

The Vine and The Branches

Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher the world has ever known! He made very difficult ideas easy for people to understand. He often used things in nature to explain His teachings. One example of this is found in John 15:1-8.

Here Jesus compares Himself to a vine. God, the Father, is the vinedresser. Disciples of Jesus are the branches in the vine. Jesus said: *"I am the true vine."* The vine is the means of giving life to the branches. It is only by remaining in the vine that a branch can have life.

Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal life. Many others have claimed to be the way to God.

Mohammed boasted that he was God's last and greatest prophet. Millions of people follow him. But Mohammed died and remains dead. He can give life to no one!

Buddhists claim Gautama was the "Enlightened One" who came to show us the true way to God. But Gautama has been dead for 2,500 years. He was simply a man, just like you and I are.

Jesus died, but He did not remain in the grave. He arose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15). He has power over death and will live forever (Revelation 1:17-18).

We can have hope of eternal life only if we trust in Jesus Christ and obey Him.

Jesus said: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"* (John 14:6).

John wrote: *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."* (1 John 5:11-12).

Jesus also said: *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* (John 15:5).

Many false teachers today say that Christ is the vine and the various man-made churches or denominations are the branches in the vine.

They say, "One branch is the Baptist Church, another the Lutheran, another the Roman Catholic, another the Seventh Day Adventist, etc."

Jesus did not say, "I am the vine, and denominations are the branches!" He said, "I am the vine and you are the branches." Disciples of Christ are the branches in the vine. If you are a Christian, you are a branch in Christ.

When God created the world. He gave the law of reproduction. He ordered that every form of life would produce after its kind (Genesis 1:11-12).

Can you imagine a tomato vine producing from the same vine maize, yams, beans, and cabbages?! It is not possible. A tomato vine can only pro-

duce tomatoes.

Christ, the true vine, can only produce Christians. He cannot produce Lutherans, Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, etc.

Christ's church was promised by the Lord (Matthew 16:18,19). It was built on the first Pentecost Day following His return back to Heaven. If we obey the Word of God, which is the seed of the kingdom, we will be added by the Lord to His church, not to some man-made denomination (Luke 8:11; Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47).

Too, Jesus, the true vine, taught that branches in Him must bear fruit. *"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."* (John 15:2).

Fruit is not produced directly from the vine, but the branches in the vine bear the fruit. Jesus does not directly tell men today what to do to be saved.

He gave the Great Commission to men (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:46-47).

It is our job to preach the gospel to the whole world and to baptize believers into Christ.

Branches in a vine which do not produce fruit are cut off and burned. Those who obey the gospel, but who do not work for the Lord, will also be cut off. Christians must use their talents to serve the Lord.

Those who use their talents are given greater abilities and opportunities.

Those who do not use their talents in the service of Jesus will lose what they have (Matthew 25:14-30).

Some falsely teach that a child of God cannot fall from grace and be lost. But Jesus said that unfruitful branches will be cut off and burned. The Apostle Paul warned: *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* (1 Corinthians 10:12).

He also spoke of some who had "fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4).

The branches which are burned teaches us that lazy Christians will be cast into Hell and burn forever and ever (Matthew 25:30,41,46; Revelation 21:8).

Christians are branches in Christ which bear much fruit by living faithful lives, helping others, and serving God.

Men will see their good works and praise God (Matthew 5:16). Christians must always be ready to do good (Galatians 6:10; Titus 3:1).

Are you a branch in Christ, the true vine?

If not, you do not have eternal life.

You can become a branch in Christ if you will believe in Him (John 8:24), repent of all your sins

(Luke 13:3); confess Christ before men (Matthew 10:32) and be baptized into Him (Mark 16:16).

If you are a branch, but are not producing fruit by doing good works, you will be cut off and be lost. You need to repent and receive the Lord's forgiveness (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:6-9).

Why not come to Christ today?



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