

Sermon Series: Book of John
Sermon Title: I AM the True Vine.
Scripture reading: John 15:1-11
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church
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Introduction

Well, today we come to the last of our "I AM" statements made by Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."

"I am the light of the world."

"I am the door."

"I am the good shepherd."

"I am the resurrection and the life."

"I am the way, the truth and the life."

And today.....the last one....

"I am the vine; you are the branches."

Let's pray and ask God to help us understand this text.

We all have our favorite words.

What's your favorite word?

I had a friend that used a word_____ all the time.

We all do that. We all have our favorite little words.

One of John's favorite words is the word **ABIDE**.

In fact he uses it 40x in his gospel and 28x in his letters 1st, 2nd and 3rd John. In our text today, he records Jesus's use of abide 10 times in verses 1-11.

Let's read it again.

1 "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 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.

What's the context of this passage?

If you remember last week when we took a look at John 13 & 14, Jesus is leaving. He is going to the cross and then he is going to leave. They were shocked.

In John 15, he's now going to instruct them on some important things before he goes away.

How should they live in this world until he comes again?

Jesus starts off this teaching by using a parable from everyday life that they would understand.

He likens himself to a grape vine.

What does Jesus mean by "I am the vine"?

He means two things.

(1) In the Old Testament, Israel is referred to as God's vine. Jesus is saying that he is the *true* Israel, the *true* Son that will accomplish what they could not, namely an obedient relationship with God. And what it means to be God's people is not to be Jewish but God's people are those who are joined to Jesus.

(2) He is showing the relationship that his disciples have with him is like a vine and its branches.

What does Jesus want his disciples to do?

What is the main thrust of this passage?

It's in verse 4. (We will come back to verse 2 in the application) What is the command?

4 Abide in me!

Abide in him and produce fruit!

Do it. Abide in me. It's not a suggestion. It's a command.

So, that they main thing we want to see today is what does Jesus mean by 'abide in me' and how do we do it.

What does it mean to 'Abide' in Jesus?

This word abide means to stay with someone, to remain, to lodge or tarry in a place.

It means to NOT move around but continue somewhere.

The word 'persevere' comes from this word and we should include perseverance here.

It's staying close and continuing to stay close.

It's the opposite of being apart.

So we see in verse 5 that Jesus says, 'Apart from me you can do nothing.' Think about that.

Disciples are to abide with Jesus and in not even the most minuscule way are they to be apart from him.

That's what Jesus wants his disciples to know and that's what they are commanded to DO while they wait for him to return. Abide.....like a branch abides in a vine.

How do we abide in Christ?

Thankfully he tells us how in this text.

I. ABIDE IN HIS WORD.

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

Jesus has already said this in **John 8:31** "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

II.ASK! it is also imperative in verse 7! If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. Prayer is a vital part of the relationship. Since 'abiding' means staying with and being close to, naturally, the relationship we have with Jesus is just that– a relationship where 2 people talk to each other. How much do you talk to Jesus?

So, we abide in Christ by:

(1) Abiding in his word.

(2) Ask him....prayer.

(3) Abiding in his love.

III. ABIDE IN HIS LOVE.

verse 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.
Abide in my love.

Jesus says that as the Father has loved him, so has he loved you. How deep is this love?! It might be good that we ponder this for a moment.

1 John 3:1-3

Romans 8:16-17

Romans 5:8!

Christians, we are in need of continually reminding ourselves of the gospel and the love that Jesus has demonstrated toward us.

Jesus loves you this morning. Do you believe that?
Abide in his love.

III. ABIDE IN HIS JOY.

verse 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

You may say, 'I don't really see the word *abide* there'.

Well, in English it is not there in some Bibles and in some it is. Some of the original Greek texts have the word 'remain' or 'abide' in the text so that it reads, *"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain (abide) in you, and that your joy may be full."*

This is not a command. But this is the result of abiding in his word, asking and abiding in his love! **Joy!**

What is the fruit that abiding brings? God wants us to bear fruit...he is pruning us so that we will bear fruit.

What is the fruit of abiding?

It's obedience to his word.

It's love.

It is joy.

This is great need for all of us. JOY.

This does not mean a surface smile. It means a deep rooted healthy joy. Do you need joy?

Abide is the command.

The fruit of non-abiding is joylessness.

The fruit of abiding in Christ is fullness of joy.

Application

- **Are you abiding?** It's more than just believing. Not just a connection to Jesus but communion with Jesus.

Not just being a Christian but being close to Jesus.
Not just being redeemed by Jesus, but Jesus being your roommate.

Not just being a servant of Jesus but being friends with Jesus.

It's not just about being involved in ministry but being married to Jesus.

Are you drinking from the vine?

Are you obeying Christ?

Are you at peace and rest in the love that he has for you?

Are you full of joy?

The key to the Christian's obedience, fruit bearing and joy is ABIDING IN CHRIST.

I'd like to encourage you to abide in Christ.

Let me encourage you to slow down and soak.

Shave some stuff off of your busy life and abide in Christ.

Now, what I don't mean is that you need to stop doing ministry or teaching a small group or serving. Don't make that error. Shave off the world. Don't shave off the church.

Abide in Christ by marinating in his word.

Get on your knees each morning and pray.

Sit at his feet and behold his glory; listen to what he has to say to you.

Drink from the vine continually, obey his word, go deep in reflection on the love that he has for you and your joy will be full.

- **Are you getting pruned right now?**

Maybe these days you feel like God is putting you through some trials and some hard times. It hurts.

But remember that even though this discipline seems difficult in the present, it is for your good.

The Father, the Vinedresser, prunes so that you will bear MORE fruit. He's cleaning you up! Abide in his word. Abide in his love. Keep asking. He is doing a marvelous work in you for your joy and for his glory.

- Are you a branch that's bearing fruit?

Are you truly a follower of Jesus Christ?

Some are connected to Jesus but do not bear fruit.

I told you we would look at verse 2.

1 "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 does bear fruit he *prunes*, that it may bear more fruit.

Notice that the two categories that Jesus gives here are not (1) Branches that are bearing fruit and (2) Branches that are not connected to Jesus but are dead and on the ground. It's also in verse 6. These are tough verses. No, the two categories here are both connected to Jesus. There are those he says that are connected to him but really aren't connected to him because they don't bear fruit.

This shouldn't surprise us. We know there were many all over the Bible, including Judas who had just walked away, who were connected to Jesus in some way but weren't bearing any fruit.

Listen closely.

The distinguishing mark of a disciple of Jesus is not that they are seemingly connected to Jesus or interested in Jesus or attend church...it's whether they bear fruit.

Matthew 7:21 was one of the verses that changed my life.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."

Don't be fooled! Attending or interest means very little.

Move in with Christ.

Live with him.

Abide in Christ.