

JESUS: I AM THE TRUE VINE

Jesus "I AM" (14)

Banska Bystrica, 23 November 2014

John 15:1-12 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 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. 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**. 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. 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**. ⁹ As the Father has *loved* me, so have I *loved* you. Abide in my *love*. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his *love*. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. ¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

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0. INTRODUCTION:

0.1. THE CONTEXT

- the purpose: *that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full !*
- Chs. 14&16 – on the Holy Spirit – ch. 15 the Father and the Son
- the *true* vine → OT

0.2. VINE IN THE OT

- **Ps 80:8-11** Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. ⁹ Thou preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. ¹⁰ The

hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof *were like* the goodly cedars. ¹¹ She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river ... **Psalm 80:14-19** Turn again, O God of hosts! Look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, ¹⁵ the stock that your right hand planted, and for the son whom you made strong for yourself. ¹⁶ They have burned it with fire; they have cut it down; may they perish at the rebuke of your face! ¹⁷ But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself! ¹⁸ Then we shall not turn back from you; give us life, and we will call upon your name! ¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts! let your face shine, that we may be saved!

- **Isaiah 5:1-8** Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. ² He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. ³ And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? ⁵ And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briars and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting; and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!² ⁸ Woe to those who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no more room, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land.
- Ezekiel 15:2-5, “Son of man, how is the wood of the vine better than any other wood, the vine branch which is among the trees of the forest? Is wood taken from it to make any object? Or can men make a peg from it to hang any vessel on? Instead, it is thrown into the fire for fuel; the fire devours both ends of it, and its middle is burned. Is it useful for any work? Indeed, when it was whole, no object could be made from it. How much less will it be useful for any work when the fire has devoured it, and it is burned?”
- **Jer 2:21** Yet I planted you a choice vine, wholly of pure seed. How then have you turned degenerate and become a wild vine?

0.3. COMPARING THE METAPHORS – BREAD & VINE

“I Am the Bread of Life”	“I Am the True Vine”
Purpose: life, resurrection	fruit
God, the Father: teaches	prunes
Relationship: faith	love
Action: “Come!” “Believe!”	“Abide!” “Obey!”
Response: knowledge, decision	identification, being

- Meditate on the differences at home!

1. FRUIT & SALVATION

- ² Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.
- ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away (ἐβλήθη ἔξω) like a branch and withers (καὶ ἐξηράνθη); and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned (εἰς τὸ πῦρ βάλλουσιν καὶ καίεται).

[LLOYD-JONES] These comparisons and illustrations, then, are meant by our Lord to show us that any desire which we may find in ourselves to hide the fact that we are Christian is not only to be regarded as ridiculous and contradictory, it is, if we indulge it and persist in it, something which (though I do not understand the doctrine at this point) may lead to a final casting out. ... As I understand it, and it seems to me to be an

inevitable piece of logic and interpretation, there is nothing in God's universe that is so utterly useless as a merely formal Christian. I mean by that, one who has the name but not the quality of a Christian. ... No man's service is of any value unless his nature is changed.¹

- [M. HENRY]...*the Father is the husbandman, georgos – the land-worker*. Though *the earth is the Lord's*, it yields him no fruit unless he work it. God has not only a propriety in, but a care of, the vine and all the branches. He *hath planted, and watered, and gives the increase*; for *we are God's husbandry*, 1Cor. 3:9. ... From a vine we look for grapes (Isa. v. 2), and from a Christian we look for Christianity; this is the fruit, a Christian temper (charakter) and disposition (náklonnost'), a Christian life and conversation, Christian devotions and Christian designs. We must honour God, and do good, and exemplify the purity and power of the religion we profess; and this is bearing fruit. The disciples here must be fruitful, as Christians, in all the fruits of righteousness, and as apostles, in diffusing the savour of the knowledge of Christ.

1.1. CHANGE OF THE HUMAN NATURE

- **Jer 13:23** an the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil.
- **Rom 8:9** You, however, are not in the flesh but **in the Spirit**, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

1.2. THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Gal 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control (ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις ²³πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια·)

1.3. PAINFUL PRUNING → SELF & EASE

- **Heb 12:5-11** "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline (παιδεία) of the Lord, nor be weary when reprov'd by him (μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος). ⁶ For the Lord disciplines (παιδεύει) the one he loves, and chastises (μαστιγοῖ) every son whom he receives." ⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure (εἰς παιδείαν ὑπομένετε). God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them (ἐνετρεπόμεθα). Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

2. FRUIT & ABIDING

Abiding in Christ means (1) believing that he is God's Son (1 John 4:15), (2) receiving him as Savior and Lord (John 1:12), (3) doing what God says (1 John 3:24), (4) continuing to believe the gospel (1 John 2:24), and (5) relating in love to the community of believers, Christ's body (John 15:12)²

- ⁷ ... my **WORDS** abide in you... ⁹...Abide in my **LOVE**.
- ¹⁰ If you **keep my commandments**, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
- **Ps 87:7** Singers and dancers alike say, "All my springs are in you."
וְשָׂרִים כְּחַלְלִים כָּל-מַעְיָנֵי בָּךְ

2.1. THE SECRET OF ABIDING: THE COMMANDMENTS OF JESUS

- The Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7) → the Beatitudes; "The New Decalogue"; life for Heaven...

¹ LLOYD-JONES, D. M. *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount I*, pp. 174, 173. II, p. 253.

² *Life Application Bible*, John 15:6

- ...require radical *change of the source of desires, attitudes and decisions*...
- ...require supernatural power of the Spirit to like them and put them into practice...
- **1Jn 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep **his commandments**. And **his commandments** are not burdensome (βαρέλαι οὐκ εἰσίν).
- **2Pt 1:4** 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.

2.2. THE SPIRITUAL UNION WITH JESUS

- **Gal 5:6** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith (WORDS → v.7) working through LOVE (v.9).
- **1Cor 6:17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes **one spirit** with him.
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2.3. THE WORK IN THE SPIRIT

- **Is 26:12** יהוה תשפת שלום לנו כי גם כל-מעשינו פּעֵלָתָ לָנוּ
- **Lk 24:49** And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.
- **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses
- **Col 1:28-29** ...that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that powerfully works within me (εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει.).

3. FRUIT & PRAYER

- 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**.

3.1. PRAYER AND MY IDENTIFICATION WITH JESUS

- “In the name of Jesus” = as if Jesus himself did it
- **John 14:13-14** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me¹ anything in my name, I will do it.
- **John 15:16** ...whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.
- **John 16:23-27** In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. ... ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf...

3.2. PRAYER AND MY MOTIVES

- **James 4:3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. (κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε.)

[M.HENRY] If we have Christ, we shall want nothing that is good for us. Two things are implied in this promise: *First*, That if we abide in Christ, and his word in us, we shall not ask any thing but what is proper to be done for us. The promises abiding in us lie ready to be turned into prayers; and the prayers so regulated cannot but speed. *Secondly*, That if we *abide in Christ and his word* we shall have such an interest in God's favour and Christ's mediation that we shall have an answer of peace to all our prayers.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- My belief in Jesus (salvation) has to manifest itself in the gradual change of my character (fruit).
- My relationship to Jesus must be deeper than my conscious thinking and decision making.
- My prayer life is to be a free expression of my identification with Jesus' mind and purpose.