

Abide in the Vine—Intimacy with Christ

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: John 15:1-8.
- B. The most satisfying relationship one can have is with Jesus Christ and the Father.
- C. We are connected everywhere, but we do not think of what we are connected to and what it is feeding us.

II. Persons in the parable.

- A. Jesus is the true vine. (Isaiah 5)
 - 1. There are false vines to which people can be connected.
 - 2. The media is a false vine. What we are plugged into feeds our sense of identity.
 - 3. Consumerism shapes what we are. (Matthew 4:4)
- B. The Father is the gardener who prunes.
 - 1. God cuts out the areas that need removing so that we can be more fruitful.
 - 2. God wants to channel the areas that are needed for bearing fruit.

III. The Word of God has a cleansing effect.

- A. True discipleship works from the inside out.
- B. We do not have to act spiritual if we are spiritual.
- C. We are to be witnesses and not hypocrites.
- D. We were not created to be vines because we are limited. When we are connected to Jesus, we do not need to get our needs met elsewhere. Instead we can meet others needs.

IV. Jesus invites believers to plug into Him.

- A. When we build our life on Christ we cannot be cut off.
- B. We are able to deal with difficulties in this.

V. God wants us to be fruitful.

- A. We must protect the connection with God. (Matthew 6:33)

B. We must be obedient in love, which is connecting to the life of Jesus. (Romans 12:1-2)

C. We must pursue God in order to abide in the vine. (John 17:3, Psalm 34:8)

Application questions:

1. Are you connected to Jesus? What does the Bible teach about being connected to Him?

2. What false vines do you need to deal with? How will you go about this?

3. How is your connection to the vine today? What can you do to strengthen this connection?
