

# THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

**BIBLE TEXT** : John 15:1-27

LESSON 236 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).**

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **John 15:1-27 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

<sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

<sup>3</sup> Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

<sup>4</sup> Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

<sup>5</sup> I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

<sup>6</sup> If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

<sup>7</sup> If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

<sup>8</sup> Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

<sup>9</sup> As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

<sup>10</sup> If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

<sup>11</sup> These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

<sup>12</sup> This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **NOTES:**

#### **Joined Together**

Jesus knew that He would soon leave His followers and go back to Heaven. He did not want them to be lonesome when they could not see Him, so He told them a parable to show them that He would continue to be near them — as near as a vine is to its branches — joined together. And He showed that God is not far away, either. God is as a faithful caretaker of a vineyard, carefully watching over the vine and its tender branches. The love of God joins us all — God the Father (the Husbandman), Jesus (the true Vine), and His true followers (the branches) — into a close relationship.

The Apostles knew that God loved Jesus. Some of them had heard His voice from Heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 17:5). And they had heard Jesus pray: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:41, 42). Surely there is great love between the Father and the Son to inspire such confidence!

Now Jesus told the Apostles, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." What wonderful love to mortal man! Can you imagine that Jesus loves us, His faithful children, in the same manner as His Father loved Him?

#### **Obedient unto Death**

One reason God loves Jesus is that He was willing to die for the sinners. When God looked down upon the sinful world and saw that the hearts of men were only evil continually, He announced in Heaven that all those people would have to die and be terribly punished unless someone without sin was willing to die in their stead. Jesus was listening when His Father spoke, and He answered that He would go, as planned from the foundation of the world (**Revelation 13:8** <sup>8</sup> And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.). He was willing to leave Heaven, where everyone loved and worshiped Him, and come to live on earth where He knew He would be hated and crucified, so that you and I might be saved. He was willing to suffer for us and take our sins upon Himself. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:8, 9). Jesus died for the glory of God, and because He loved sinners enough to buy them for Himself with His own Blood.

#### **Love for One Another**

God the Father, and God the Son, are not the only ones who have love. Jesus now gave the commandment, "Love one another, as I have loved you." He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He wants us, too, to have such love.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, he said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." If Jesus was willing to give His life to save our souls, we must be willing

loved you.

<sup>13</sup> Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

<sup>14</sup> Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

<sup>15</sup> Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

<sup>16</sup> Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

<sup>17</sup> These things I command you, that ye love one another.

<sup>18</sup> If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

<sup>19</sup> If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

<sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

<sup>21</sup> But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

<sup>23</sup> He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

<sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

to give our lives to help Jesus save other souls.

No one can be saved without the Blood of Jesus, so we could not save anyone by ourselves, even if we died for them. But Jesus wants us to consecrate our lives to help Him spread the news of salvation into all the world. We may be able to do much more for Him by living for Him, than if we gave up our life. But our devotion to God and our service for Him must be the most important thing in our life. We do not care so much where we live, what we eat, or what we wear, as we do about winning lost souls for Jesus. We love all people so much that we want to see them go to Heaven and live with Jesus forever; and we are willing to work hard to help them.

### **The Word Abiding in Us**

Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Do you know what His commandments are? You know some of them. But how careful are you to study the Bible so that you will know all the words of Jesus? Through the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we have the actual words that Jesus spoke when He was on earth. But how often do you look to see what they are? You may have read them at times, but you cannot remember them all. We should all look into that Word every day to be sure that we are doing what Jesus said we should. His Words must abide in us.

Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Are you satisfied to think you have eternal life because you have once been saved, sanctified, and have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Or are you searching His Word every day to make sure that you are ready to meet Jesus?

### **Cleansed Through the Word**

Jesus said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Of course we will have to be clean to be ready to meet Jesus; and we continue to be purified even after we are sanctified, by the "washing of water by the word." As we continue to read the words of Jesus, we find new things that He wants us to do, and we are reminded of other things that we did know but have neglected. If we are going to stay in the true Vine, we must keep God's Word in our heart.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." If our prayers are not being answered, it is a good thing to search our hearts to see if the words of Jesus "abide" in us. The promises He gave cannot fail. He told the truth when He said He would answer our prayers. So if He is not hearing us when we pray, we had better look into the Word to see if there is some commandment we have neglected or overlooked. Sin may even have crept into the heart of a person who was once a Christian, and in his carelessness he did not even notice it until he looked into the Word and saw a commandment he had broken. If he had not looked he might never have realized his error.

### **Judged by the Word**

Do we realize the importance of the Word of God? Man is going to be judged by it in the great judgment. Jesus said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Now if we are to be judged out of the Bible, do you not think it important that we study it diligently, to know what it says? We learn our lessons in school, as we should, but it is even more important to know the Word of God than to know who was the first president of the United States, how many states there are in the Union, how many battles our country has

<sup>25</sup> But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

<sup>26</sup> But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

<sup>27</sup> And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

fought, or which are the strongest nations in the world. Compared with the time we spend on our homework from school, how much time do we spend learning the Word of God?

### **Much Fruit**

We, as Christians, are branches on the Jesus-vine and must bear much fruit for Him. He is not satisfied with merely some fruit — it must be much. We may be bearing fruit, and we may think we are pleasing God — and then some trials will come, and we will wonder why. Jesus said, "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Through the purging (the trials) we find that there are more things, such as patience, meekness, long-suffering, and kindness, that we can learn, which will make us better Christians.

Let us consider persecution. Perhaps our first reaction would be to denounce anyone who spoke against us. That may be why the Lord let it come — to show us that we did not have as much love for another as we thought we had. Love is one of the fruits Jesus wants us to bear, and it is not enough to love only our friends. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Loving your friends would be a little fruit, but loving your enemies is much more fruit.

We may have thought that it is only our work for Jesus that is fruit. We may think we are bearing much fruit if we sing and testify for Jesus, visit the lonesome and the sick, help others in trouble, and give willing service. But the Bible tells us that the fruits of the Spirit are these: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23). The Apostle Peter tells us some more of the fruits: "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous" (I Peter 3:8). Even being well-mannered, if it is done as unto the Lord, is a fruit. These are the fruits we are to have much of, and to add to.

In order to learn more long-suffering, more goodness, more gentleness, we may have to suffer, be purged; but if we endure it as from God and for our good, we will enjoy the reward for having "much fruit." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11). The works we do for others will naturally follow if we have this good fruit in our heart.

### **The Comforter**

There was another lesson Jesus wanted His disciples to remember. He had emphasized the importance of His Word, but lest they should forget about it after He was gone, He promised to send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to remind them of all His words. "He shall testify of me." Another time He said, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; ... He shall glorify me" (John 16:13,14).

When we are baptized with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit dwells in us and teaches us the truth; and He testifies about Jesus. Are we letting Him speak through us? Do we let the world know that we are Christians? Are we leading others to Jesus? That is the work of the Spirit; and if He is in us, that is what we are doing — witnessing for Jesus.

The last words Jesus spoke to His disciples on earth were: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon

you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The people who are faithful witnesses for Jesus are the good branches, abiding in the true Vine.

### **Fruitless Branches Cut Off**

We have paid particular attention to the fruit-bearing branches. What about those who bear no fruit? Jesus said they will be cut off. They will no longer be a part of the true Vine; they will have no connection with Jesus. More than that, they will be punished and forever lost if they do not repent and come back to Jesus — be grafted in again.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 Who is the true Vine?
- 2 Who are the branches?
- 3 What part does God have with the Vine and branches?
- 4 Name some of the good fruits.
- 5 What does God do to the fruit-bearing branches?
- 6 How much fruit must we bear?
- 7 In what Book do we get our most important instruction for life?
- 8 For what purpose was the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, sent to this world?
- 9 What are we supposed to be doing for the Lord?
- 10 What happens to the branches that do not bear fruit?