

“The True Vine!” John 15:1-11



15 “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, 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, 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, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have 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 remain in you, and that your joy may be full. John 15:1–11 (NKJV)

I Love the grape vine picture with wine corks instead of grapes.
In Scripture, wine was a blessing for God’s people, a symbol of JOY!

In John’s Gospel Jesus’ making water into wine is the opposite of Moses’ making water into blood! Blood was a symbol of judgment, even wrath upon Egypt!
The miracle of making water into wine a symbol of GRACE!

As the True Vine He is our SOURCE of Joy & He presents Himself to us this way as
He headed toward the cross –

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)

1. Jesus is the True Vine in relation to Israel –

15 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. John 15:1 (NKJV)

1. Israel is the vineyard from which Jesus as the True Vine has come –

⁷ For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. ...Isaiah 5:7 A (NKJV)

2. The apostle Paul described Israel or Israelites as human ancestors of Christ, hence in this sense they are the vineyard from which Christ as the True Vine emerges -

⁴ who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵ of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. Romans 9:4–5 (NKJV)

3. *Jesus more particularly was from the Tribe of Judah described in **Isaiah 5:7** as His (God's) **pleasant plant** ...*

4. *In **Genesis 49**, Jacob on his deathbed is blessing his sons, His blessing / prophecy about Judah is glorious, relating to our Lord Jesus Christ, and also mention a vine –*

⁸ “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s children shall bow down before you. ⁹ Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. ¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. ¹² His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk. Genesis 49:8–12 (NKJV)

A. *Jesus is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah – **Revelation 5:5***

B. *Surely the scepter does not depart from Him as His rule is eternal – **Genesis 49:10, Isaiah 9:7***

C. *But a glorious vine is also mentioned in **Genesis 49:11** The donkey tied to the vine and garments washed in wine are both indicators of an exceedingly LARGE and FRUITFUL VINE ... Big Enough, there is no fear of a donkey eating it all and fruitful enough that Judah is said to wash his garments in its wine.*

D. *In the Lord’s Supper, the Wine is a symbol of Christ’s blood which also has cleansing power –*

⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, Revelation 1:5 (NKJV)

5. *Ultimately wine in Scripture is pictured as a blessing to godly people, as symbol of prosperity, luxury and joy – ... ¹⁵ **And wine that makes glad the heart of man, ... Psalm 104:15 A (NKJV)***

“The grapevine was a symbol of national life. The emblem appeared on coins minted during the Maccabean period ...” R. Kent Hughes

“In the Roman period... Herod the Great’s rebuilt Temple adopted the image (of the vine). Between the porch and the holy place was a golden gate on which was affixed a gold vine. Clusters of gold grapes hung from it and wealthy families would give gold tendrils, berries and leaves as gifts so the vine might always grow larger. (Josephus BJ v 5.4 (120); Misnah Mid. Iii.8” Eerdmans Bible Dictionary

6. Yet, as much as Israel embraced the vine as a symbol; they failed as a vine or vineyard themselves –

⁵ And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it.” ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help. Isaiah 5:5–7 (NKJV)

7. Only Jesus Christ is the True Vine, not as a replacement for Israel, but as a fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel –

II. Of course, if Jesus is the True Vine in relation to Israel, He is also the True Vine in contrast to all false sources of joy –

31 For their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges. 32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter. 33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of cobras. Deuteronomy 32:31-33 (NKJV)

1. *Rock and rock in Deuteronomy 32:31 are references:*

A. *Rock, (uppercase R) to the true God and Christ –*

⁴ He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. Deuteronomy 32:4 (NKJV)

B. *rock (lowercase r) to the false god, goddesses or whatever else the ungodly might depend upon -*

For their rock is not like our Rock ... Deuteronomy 32:31 False god(s) and other things we should not rely on!

C. *Their vine* **2 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom ...**

Where they find pleasure is in immorality, Sodom was symbolic of that!

D. *Grapes, are* **Their grapes are grapes of gall two definitions of gall are**

(1) Any thing extremely bitter.

(2) Rancor; malignity.

E. *Wine –* **33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of cobras. Deuteronomy 32:31-33 (NKJV)**

When wine is connected to drunkenness and immorality, it is no longer a blessing but a curse.

In fact, all seeming blessings are curses to those who do not know Jesus Christ.

III. *More than anything else, even regular grape vines, Jesus is the True Vine for those who are truly His people –*

1. *If we are connected to Jesus, God the Father is our Gardener, our Vine-dresser -* **and My Father is the vinedresser. John 15:1 B**

A. *He gets rid of branches that do not bear fruit, a fearful thing.*

B. *He prunes branches that do --- Providentially, He works in our lives that by His grace we bear the fruit of God's Spirit –*

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)

2. *God's Word sanctifies / cleans us –*

³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. John 15:3

**17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. John 17:17
(NKJV)**

3. *Abiding means staying CONNECTED –*

⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, 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, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. John 15:4-5

A. *Fruit bearing is impossible without this connection! Our LIFE is dependent upon it.*

B. *We abide in Christ by continuing in God’s Word and Prayer, by confessing and repenting of sin, by not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together and basically by keeping Christ as our first love –*

4. *Not abiding has dreadful consequences –*

⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. John 14:6

A. *This militates against the once-saved-always-saved half-truth – Lie ...*

³⁰ As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. ³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.” ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” ³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’” ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. ³⁷ “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. ³⁸ I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.” ³⁹ They

answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “**If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham.** ⁴⁰ **But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.** ⁴¹ **You do the deeds of your father.”** Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “**If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.** ⁴³ **Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.** ⁴⁴ **You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.** John 8:30–44 (NKJV) *See the REST of John 8...*

They believed for a moment, but they needed to ABIDE, continue in Christ word ...

B. Judas was an apostle, but he did not abide in that state, because he was NEVER really saved –

⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

C. We believe in the perseverance of the saints –

¹⁶ For a righteous *man* may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity. Proverbs 24:16 (NKJV)

5. Abiding means answered prayers –

⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. John 15:7

6. Abiding means glorifying God –

⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. John 15:8

7. Abiding means being LOVED by God, God-the-Father, God-the-Son, God-the-Holy Spirit sort of the Ultimate God Group Hug ... Ultimate JOY, Christ’s Joy –

⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have 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 remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. John 15:9–11 (NKJV)

A. Wine a source of joy comes from a Vine –

¹¹ Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. Genesis 49:11 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And wine *that* makes glad the heart of man,... Psalm 104:15 (NKJV)

B. Jesus is the Ultimate and ONLY true source of joy -

...that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.
John 15:9–11 (NKJV)

C. That joy is a loving relationship with the true and living God, your Creator and Redeemer – keeping Christ's commands = abiding in His Love ...

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