we must abide more and try less. Manufacturing is of man, bearing

fruit is of God, and we have no control over the times and the seasons required to bear His fruit.

Apart from the vine we can do nothing that counts with God; we've done nothing He recognizes or accepts. We will be judged by how much fruit we have allowed Him to harvest in us.

John 15:1-11

6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

Eternal judgment and damnation awaits all who abide not in Him.

John 15:1-11

7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

2 Peter 1:3-11 ESV

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge (epignosis - knowledge acquired from first-hand experience, application knowledge gained by direct relationship) of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with **virtue** (moral excellence, goodness, uprightness), and virtue with **knowledge** (gnosis - knowledge acquired from first-hand experience, application knowledge gained by direct relationship),

6 and knowledge with **self-control** (dominion within, mastery, proceeding out from within but not by oneself), and self-control with **steadfastness** (endurance, patient enduring, remaining behind, steadfastness), and steadfastness with **godliness** (godly heart-response, someone's heart response to the things of God),

7 and godliness with **brotherly affection** (affection for the brethren, loving friend), and brotherly affection with **love** (agape - love which centers in moral preference).

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.