

I AM THE TRUE VINE

INTRODUCTION

John 12-20 describes the last week of Jesus' life. Even though these chapters comprise almost half of John's Gospel, they record the events that take place over the course of a few days. Therefore, a big portion of the material in them is devoted to the subject of Jesus' death and the things that transpired leading up to it. John 15 gives us one of those episodes when it tells us how Jesus spoke to His followers about what a real Christian looks like which is what we are going to talk about this morning by looking at "4 Ways to Tell that You are a True Disciple."

1). You are Part of the Vine (verse 1).

Verse 1 says, *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."*

Discussion Question A: What does this expression "I am the true vine" mean? What does the expression "My Father is the vinedresser mean" and what does the Mount of Olives have to do with it?

Discussion Question B: Can you remember any of the other "I AM" statements in the Gospel of John?

2). You Bear Fruit (verses 2-3).

Verses 2-3 says, *"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 much fruit. You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you."*

Discussion Question A: Jesus mentions 2 types of branches here. What were they and how are each of them treated differently in this passage?

Discussion Question B: Describe the process of pruning. How were the disciples going to be pruned that night and how does God still prune Christians today?

3). You Abide (verses 4-10).

Verses 4-6 says, *“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. 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. 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.”*

Discussion Question A: How many times does Jesus repeat the word “abide” in this chapter and what is the significance of that?

Discussion Question B: Did all 12 of the disciples continue to abide with Jesus? Which one failed in this department? Which ones failed and repented?

4). You Love One Another (verses 11-17).

Verses 12-15 says, *“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”*

Discussion Question A: Why did Jesus tell the disciples to “love another, just as I have loved you?” How did Jesus show love for the disciples earlier on this night?

Discussion Question B: How does this relate to us today? If we are struggling to produce the fruit of a Christian, what is Jesus’ instruction to us here?