

BIBLE READING DAY 42, SATURDAY: APRIL 9

I Am the True Vine

John 15:1–27

“I am the true vine,” said Jesus, “and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he trims away; and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes, that it may yield more fruit. Already, you have been pruned by the teaching I have given you. Abide in me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself without continuing in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me, and I in him, is the one who will bear abundant fruit. For you can do nothing severed from me.

“If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. As you bear abundant fruit, my Father will be glorified, and you will truly be my disciples.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Continue in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will continue in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and continue in his love. I have told you these things so that you may share my joy, and that your joy may be complete.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you servants, for a servant does not know everything about his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, because I have shared with you everything that I have heard from my Father. It is not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should endure, and that the Father should give you whatever you ask in my name. This I command you: love one another.

“If the world hates you, just remember that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember what I told you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you too; if they have accepted my teaching, they will accept yours too. But they will do all these things to you because you bear my name, and because they do not know the one who sent me. If I had not come and taught them, they could have continued to pretend they were without sin. But now, they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father too. If I had not done among them such works as no one else ever did, they could have gone on pretending they were without sin. But now, they have seen both me and my Father, and hated us both. But thus is fulfilled what is written in their own law,

‘They hated me without a cause.’

“But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of Truth who goes forth from the Father—he will bear witness of me. And you too will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

“It is better to be divided by truth than to be united in error. It is better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals, than falsehood that comforts and then kills.”

Adrian Rogers

Promise of the Holy Spirit, John 16:1–33

“I have told you these things so that you will not lose faith. They will exclude you from the synagogues. Indeed, the time will come when whoever kills you will think he is rendering a service to God. They will do these things because they know neither the Father nor me. But I have told you these things so that, when the time comes, you may remember that I told you about them.

“I did not tell you these things before, because I was still with you. But now, I am going away to him who sent me. Yet not one of you is asking me, ‘Where are you going?’ Instead, sorrow has filled your hearts because I have told you these things. But I tell you the truth, it is best for you that I go away. For unless I go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in me; of righteousness, because I am going away to the Father and you will no longer see me; and of judgment, because the prince of this world has been judged and condemned.

“I still have many things to tell you, but you are not able to grasp them now. But when he comes—the Spirit of Truth—he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take the things that are mine and declare them to you. All that the Father has is mine; that is why I said that he will take the things that are mine and declare them to you. A little while, and you will see me no more; again, a little while, and you will see me.”

Then some of his disciples said one to another, “What is this that he is saying to us— ‘A little while, and you will not see me; and again, a little while, and you will see me’; and ‘because I am going away to the Father’? What is this that he is saying— ‘a little while’? We do not know what he means.”

Jesus, knowing they wanted to ask him, said, “Are you asking each other about what I said— ‘A little while, and you will not see me; and again, a little while, and you will see me’? I tell you truly, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful; but your sorrow will change to joy. When a woman is in travail, she has sorrow because her time has come. But when she brings forth the child, she no longer remembers the agony because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. And you indeed have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. And in that day, you will ask me nothing. I tell you truly, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. As yet, you have not asked anything in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

“I have been speaking to you in parables, but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in parables but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day, you will pray in my name; and I need not tell you that I will pray to the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

“Now you are speaking plainly,” said the disciples, “and not talking in parables. Now we know for sure that all things are known to you, for you need not wait for anyone to ask you anything! Because of this, we believe that you came forth from God.”

“Do you now believe?” replied Jesus. “The hour is coming, indeed it has already come, when you will be scattered, each to his own place, and will leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have told you these things so that, in me, you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble and distress; but be of good courage, I have overcome the world.”

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry														
EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	FIRST PASS-OVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASS-OVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	FINAL PASS-OVER

DEVOTIONAL DAY 42 (SATURDAY APRIL 9)

The Divine Vine

Based on John 15:1–27

Did you know.....

- Grapes are known for their heart-healthy properties.
- Grapes grow on beautiful, vining plants. The plants need trellises or fences to support their heavy vines.
- The grapes we eat fresh are different than those used for making juice and wine.
- Some grapes, such as the Concord grape, grow well in cold climates. Wine grapes need warm weather. They grow in places like Colorado, southern Utah, or western Colorado.

Grapes are BIG business in today's economy. The industry contributed \$114.1 billion to the national economy last year alone. Knowing how to properly grow and cultivate this plant is also very important. The grapevine can be a highly productive plant in the right season, but by pruning the vine, you can 'tell' each plant how many bunches of grapes farmers want it to produce in the coming season. Many things are taken into consideration like the climate, the soil, and the age and vigor of the vines. As well as affecting the yield (quantity of grapes produced), pruning also affects the balance, consistency, sustainability and viability of the resulting crop. The bottom line is that pruning is a VERY important part of growing grapes.

In John 15, Jesus was most likely speaking to farmers who knew all about harvesting grapes. They knew that in order to produce the best crop, 80-90 percent of the vine would need to be cut down in order to produce new growth. They understood that it was important to watch for weeds during this time as they would choke the vine and that you would not see fruit for 36 months. And they knew the importance of the vine only having one shoot and not many to produce good quality grapes instead of many. In today's world, we are very "connected." Connected to each other through social media. Connected to our work through e-mail and zoom meetings. Connected to entertainment with Netflix and Hulu accounts. So why is it that with all the connectivity, people feel more alone than ever? The answer is simple. We need to be connected to the "true vine." We need to be connected to Jesus. We cannot be tied to this world and to serving God. He prunes us so we can produce more fruit. The key to being fruitful is not labor, though labor will be necessary. The key to fruitfulness is not situations you find yourself in, though how you handle your situations is important. The key to fruitfulness is for us to have our lives joined to the one, true, healthy vine — Jesus.

Father in Heaven, increase my desire to seek You, know You, and remain close to You. Help me to be faithful and not give up when I am tired and weary. Help me to endure Your pruning with grace and strength. Help me to stay fully connected to You, the True Vine. Amen.

--By RJ and Angela Bacon

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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