

the TRUE VINE

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"I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vineyard-keeper. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes-away (cuts off); and every branch that bears fruit, **He cleanses** (prunes) it, so that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are **clean** through the Word which I have spoken unto you. **Abide in Me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abides in the vine; so no more can you, **except you abide in Me (Jesus). I am The Vine,** and you are the branches: **He who abides in Me, and I in him,** he brings forth much fruit; **for without Me you can do nothing.** If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and dries up; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. **If you abide in Me (Jesus), and My Words abide in you,** you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. **By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.** **As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue in My love.** If you keep My commandments, **you shall abide in My love;** even as I have kept My Father's commandments, **and abide in His love.** These things I have spoken unto you, so that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. **This is My commandment: that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lays down his life for his friends.** You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you slaves; for the slave does not know what his lord is doing. But I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen Me, **but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.** **These things I command you, that you love one another.** (John 15:1-17)

True: from the Greek word ***alethine*** which means: true (lit: made of truth), real, genuine, factual, authentic. Emphasizes the integrity, certainty, and factuality, of what is true, ("true inside and out"). True to the exclusion of any thing false, or impossibly contradictory, to 'that' which is being declared to be exclusively true.

Vine: from the Greek word ***ampelos*** which means: a vine, specifically - the entire grapevine, the roots, the main trunk, the main branches, and the 'new branch-vines' that bear flowers and fruit. It is these new fruit bearing branches that needed to be cleansed by pruning, so that excess foliage would not draw away nutrition and water from the grape clusters.

True Vine: Figuratively, Jesus compares Himself to a cultivated grapevine shrub; and he compares His believing followers as being fruit bearing branches who abide in Him, and who are actually joined to Him! On a real grapevine, the fruit bearing branches get all of their life-sustaining needs from the rooted grapevine shrub; so also do we get all of our life sustaining needs through Jesus. (This is a similar analogy to being 'members' of the Body of Christ.) By calling Himself the **True Vine** Jesus is declaring Himself as the only true source of fruit-bearing spiritual life.

Jesus is the One and Only True Vine! We are the fruit bearing branches! **We must abide in Christ Jesus** in order to bear true fruit for the Kingdom of God. We must allow the Words of Jesus **to abide in us** in order to bear much fruit in our inner being! By this we demonstrate that we are true disciples of Christ Jesus! **We must abide in the Love of Christ Jesus by keeping His commandments.** Those who do not, in this manner, abide in Jesus the True Vine, will be cut off and cast into the fire of destruction! Those who diligently seek to abide in Christ Jesus, according to His given commandments, these shall be cultivated by the Father, the Vineyard-keeper, through the careful process of pruning, feeding, and watering.

The pruning process involves the removal of anything in your life that hinders good fruit production; and thus enhancing fruit bearing. Consider these things that hinder fruit production:

"And He (Jesus) spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when He sowed, some seeds fell by the roadside, and the birds came and ate them all up. And some fell upon stony-places, where they did not have much soil; and when they sprung up, and because they had no deepness of soil; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.'" (Matthew 13:3-7)

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"Therefore, hear the parable of the sower, 'When any one hears the Word of the Kingdom , and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the roadside. But he who received the seed into stony places, this is he who hears the Word, and receives it right away with joy; yet **he has no root in himself**; and he only endures for a while; but when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he soon stumbles (falls away). And He who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the Word; but the worries of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becomes unfruitful." (Matthew 13:18-22)

Some Notes:

The Seed = the Word of the Kingdom which was sown upon three kinds of unfruitful ground.

the Word of the Kingdom = The Good News of God's word; God's glorious plan of Salvation through Christ Jesus; including the plan that offers eternal salvation from sin, through the sacrifice of the Father's Son Jesus on the Cross for the forgiveness of sin; and the plan of salvation that promises sanctification and growth and fruitfulness in Christ Jesus the True Vine for those who believe **and abide in Christ Jesus**.

The roadside-ground = the heart of him who hears the Word of the Kingdom, but does not understand the Word, and it is snatched away by the birds (the evil one). The word never even has a chance to sprout and grow in his heart; and He is not grafted into **the True Vine**.

The Rocky-ground = the heart of him who hears the Word, and receives it with joy, but the Word (the seed) which does sprout and began to grow, does not get firmly rooted into the persons heart, and it soon withers away in the scorching sunshine. **The scorching sunshine** represents trials such as afflictions and persecutions that arise because of the Word. But because the Word was not firmly rooted into his heart, he soon stumbles; and the Word and the joy withers away in his heart, and he does not bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.

The ground with thorn bushes growing within it = the heart of him who hears the Word, and the word begins to grow in his heart, but the vigorously growing thorn bushes choke the Word that is in his heart; and the Word in his heart becomes unfruitful; and he himself is unfruitful. **The thorns** represent things such as the worries of the world and of life, and the deceitful pursuits of riches. When these 'thorns of life' become firmly rooted into someone's heart they choke the Word, and the Word in their heart become unfruitful, and the person does not grow in Christ Jesus; and he becomes unfruitful, and does not bear fruit for the Kingdom.

In these two situations the **Vineyard-keeper** has two choices: keep the fruit bearing branch, but prune it so that hopefully it will produce good fruit. But if over some time the pruning process does not produce good fruit, then the Vineyard-keeper will completely cut off the worthless branch from the True Vine, and it will be cast into the fire.

The feeding process involves the inflow of the life sustaining Word of Christ, like nutrition from God, which provides for us spiritual health! Consider these verses:

"And He (Jesus) spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'Behold, a sower went forth to sow; **And some fell into good soil**, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:3, 8-9)

"Therefore, hear the parable of the sower, 'When any one hears the Word of the Kingdom , ... **And he who received seed into the good ground is he who hears the Word, and understands it; who also bears fruit, and brings forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.**" (Matt. 13:18, 23)

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Some Notes:

The Seed = the Word of the Kingdom which was sown upon the Good Soil.

The Good Soil = the heart of him who hears the Word of the Kingdom, and understands it; and receives it into the good fertile soil of his heart, where it grows and blossoms, and bears an abundance of healthy fruit! Christ Jesus is the True Vine, and we are the branches that abide in Him, and that bear fruit abundantly. Consider these verses:

"**Abide in Me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abides in the vine; so no more can you, **except you abide in Me (Jesus). I am The Vine**, and you are the branches: He who abides in Me, and I in him, he brings forth much fruit; **for without Me you can do nothing**. If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and dries up; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. **If you abide in Me (Jesus), and My Words abide in you**, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples." (John 15:4-8)

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, 'If you continue in My Word, then you are My disciples indeed; and you shall know the **Truth, and the Truth shall make you free!**'" (John 8:31-32)

We must continue in Christ's Word. Day by day we must feed our spiritual being with the full counsel of the Word of Christ. And you must abide in Jesus the **True Vine** so that the **Water of Life** may flow into your lives, and that the Word of Christ may be truly bear fruit through Christ Jesus in you!

The watering process speaks of the Living Water of Life that flows from the roots through The True Vine, and into the the branches abiding in the True Vine, of which we are. Consider these verses:

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If you knew the Gift of God, and Who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you Living Water.' But the woman said unto Him, 'Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from where then have You that Living Water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from there himself, and his children, and his cattle?' But Jesus answered and said unto her, 'Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again; But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; and the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life.'" (John 4:10-14)

Unless we are a branch that is abiding in the True Vine, it is not possible to drink of the Living Water. We must be an abiding part of the True Vine in order to receive the Living Water that is only available to those who are abiding in the True Vine. Jesus is the source of the Living Water that abides in us when we abide in Him! Consider these words of Jesus:

"On the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of Living Water. But of this He was speaking of **the Spirit**, of Whom, they who believe on Him (Jesus) should receive; for **the Holy Spirit** had not yet been given; because Jesus had not yet been glorified.'" (John 7:37-39)

The **Gift of God** is the **Holy Spirit**, of Whom, we received when we first believed in Jesus. That day when we first believed in Jesus, is the day in which when we were first grafted into Jesus the True Vine. That was the day in which we first begin abiding in Christ Jesus, and He in us. That was the day in which the Spirit of Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Living Water, first began to flow in our lives. That was the day when we were Born again! That was the day when we first became living spiritual beings, rather than merely being physical flesh-and-bones human beings. It is as Jesus said:

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"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; **and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** Do not marvel that I said unto you, '**You must be born again.**' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but you cannot not tell from where it comes, or where it goes; so is every one who is born of the Spirit." (John 3⁷⁶⁻⁸)

Jesus also said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments, and I will pray to the Father, and He shall give you **another Comforter**, so that He may **abide with you forever**; even the **Spirit of Truth**; Whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him, nor know Him. But you know Him; because **He abides with you, and shall be in you.**" (John 14:15-17)

Jesus is the True Vine! We Must abide in Jesus, and, if need be, allow the Father to prune out of our lives the things which hinder the abundant fruit-bearing life in Christ Jesus. Also, we must abide in His Words, and keep His commandments, so that we may be true disciples of Christ Jesus. We must also abide in the Love of Jesus, and abide in love for one another; even as Jesus abided in His Father's love, and kept His Father's commandments, and laid down His life for His friends - even Us!! And we must allow the Living Water, the Holy Spirit who abides in us, to lead, guide, and teach us in the ways of Christ Jesus! Consider these words of exhortation:

"Jesus said, 'As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you; continue in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things I have spoken unto you, so that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. **This is My commandment: that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lays down his life for his friends.**" (John 15:9-13)

"Therefore, let that abide in you, which you heard from the beginning. If that which you have heard from the beginning abides in you, you also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us: even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning those who try to deceive you. But **the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you,** and you need not that any man teach you. But the same anointing teaches you about all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, so you shall abide in Him. And now, little children, **abide in Him**; so that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming!" (1 John 2:24-28)

Finally, consider this short paraphrase: "We have been crucified **with Christ**; nevertheless We live; yet not Us, **but Christ lives in Us**: and the life which We now live in the flesh We live by faith in **the Son of God**, who loved Us, and **gave Himself** for Us!" (Galatians 2:20)

Jesus is ... the True Vine

**He is the source of Life! His Word is the source of Truth and right living!
His Spirit is a well of Living Water springing up into everlasting life!**

**Only when we abide in Christ Jesus can He fill us with His Holy Spirit!
Only when we abide in Christ Jesus are we able to live an abundant fruitful life!
Only those who believe on the Name of Jesus can abide in Jesus, and He in us!**

Father in heaven, You are the Vineyard-Keeper!

**Please Father prune out of my life all that hinders me from
having an abundant fruitful life in Christ Jesus!
Please Holy Spirit lead, and guide, and disciple me into all Truth!**

All praise and Honor to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit! Amen and Amen!