

Branch life of the Believer

Lesson 10: THE VINE

I am The Vine, Ye Are The Branches - John 15:5

I. Introduction

- a. In the previous verse Christ said: "Abide in me." He had then announced the great unalterable law of all branch-life, on earth and in Heaven: "not of itself"; "except it abide."
- b. In the opening words of the parable He said: "I am the vine." He now repeats the words. We should be especially attentive to those things that Jesus repeats.
- c. The Lord would have us understand and learn the lesson, simple as it appears, it is the key of the abiding life-that the only way to obey the command, "Abide in me," is to have eye and heart fixed upon Him.
- d. Just as we may study the natural vine to discover the functions it serves for each of its branches, we should study the functions of Christ as the true Vine until we see all that He is for us.
- e. It is when we begin to apprehend the inexhaustible supply of Christ in all His functioning toward each individual believer that we position ourselves to abide in Him.

II. Functions of the True Vine

- a. He is the being producing life itself for each of His branches. Without the life-giving connection with its vine there can be no life in the natural branch. Christ is the life of every believer. Acts 17:28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being; KJV*
- b. He bears all His branches. We are rooted in Him as surely as the natural branch is rooted in its vine and as surely as Christ was in His Father. We are identified with him and He is identified with us. John 14:20 *ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. KJV*
- c. He strengthens all His branches. The natural branch withstands the winds of the storm only to the extent that it is strengthened by its vine. Christ is our strength for every situation, adversity and trial. Phil 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. KJV*
- d. He supplies all His branches. As the natural branch draws its nutrients from its vine, so too, believers are supplied exclusively by the inexhaustible supply of Christ. Phil 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. KJV*
- e. He inspires all His branches. The natural branch receives its growth and production instructions from its vine. So Christ provides every resource required by His branches to ensure that they produce exactly what He has designed for them. Eph 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. KJV*
- f. He is responsible for doing in each branch all that it could possibly need. While natural branches may be diseased or lack what they need, in Christ there is no possibility that a branch could require anything that He could not provide. Matt 19:26 *with God all things are possible. KJV*
- g. As we comprehend the aggregate functioning of the Vine in us, we enter into an ever deepening process that prepares us for an abiding relationship.

III. The Ever Deepening Process experience-trust-rest -abide

- a. The process begins when the Lord sovereignly prepares experience that He has chosen by which He will accomplish His purposes for each individual branch. Acts 9:15 *Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: KJV*
- b. Before we can truly trust Christ in ways that will prepare us to abide in Him we must experience that He is trustworthy. Personal experience over time is what produces that level of trust. 1 Sam 17:37 *David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. KJV*
- c. When experience has taught us that we can trust Christ in all that He is and in all that He promises, the foundation is laid for our abiding in Him. There can be no abiding where there is no trust. Rom 5:3-4 *but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope:KJV*
- d. It is when we are utterly trusting Christ regardless of the circumstance that we are free from the storms, struggles, and upsets of this life and we find our rest in Him. Matt 11:29 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. KJV*
- e. Many have thought of abiding as a continual strain and personal effort-we forget that trusting Christ means rest from effort because we have found the blessed place of our abode.

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- f. We are at rest because we have learned that in a spiritual sense there is **nothing** left for us to do; it is a fait accompli. Eph 2:6 *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: KJV*
- g. When God raised Christ from the dead, he did in effect raise up **all believers** together with him, and when he placed Him at His right hand in heavenly places, He advanced and glorified believers in and with him.
- h. The result is that in the present we may enjoy a type of **rest**; a rest which emanates from our status as a new creation in Christ. The work is done and we are enabled to be at rest.
- i. Just as surely as trusting flows out of experience; experience that Christ has taken us through, resting is the **result** of trusting
- j. When trusting Christ has been worked into us we are ready to abide in Him. Abiding is that spiritual state of mind which says I have **no needs** that are unmet and there is no other place for me to dwell. John 6:68 *Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. KJV*
- k. Abiding in Christ occurs as our hearts seek nothing from anyone or anything else. We have no need to seek anything because we have found our abode in Him. Christ is **our all**. Col 3:4 *Christ, who is our life, KJV*
- l. None-the-less we need to be **reminded** what Christ says to us: Abide in Me, trust Me, rest in Me, and let Me do My work in you and I will be glorified in you. John 17:10 *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. KJV*
- m. Our only task is to walk confidently through experience, trusting Him moment by moment and resting from our own labor and concern. He will **do all in us**.

IV. Summing it up

- a. He to whom God **reveals** the glory of the true Vine; he who sees what Jesus is and follows Him through experience as a result will trust Him. Such a believer cannot but abide.
- b. Trusting Christ with our day to day lives reveals Him to us in new and deeper ways. We experience His supply and we are led into a **resting place**. Ps 23:4-5 *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. KJV*
- c. If we would abide in Christ we must understand that we must come out of **every other** place, and every other trust and preoccupation, come out of self with its reasoning and efforts, come and rest in what He shall do.
- d. He invites us to live out of ourselves and to abide in Him. His desire is that we would know that we are in Him; we need **nothing** more; we are to remain there in Him.
- e. Those who seek shall find. He will reveal it to us, first in the thoughts and confessions and desires these words **awaken**, then in power by the Spirit.
- f. Let us wait on Him each day, in our quiet time, in the inner chamber with Him and His **Word**, let our trust in Him give us that blessed rest that we may abide in Him

V. Application

- a. If abiding in Christ can be thought of as the result of a process, how are you doing:
 - 1. In following Christ through your moment by moment experience?
 - 2. In trusting Christ with the details of your day to day life?
 - 3. In resting in what He has already accomplished on your behalf?
 - 4. In consciously abiding in Him?
- b. Confess your shortcomings to Him
- c. Rejoice and thank Jesus for all that He is and that all His fullness is for you.

I am the Vine. Blessed Lord, speak Thou that word into my soul. Then shall I know that. And that I can count upon Thee to stream it into me, and that my abiding is so easy and so sure when I forget and lose myself in the adoring faith that the Vine holds the branch and supplies its every need.