

**Lesson 11 YE THE BRANCHES**  
*I Am The Vine, Ye Are the Branches - John 15:5*

What does it mean to wait upon the Lord? What are the essential ingredients in the soul of one who waits upon the Lord?

**I. Introduction**

- a. Christ had already said much about the branch; here He comes to the personal **application**. In effect He is saying: "You are the branches of whom I have been speaking".
- b. As our Vine, He is engaged to be and do all the branches need. Now, He instructs His branches to accept their **role** as branches in the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit whom He had promised.
- c. The role of the branch is to function as a member of **His body** and to be a branch on earth; nothing less, nothing more. Rom 12:5 *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. KJV*
- d. The relationship He seeks to establish is an intensely **personal** one: it all hinges on the two little words I and You. And it is for us as intensely personal as it was for the first disciples. John 6:70 *Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you KJV*
- e. Let us therefore present ourselves before our Lord and wait upon Him until He speaks to each of us in power, and our whole soul **apprehends** this intimate connection: "I am the Vine; you are the branch."

**II. A Branch - Nothing Less**

- a. As disciples of Jesus, regardless of youth or feebleness, we need to hear the voice: "You are the branch." You must be **nothing less**.
- b. However, we should be alert to the fact that there are any number of ways in which we may function at levels that are **less** than that for which the Vine has designed us.
- c. Many a branch has failed to live up to his true potential because of **false** humility. What makes this "humility" false is that it is not a part of the true identity of the branch.
- d. An example of this **error** is reflected in the statement: "*I can not share my Christian faith with non-Christian friends because they will reject me*".
- e. Such thinking is rooted in **unbelief**; this a failure to accept what the Lord has promised and provided. Matt 8:26 *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? KJV*
- f. Others fall short because of their carnal resistance to personal **sacrifice** which our Lord clearly warned ought to be expected by every true branch rooted in the heavenly Vine. Luke 14:27 *And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. KJV*
- g. Still others come up short because they are trusting in their natural abilities, believing that they are **able** to produce what Christ desires by power of their own will and natural talents. Gal 3:1 *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? KJV*
- h. Every failure of branch-life living that is less than what a true branch **can be** is ultimately rooted in unbelief whether that unbelief is spawned by ignorance or rebellion; it is unbelief in any case.
- i. Having said that, being a branch and nothing less is a two-sided coin. On the one side the truth is that no one is able (in the **flesh**) to live up to the perfect standard of God.
- j. On the other side of that same coin however, we must utterly believe and **live** the realization that Christ who is our life will do all through us. We must wait upon Him for His timing.
- k. It is He who will enable us to say: "I will be a branch, with all that may mean-a branch, very feeble, but yet like the Vine, for I am of the same nature, and receive of the **same spirit**. 1 Cor 12:4 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. KJV*
- l. True, we may be a branch, utterly helpless, and yet just as manifestly set apart before God and men, and wholly given up to the work of bearing fruit, just as the Vine itself **works** ceaselessly in us. John 5:17 *But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. KJV*
- m. By faith, as a branch we must apprehend the truth that we are nothing in ourselves, and yet we must trust and rest; rejoicing in the faith that **knows** that He will provide all for all. Matt 13:11 *He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. KJV*

**III. A Branch - Nothing More**

- a. *You are the branch.*-You need be **nothing more**. You need not for one single moment of the day take upon yourself the responsibility of the Vine. Simply wait upon the Lord.
- b. Being nothing more is an admission that we are constrained to a place of **total** dependence. John 15:5 *for without me ye can do nothing. KJV*

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- c. Being nothing more is an acknowledgement that our lives are not about and for **ourselves** but about and for Christ. Matt 16:24 *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. KJV*
- d. We need, least of all, to be **anxious** as to how we are to understand the mystery, or fulfill its conditions, or work out its blessed aim. We may trust Him for His results in us. Phil 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: KJV*
- e. The realization of our being a branch and nothing more is the greatest source of **liberation** for those who labor under the mistaken belief that one's relationship with Christ is dependent upon one's performance. Heb 4:10 *For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, KJV*
- f. The Vine will give all and work all. The Father, the Husbandman, watches over our union with and **growth** in the Vine. We need be nothing more than a branch. Only a branch!
- g. Understanding that we are nothing more than a branch will lead us in the path of **continual** surrender to Christ's working and will lead us into moment by moment true obedience to His every command. 1 Peter 1:13-14 *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; <sup>14</sup> As obedient children, KJV*
- h. Being a branch and nothing more is the gateway through which the branch passes on the way to experiencing the **joyful** expectancy of all Christ's grace. John 15:7 *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. KJV*

**IV. How We Learn Branch Life**

- a. So one may now ask: "How can I learn to be, 'Only a branch!' and how can I **live it** out?"
- b. We must remember that the character of a branch, its strength, and the fruit it bears, depend entirely upon the Vine. Your life as a branch, in large measure depends upon your apprehension of **what** our Lord Jesus is.
- c. Whatever the Lord is in His character must not only be learned intellectually, but must also become a part of our growth through personal **experience**. That which is not personally experienced of Christ is not really ours. Ps 34:8 *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. KJV*
- d. Therefore we must never **separate** the words: "I the Vine from the words you the branch." Our life and strength and fruit depend upon what our Lord Jesus is! As the Vine, so, the branch.
- e. We must wait upon the Lord. This leads us to worship and to trust Him. Let Him be your one desire and the one occupation of your heart. Set aside all the worldly attractions which **distract** you from that one ultimate aim. Col 3:2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. KJV*
- f. When we feel that we do not and cannot know Him fully, then we need just remember it is part of His responsibility as Vine to make Himself known to us. We must **wait** upon Him expectantly for His revelation. Ps 123:2 *Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us. KJV*
- g. He does this not in thoughts and conceptions-no-but in a hidden growth which occurs through **experience**. This mechanism is at work within the life that is humbly and restfully and entirely given up to wait on Him. Ps 27:14 *Wait on the LORD : be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD .KJV*
- h. The Vine reveals itself within the branch; thence comes the growth and fruit. Christ dwells and works within His branches. Our task is only to **be a branch**, waiting on Him to do all.
- i. He will be to you the true Vine. The Father Himself, the divine Husbandman, is able to make you a branch worthy of the heavenly Vine. You shall **not** be disappointed and He shall be glorified.

**V. Application**

- a. Our correct aim is to only live to bear the fruit of the vine; may my life on earth have no wish or aim, but to let Christ bring forth fruit through me.
- b. Lord, teach me to wait upon you for what you will produce in me.
- c. What interferes with your ability to wait upon the Lord? What will you do about it?