

The Prayer God Hears II

Branch Living

John 15:1-7, 16 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. **2** "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. **3** "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. **4** "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. **5** "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. **6** "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. **7** "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you... **16** "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

I. The Vine; **vs. 1**

- a. An agrarian metaphor using the vine – vines grow where they want to grow
- b. While vines grow where they will; Christ as the vine knows where he intends the branches to grow
- c. The Branch's roots absorbs the water & nutrients needed for growth
- d. As such it is critical that the branches are attached to the vine for it is from that source that life comes about
 - i. More than a theological attachment based on understanding but with no understanding of application
 - ii. We are to be attached & draw live into every aspect of our lives

II. The Vinedresser; **vs. 1**

- a. The Vine dresser cuts away the "suckers"
- b. He constantly attends the vine to be sure that the quality of life in the Vine goes into the branches

III. Branches; **vss. 2-6**

- a. Question: why don't the branches attached to the Vine don't look

like the Vine

- i. Everyone likes Jesus – He was a revolutionary
- ii. Folks don't understand who the Vinedresser is
- iii. But people don't like the branches

A. Non-Abiding Branches; vs. 6

- 1. Get Removed** – they aren't attached, but they think they are.
 - a. They have a "theological" mindset – exposes the fact that they are NOT attached
 - b. Circumstances expose – one may not know they are not abiding until the circumstances, the issues come along that press a person away from Christ because they have never embraced Him as Lord
 - c. Such only address God is when they are in trouble
 - d. God is merciful to allow difficulty to come upon us so as to bring us to reality and the realization that a person is not attached
- 2. Dry Up** – sustained detachment leads to "drying up"
 - a. People become bitter when they don't get from God what they ask for
 - b. They are angry because things don't work their way
 - c. They become so dry they end up "on the fire"
- 3. Become Fuel** (their burning intensifies the fire so that people keep their distance from the acts that caused their judgment.)
 - a. God uses the fire to expose what a life looks like not joined to God
 - b. They become like salt that loses its flavor – they are not able to stop corruption; such are of no use except to give traction to the lives of others toward God
 - c. Their example: Dry branches testify, in their burning, that God intends for us to be holy, rightly joined to Him
 - d. Sampson: a branch that did not remain gives us an example of how we are NOT to live. He failed to remain in God and exemplified for us that such a life is NOT the way we need to live.
 - e. Even when things are "cold" – when things are not going the way we want, the "burning" reminds me that, at the least, I'm not going to the Hell. The burning of the dry branches give us "light" to see that there is no option to abiding in Christ.

B. Abiding Branches

1. Must Be Abided Within; vss. 4-5

- a. Abiding branches not only abide in Christ, but the Spirit of God indwells our lives.
- b. When things are not going right, its not about discipline that makes it possible for me to be a good Christian, its about Christ working in us

- c. Christianity is the only religion that CANNOT be lived by people on their own. Christ is the only Source of power by which we can live this life.
- d. "Unless you die..." we cannot live in victory. Christ living on the inside of us is our motivation, inspiration, direction that moves & enables us to live as He would have us live.
- e. Had Christ not been on the inside, we could not live this life.
- f. We must abide in Christ, but He must abide in us to truly live

2. Become Fruitful; vs. 5

- a. We are to bear fruit
- b. We are to be pruned so that we can "bear more fruit"
- c. We are to be those who bear ABOUNDING, much fruit
- d. Question: what do we present to God by way of offerings?
Are we always empty?
- e. There is the fruit of the Spirit – GAL 5:19-23
 - i. This fruit must be cultivated, developed, grown in our lives
 - ii. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering...there is no law against these; if you lack fruit, "get some more" for by these you overcome the unlovable people and circumstances in your life
 - iii. Fruit reflective of God's character
- f. There is fruit that results from the impact of your life on others
 - i. Are there people you can present to God
 - ii. People who testify that Christ is in their life because of your life

3. Get Pruned; vs. 2

- a. Pruning is done that you may bear more fruit
- b. Branches are removed that we may like, but that are unfruitful
 - i. God will ask that things that aren't fruitful so that more fruit bearing can occur

4. Get What They Pray For; vss. 7, 16

- a. When we bear fruit like this, we can ask what we want & God will give it to us.
- b. The more fruitful a branch becomes, the more the vine provides resources so that grow the branch.
- c. When we become fruit bearing, we can ask God for the provision we need to bear more fruit
- d. These are the prayers that God hears