

Title: Are You a Branch on a Tree or a Stick in the Mud?

Scripture: John 15:1-6

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John 15:1-6 / King James Version (KJV)

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Christ used the vine and the branches to explain salvation. He knew the men were drinking wine. The wine came from grapes. The grapes came from a branch and the branch from a vine. What is the true vine?

1. The Genuineness of the Vine:

- a. Most farmers are concerned with making a product of quantity, not quality. They want their product to look good so that you will buy it (John 14:6). Jesus is THE vine. A lot of churches today are more concerned with looks instead of taste. They want to get you in, but don't care about the nourishment that you'll need in between.

2. The Gardener of the Vine:

- a. "Husbandman" = means *gardener*. Christ said "I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman." In verse 2 he says: "Every branch in me." Christ is talking about his branches -not anyone else's. The branches belong to him. We have God's word in order to become part of the vineyard. The gardener takes care of his vineyard. He keeps watchful eyes on his vineyard. He sees when the plants need for things just as Christ does for us (Proverbs 15:3).
- b. He purifies the plants: He purges the right parts. Christ makes sure we get the light, water, air and everything else we need. Christ moves the branches. The branches are good for two things: burning and bearing fruit. The branches are attached to the trunk of the tree. A house isn't made from branches. The lumber comes from the trunk (James 1). A mirror shows a reflection of whatever is in front of it. God's word does the same. This is how he prunes us when we need it.

3. The Purpose of the Vine:

- a. To bear fruit. The fruits are produced by the branches. The vine's purpose is for its branches to produce fruit. God wants us to produce fruit – to show others.
- b. In God's word, his branches are promised a few things:
 - i. We are promised in John 15:7 and John 14:3 that the branches have a promise of an unhindered prayer life. To gain this promise, you must be part of his vineyard. Sometimes as humans we tend to question the motives of Christ. We want to know why some branches are better than others. That doesn't matter – it just matters what the fruit is.
 - ii. John 15:9 gives us the promise of an unending love. He loves us and takes care of us.
 - iii. In John 15:11, we are promised an uncommon joy. A branch attached to the true vine has a reason to rejoice. The joy that Christians have is unlike any other happiness in the world.