

08 January

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Gospel of John – week 31

 Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member that Jesus Christ is the True vine?
2. What is God the Father called in v.1? (**Vinedresser (NKJV); gardener (NIV).**)
3. How does v.2 explain the pruning process? (**Removing of unfruitful fruit, and pruning of fruitful fruit to bear more fruit.**).
4. How does God prune us according to v.3? (**By the Word of God.**).
5. How can we bear fruit according to v.4? (**Abide in the Vine, Jesus Christ.**).

 Let's go deeper

6. What is the warning for unproductive fruit in v.6? (**He is cast out as a branch and is withered; and gathered and thrown into the fire and they are burned.**).
7. How can we bring glory to Father God in v.8? (**Jesus said; "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples."**).
8. What is Jesus calling us in v.15? (**Jesus said; "I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."**).
9. For what purpose did Jesus choose us in v.16? (**Jesus said; "you did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit."**).
10. What is Jesus' command in v.17? (**That you love one another**)

 Let's apply this

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

The purpose of fruit bearing is to bring glory to God, not to the disciple. A branch that bears much fruit brings honour to one who cares for the vine, and a disciple who bears much fruit brings honour and glory to God.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you, how you can bear more fruit?
- Trust and surrender the Father's pruning work in your life?
- Ask a godly friend to help you grow and bear more fruit to the glory of God the Father.

SUMMARY:

Gospel of John: Week 31 (Fruitfulness).

Read: John 15:1 – 17.

v.1; The picture of a vine was a familiar symbol in ancient Israel. God used a vine as a metaphor of His people in the scriptures. See Isaiah 3:14; 5:7; 27:2 – 3; Psalms 80:8 – 9; Ezekiel 15; Jeremiah 2:21 and Jesus' parable in Matt.20:1 – 16. A large golden vine was also set on the front of the temple to communicate the idea that Israel was God's vine; and the vine was a recognised symbol of the Messiah. For Jesus to say, "I am the true vine" (in the last of His "I AM" sayings"), we see a declaration that, as the Messiah, Jesus now becomes the focus for God's people. Jesus is the true vine. We must be rooted in Him (not in Israel) if we will bear fruit for God. In the New Covenant community, our first identification is in Jesus Christ Himself, not Israel.

v.2; God prunes us by removing unfruitful branches, and pruning fruitful one's. God the Father prunes our lives, so that we will become healthy and bear spiritual fruit. Pruning is a principle to practice in our individual lives, corporate lives as a church and for business leaders. The word can be translated both pruning and cleansing.

v.3; Pruning or cleaning is done by the Word of God. It condemns sin; it inspires holiness; it promotes growth. Jesus applied the words God gave Him to His disciples, they underwent a pruning process that removed evil from them and prepared them for further service.

v.4 – 5; To "abide" means that we "hold to" or "continue in" Jesus' teaching. In this metaphor of the vine and the branches, "abiding" refers to being intimately connected to and receiving life from the vine.

v.6; This is a warning that those who reject God's Messiah, Jesus Christ will be thrown into the fire. A branch only has life as it is connected to the vine; a disciple only lives as they are connected to the Master through a personal relationship.

v.7 – 8; The purpose of fruit bearing is to bring glory to God, not to the disciple. A branch that bears much fruit brings honour to one who cares for the vine; and a disciple who bears much fruit brings honour to God.

v.9 – 11; When the disciples stay connected to the love of Jesus the relationship stays strong; healthy and is life giving.

v.12 – 17; Servants obey because they must. Friends obey because they want to. In the relationship between a disciple and his rabbi of that time, it was not expected to be a friendship. Yet Jesus the rabbi called His disciples, and servants – **friends**.