

Episode #2-07 – Where the Branches Must Abide

I. The purpose of the gospel of John is to produce believers in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the One anointed by God to be the Savior of the world, and that Jesus is the Son of God, God represented in human form.

II. We continue to consider events leading up to the Lord's death. In John 15, the Lord continues His teaching to His disciples as they travel from the upper room where they had the last supper to the garden of Gethsemane. The Lord was discussing the vine and the branches on His way from the last supper to the Garden of Gethsemane. We saw He is the vine, the disciples the branches.

III. John 15:1-8. The vine and the branches.

- A. V.5. The point of the illustration. Acts is the working out of this. We too must abide in Him to do any work for Him. But our work will never be like the apostles' work!
- B. V.6. This has nothing to do with salvation today. Judas refused to abide in Him and had been cast out. He soon withered and became good for nothing but burning. This is not an illustration of eternal torment, as some would like to make it (men do not gather other men). Judas' enemies quickly gathered him in to make him a traitor. After this, he was quickly destroyed.
- C. V.7. This is not a promise about prayer, and has nothing to do with prayer today.
 - 1. No matter how much we abide in Him, do not get all we ask. (If we did, that would be very bad!)
 - 2. This did not even work for the twelve! Consider the death of James. Acts 12:1-2. Did none of his fellow apostles ask for his release?
 - 3. The Lord's servants would be bearing much fruit for Him. There might come a time they would need a miracle, or guidance, or inspiration, or power. All they had to do was abide in Him, and they would receive these things.
 - 4. But this does not apply to asking for a new fishing boat or a pair of sandals!
- A. V.8. The fruit they bore glorified Him by its miraculous character. A disciple is a learner or student, like a grad student. A disciple implies a master. They have been learners, but by bearing fruit, they will learn from Him again and again.

IV. John 15:9-17. The commandment to love.

- A. V.9. The Father's love for the Son must be beyond understanding. Amazing that the Lord could have that kind of love for sinful, fallen men! And He does for us too.
- B. V.10. How are they to abide in His love? By keeping His commandments! We read of them in John and elsewhere. This is the same for us, when we are keeping His commands to us and abiding in His love.
- C. V.11. This is why He spoke these things. He gave them His peace, John 14:27. Now He gives them His joy. It is earned by keeping His commandments. I have said, "How sad and frustrated and disappointed and burdened and hurt and discouraged and overwhelmed and beaten down and bitter and unhappy are so many believers today!" Why are they this way? Because they show no obedience to His commands, or even knowledge of what His commands are! We will only have His joy when we abide where He wants us to be.

V. Conclusion: The Lord used the Old Testament illustration of Israel as the vine and alters it, revealing Himself as the vine and them as the branches. They need to abide in Him to bear fruit. If a branch does not abide in Him, it will wither, and soon be destroyed. If they abide in Him, He will grant them whatever they ask. The Father is glorified by the fruit they bear. The illustration

is about the Lord and His disciples, not about us. Nevertheless, we too must abide in our Lord if we are to do any work for Him. Let us learn from this, and abide!