



MESSAGE/SERIES:

Series: JESUS IN JOHN

Message: "Signs of Life?"

DATE: August 15, 2021

SCRIPTURE FOR THIS WEEK:

(These verses will help you understand themes within as you read our core text as scripture proves scripture)

John 15:1-27, Exodus 3:13-14, Psalm 80, John 14:16,20,23,27, Hebrews 12:4-11

(Disciple of a Father), Matthew 24:12, John 8:31, Hebrews 3:13-19, **1 John 2:19, 2**

John 1:9, John 5:29, **Ezekiel 15:1-8, Matthew 13:37-42, 1 John 1:1-4, Isaiah 27:2-6, 1**

John 3:16, 1 Timothy 1:12, John 7:7, Ephesians 2:3

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

[JOHN 15:1-27]

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 does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I 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 be in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'

²⁶ "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning."

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 15:1–27.

“The means for Fruitfulness for which the believer has been chosen is Prayer in Jesus name .”

-DA Carson

TERMS & BACKGROUND:

[I AM STATEMENTS]

“I AM” SAYINGS Self-proclamations made by Jesus in the Gospel of John.

One of the distinctive elements of the teaching of Jesus is the way Jesus expresses important truths in terms of his own personal character and mission. These statements begin with the words “I am” and then continue to express a deep theological thought in terms of the metaphorical statement. This method of teaching is preserved for us in the Gospel of John alone. While Matthew, Mark, and Luke emphasize Jesus’ mode of teaching in the form of the

parable, John pictures Jesus as teaching in discourses. These discourses often find an “I am” statement as the key expression of the central thought.

The “I am” statements found in the Gospel of John are the bread of life or the living bread (6:35, 48, 51), the light of the world (8:12; see also 9:5), the gate (10:7, 9), the good shepherd (10:11, 14), the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way, the truth and the life (14:6), and the vine (15:1, 5).

Each of these statements follows a basic pattern. They are written as metaphors in which one of the key elements is to be the Christ expressed as “I am.” The meaning of the metaphor is to be drawn chiefly from the explanatory statement connected with it. Thus when Jesus says, **“I am the light of the world,” the explanatory statement follows, “So if you follow me, you won’t be stumbling through the darkness,** for living light will flood your path” (TLB). This latter statement is intended to help a person interpret the metaphor. Most statements have such interpretive elements joined to them.

These metaphorical statements often complement Jesus’ miracles. The statement and a miracle each contribute to the understanding of the other. Thus when Jesus proclaims that he is the light of the world, he proceeds to bring sight to the blind man. The controversy that follows between the blind man and the Pharisees shows that the man has received spiritual sight as well as physical. Before Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, he tells Martha that he is the resurrection and the life. The raising of Lazarus is intended to show Jesus’ power to give life now and to demonstrate his power to do what he proclaimed he was able to do. After Jesus had fed the 5,000, he declared that he was the living bread that had come from heaven. Each of these miracles is interpreted by the metaphorical “I am” statement. **Each statement is intended to give the miracle meaning for the ministry of Jesus.** They show us that Jesus’ miracles were not just acts of power or mercy but actions demonstrating the meaning of his ministry and teaching.

Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 623.

[EXODUS 3:13-14]

“Many theologians consider the “I am” formula to reflect an identification of deity found in the OT (see God, Names of). When Moses was called, he asked God to identify himself in such a way that Moses might gain acceptance from the Hebrew people. God revealed himself to Moses as the great “I Am.” Moses was to tell the Israelites that “I Am sent me to you” (Ex 3:13–14). From this “I Am” the name Yahweh is derived. Many believe that Jesus used this same formula from the OT to relate his deity. **The “I am” statements in John’s Gospel help the reader identify Jesus as divine, as God.**”

Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 623.

[VINE DRESSER & PRUNING]

God, the Father is the Vinedresser and is constantly pruning His church. Pruning is cleansing his church of sin and sinful practices. “But what in actual practice is this process which is here referred to as ‘cleansing the vine branch’, and by what means is it done?”

The common answer has been that it refers to God’s discipline of his people. When a vinedresser cleanses or prunes, a vine he will take a sharp knife or a pair of secateurs and drastically cut away all excessive growth, so severely indeed that to an untrained eye he might appear to have devastated, or even destroyed the vine. But in actual fact, far from destroying the vine, the drastic pruning re-directs the vine’s energies so that, next season, instead of producing showy but fruitless foliage and wood, they turn themselves into larger, sweeter, and more numerous bunches of grapes. So our heavenly Father allows pain, sorrow, persecution, suffering, and trials of every kind to come upon us so as to educate, train if need be discipline, and chastise us, so that we may be partakers of his holiness. God himself admits that while the process is going on, it is far from joyous: it can be devastatingly grievous.”

David Gooding, *In the School of Christ: Lessons on Holiness in John 13–17*, Myrtlefield Expositions (Coleraine, Northern Ireland: Myrtlefield House, 2013), 139–140.

[ABIDES]

John 15:4 introduces the term “Abide”. Abiding is the continuing with and in Christ’s Strength. Abiding is the absence of independence in self.

[VINE IMAGERY]

“Vine imagery is so common in the ancient world that scholars have been able to discover parallels they find compelling in a wide range of literature—in Gnosticism, the Mandaean corpus, Philo, the literature of Palestinian Judaism, and more. The popularity of such imagery in ancient agrarian societies means that superficial similarities cannot themselves demonstrate dependence, at least until all competing claims are weighed.”

D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 513.

“In the Old Testament, the vine is a common symbol for Israel, the covenant people of God (Ps. 80:9–16; Is. 5:1–7; 27:2ff.; Je. 2:21; 12:10ff.; Ezk. 15:1–8; 17:1–21; 19:10–14; Ho. 10:1–2). Most remarkable is the fact that whenever historic Israel is referred to under this figure it is the vine’s failure to produce good fruit that is emphasized, along with the corresponding threat of God’s judgment on the nation. Now, in contrast to such failure, Jesus claims, ‘I am the *true* vine’, *i.e.* the one to whom Israel pointed, the one that brings forth good fruit.”

D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 513.

OUTLINE:

I. (v1-8) The Metaphor/ TRUE VINE

A. (v1) **THE ROLES-** "I am the true vine, and **my Father is the vinedresser.**"

1. **God the Son/Jesus is the Vine**

- a) He is the source of Life (eternal life)
- b) Jesus is the Covenant God of His people (Committed to His people)

2. **God the Father is the Vinedresser tending to those who belong to Jesus**

B. (v2) **THE RESOLVE OF THE FATHER-** "Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and **every branch that does bear fruit he prunes**, *that it may bear more fruit.*"

1. **The Father prunes every branch**

- a) Those that bear no fruit at all are cut away from the rest so that the living branches may be more healthy
- b) Those that bear some fruit are pruned so that they may bear more fruit
 - (1) Puning represents suffering and trials that produce more trust/Faith in Jesus (James 1)
 - (2) More fruit in each believer is the goal of the Father and not torture or punishment

C. (v3) **THE REALITY-** "Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you."

- 1. *All of the Branches are ceremonially clean before God because they are in Christ (Saved/set apart by God)*
- 2. *Ceremonially clean is clean before the Father because of Jesus (Justification/Our propitiation)*
- 3. *We are made clean by the word that produces faith unto salvation (Romans 10:17)*

D. (v4) **THE REAPING-** "**Abide in me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me."

1. **Staying or continuing in Jesus is abiding**

- a) Abiding is the absence of independence
- b) Abiding is a daily surrendering to Jesus
 - (1) Daily repentance has no wait on salvation but rather effectiveness and fellowship with Jesus

2. **Fruit is the product produced by the Spirit due to our new identity**

- a) Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24)
- b) Productive kingdom work

E. (v5) "I am the vine; you are the branches. **Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.**'

1. *Continuing with and in Christ will produce fruit (What God desires)*

- a) People will grow in Christ
- b) People in Christ will not just be effective they will be very effective in Kingdom work

F. (v6) ⁶ "If **anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers**; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned."

1. *Those that do not abide in Christ in daily repentant fellowship can do nothing to glorify God*

- a) Hebrews 11:6 "It is impossible to please God without faith..." (not abiding is evidence of lack of faith

(1) *He is "Thrown Away"- action by God against the unfruitful works of man*

(2) *The branches are "Burned"- a final action against the works and life of the unbeliever*

G. (v7) **THE FRUITFUL PRAYER LIFE-** ⁷ If you abide in me, **and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.**"

1. The word of God will continue in us if we are in the word daily

2. The word of God reveals God's desires and makes our prayers in His Will

- a) God will give us what our heart desires *when* our heart is guided by His word

(1) This is the definition of effective prayer

(2) Effective Prayer will equate changed actions

(3) Our desires (wishes) change as we pray and search

H. (v8) "By this **my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit** and so prove to be my disciples.'

1. *Glorifying God is done by Bearing fruit that is unmistakably from God*

2. *Glorifying God is by not only bearing some fruit but much fruit*

- a) Lack of fruit proves that one never was connected to the vine because it does not glorify God

- b) Lack of faithfulness to God is proof that one was never truly connected to the true vine but rather religion was the taproot of the faith they possessed and it could not provide life

II. (v9-16) The Meaning/ EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

- A. (v9-10) **ABIDING IN HIS LOVE**- ⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I 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."
1. (v4/7) *Abiding is tied to obedience to God's word*
 2. (v9-10) *Abiding in His complete & perfect love (the perfect love of the Father)*
 3. *Abiding in Jesus is Abiding in His perfect love*
 - a) We are loved by Jesus the way God loves His Son Jesus
 - b) The Love of the Father sent Jesus after us (1 John 4:10)
 - c) The Love of the Father provokes us to love (1 John 4:19)
 4. *Obedience to His word is Jesus doing the will of the Father through us (love is obedience)*
 5. *Enjoyment of the Love of God is found in obedience*
 - a) His love never fades for us but the realization in our own hearts does with a lack of obedience
- B. (v11) ¹¹"These things I have spoken to you, **that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.**
1. This instruction to obey God's commands is there that we may know His Joy in its fullness
 - a) Jesus' Joy is found in obeying the Father's will
 - b) Therefore our Joy is found in obeying Jesus' will (which is the will of the Father/unity)
 - c) John 12:24-26 (Full Joy is anchored knowing Jesus is pleased)
- C. (v12-13) ¹²"This is my commandment, that you **love one another as I have loved you.** ¹³*Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*
1. *Jesus points out that loving one another is paramount (individual commands must be followed)*
 2. *Jesus points out that His loved laid down His life for those who would believe and this is the example for us to follow*
 3. *Laying down our lives comes through putting others before ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4)*
 - a) If we are not sacrificing for others our love is depleted
 - b) If our love is depleted then we are not in Christ and drawing from His Love with His Joy

D. (v14-15) ¹⁴ **You are my friends if you do what I command you.** ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

1. *Jesus no longer calls us servants but friends and has made this know to us by revealing the Fathers will to us*
 - a) The Spirit reveals the will of the Father to those who belong to Jesus and are His friends
 - b) Jesus doesn't view us as servants but friends but we should love Him enough to view ourselves as Bondslaves (Freed but out of love stay and serve)

E. (v16-17) “¹⁶ **You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.**”

1. (v16) *Jesus chose us*
 - a) We did not go looking for Him but rather He came and convicted our hearts, gave us faith, and desire to follow (God move us through desire)
 - b) He has appointed us to bear fruit in the tasks that He has called us to do
 - (1) *When we are in God's will and serving His purposes there will be fruit*
 - (2) *By contrast, when we are not in His will there will not be any kingdom work done with any real fruit*
2. (v16) *Fruit is being a tool for salvation and leading others to Christ as Lord and Savior*
 - a) When we are obeying God we are in a position to be used to lead others to Christ
 - b) When we are obeying God will place people in our path
 - c) When we are obeying Jesus the fruit or effectiveness in ministry should be constant (Abiding)
 - d) Effectiveness in ministry is evidence of salvation
3. (v16) *Whatever we ask for that aligns with His word (in His name) will be given to us for the mission He has called us*
4. *Fruitfulness is prayer that aligns with God's word and heart*

III. (v17-27) The Resistance/ COUNTER CULTURE

- A. (v17) “¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”
1. We are placed into a community of Love at the point of salvation
 - a) The Father and Son love us so much they gave life

- b) The love of the Father and Son are placed in us to Love them and their mission to the point of obedience
- c) The Love of the Father and Son are placed in us to Love His people
- d) Loving is serving therefore we serve one another

B. (v18-19) “¹⁸ **If the world hates you**, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; **but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world**, therefore the world hates you.

1. *We should never be surprised that the world hates us*
2. *The hate of the world is just an extension of the hate they have for Jesus whom they hated from the start*
3. *We represent and carry the Mission of Christ in our bodies therefore they will hate us and persecute us for the cause of Christ*
4. *Love of the Father will lead to hate from the world/persecution from the world because we are not of the world*
 - a) We are called out from the world
 - b) We must reject the world's ways therefore we are rejecting them in their eyes
 - c) We have no other way to go but the Father's way so our lives will contrast the world if we are truly following Jesus
 - (1) The cause of all persecution of Christians is the hate for Jesus
 - d) To be “chosen out of the world” means we are separated from the world in thought and actions because God's Word contradicts the world's philosophies

C. (v20-21) “²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: ‘**A servant is not greater than his master.**’ **If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.

1. *We are not greater or deserve any different than Jesus received in the world*
2. *The world did not keep His words therefore they will not keep ours*
 - a) Right and wrong based on God's word will be hate speech to the world
 - b) God's commands to repent will make us and God judgemental in the world's estimate
 - c) Fruit of the Love of the Father in us is persecution from the World
3. The fact that they do not recognize Jesus as God is evidence that they do not know God nor will they receive His forgiveness in the end

D. (v22-24) “²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would **not have been guilty of sin**, but now they have no excuse for their sin.²³ **Whoever hates me hates my Father also**.²⁴ **If I had not done among them the works that no one else did**, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.

1. *Jesus’ very coming and working miracles in this world are damning to the world as they can now see their sins*
2. *Jesus points out every man’s need for a savior as does the Law and man does not like to be told he is a sinner*
3. *Jesus’ life points out that He is God the Son and if the Son then also judge in the end and man does not want any judge*
4. *By rejecting Jesus they reject God’s revelation and are therefore in rebellion against God*
5. *Those who hate Jesus’s teachings hate God the Father as they are His words as well*
6. *Jesus’ words provide conviction of sins and the remedy*

E. (v25) “But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘**They hated me without a cause.**’”

1. **Psalm 69:4** *“Those who hate me without cause outnumber the hairs on my head. Many enemies try to destroy me with lies, demanding that I give back what I didn’t steal.”*
 - a) (Prophecy fulfilled) The word of God predicted they would hate Jesus without cause

F. (v26) “But when **the Helper comes**, whom I will send to you from the Father, **the Spirit of truth**, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”

1. *The Holy Spirit submits in love to Jesus and the Father to come to earth and testify of Jesus to those who have not seen Him*
 - a) The Spirit joins us in our faith in Jesus
 - b) The Spirit joins us in testifying to the World of Jesus who came to seek and save the lost
 - (1) *The Holy Spirit (the Paraclete) brings counsel to weary Christians*
 - (2) *The Holy Spirit brings conviction to the world through the church utilizing His own words from Scripture to produce faith in those who will believe.*

G. (v27) “And **you also will bear witness**, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

1. The Subject here is the disciples who walked with Jesus (“with me from the beginning”)
 - a) They would be foundational witnesses and co-laborers with the Spirit in building His church/Kingdom

