

John 50 – Vine, Branch, and Hagiazio Process

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John 15:1-11

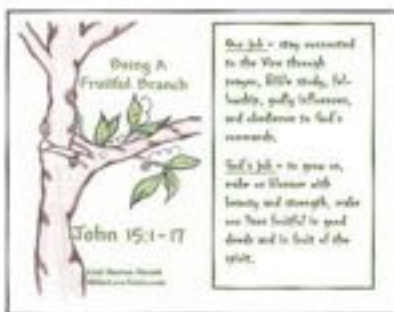
Metaphor of Vine and Branches

- Vinedresser - Father
- Vine - Son
- Sap - Holy Spirit
- Branch - People: Church
 - Believers - Pruned
 - Unbelievers - Removed



Metaphor Frequently Misused

- Teaches the branch is equal to vine - Free will
 - Branch decides if it will abide with the vine
 - Vine dependent on choice of the branches
- Oft taught but not by the Bible or by Christ



Metaphor: Closer Look

- There is no difference between the vine and the branches which are assimilated into the vine
 - Christians {Believers} are grafted branches that become integrated with the vine
 - Unbelievers {Lost} are grafted branches that remain distinct from the vine; rejected, not nourished and die
 - It is not the branches that determine life but the vine which decides which branches receive sap; live or die

Metaphor: Picture of Sovereignty

- Christ clearly states He is the true Vine; i.e., there is no other Vine but Him
- The Father determines who is truly attached to the Vine and who is not (Jn: 15:24-30)
 - True {Saved} branches are pruned
 - False {dead} branches are removed and burned

Apostles Reassured

- Jesus tells the Apostles they have already been pruned {clean} due to His previous teachings and experiences
 - Reassured them that they are saved unlike Judas Ish.
 - The past three years of learning and experiences have challenged much of the religiosity instilled in them
 - However, there will still be much pruning to endure until they are called Home; one by one

Abide – A Verb of Position

- Abide (μένω) means to remain or stay where directed, usually with someone; in this case, with Christ
 - This is the essence of every intimate relationship
 - Each member *abides* or mutually agrees with each other on the deepest levels of intimacy
 - Violation of this intimacy with another is to no longer abide in the other person (1Co 6:13-20)

Example: Father and Son

- The intimate relationship of Father and Son is our quintessential example of intimate *abiding*
 - The Father *abides* in the Son giving him the Gospel to share with people
 - The Son *abides* in the Father agreeing to
 - Take on body of flesh in this creation
 - Becomes the Paschal Lamb paying the price for sin
 - Becomes the eternal *parakletos* between Father and believer

Branches Dependent on the Vine

- Believer must *abide* in Christ or never bear good fruit
 - Branches do not produce fruit by themselves
 - Branches require the nourishment, sap, of the vine to grow and produce any fruit
 - Full growth branches produce good fruit – Pruned
 - Stunted growth branches produce bad fruit – Rejected
 - The only means possible to bear good fruit is to have an intimate ongoing relationship with Christ

It is NOT About the Branches

- Branches cannot produce good fruit unless they *abide*, become one with the vine; similarly:
 - Unbelievers cannot produce good fruit because they are rejected by the vine; i.e., they wither and die
 - Believers produce fruit because of the activities of the vine; i.e., they have no inherent properties to thrive away from the vine: they want to *abide* in the vine

Not of Works Lest

- Christ clearly states that if anyone does not *abide* in Him they cannot produce good fruit (Mt 7:17-20)
 - Both branches produce fruit; however,
 - Branches that do not *abide* in the vine produce bad fruit
 - Branches that do *abide* in the vine produce good fruit
 - By their fruits will their condition be known (Mt 7:20)
 - The vine determines between good and bad branches

Bad Branches Will Die

- Branches rejected by the Vine will be cut off by the Vinedresser (Father) and thrown into the fire
 - This is a metaphor for eternal separation from God
 - Unbelievers go to Hell after separation from bodies
 - They will stand at the White Throne judgment to give an account of their bad fruit which judges them
 - They will go into Lake of Fire: Seraphim search for God's righteousness; but, they will find none (Is 9:7-9)

New Covenant Abiding

- Inherent in the New Covenant is the very intimate relationship between Father, Son, Spirit and believer
 - *Abiding* means growing in Christ-like maturity via the development of the *new man* received at salvation
 - This is a portion of God's nature which strives to be like Christ though the Flesh wars to remain true to its sin
 - Believers have a part in this pruning: Hagiazio Process

Our Part in the Hagiazio Process

- Every believer plays some part in their own maturation described by Peter (2Pe 1:5-9)
 - Each believer is to understand and strive toward the goals described by Peter; however, the unbeliever rejects these goals *proving* himself, herself, lost
 - Faith → Goodness → Knowledge → Self-Control → Perseverance → Godliness → Mutual affection → Love (Agape) (1Co 13:13)

Maturation Leads to:

- Fruits of the Spirit; in other words, becoming more Christ-like and *abiding* in the Son, Father and Spirit
 - This process of continual pruning, Hagiazio Process, is the primary means God uses to reveal our subtle fleshly sinfulness so we will repent and turn to dependence on the vine (Christ alone)
 - This is what assures us we are saved in that He disciplines us as we become His disciples (He 12:5-8)

Notice Peter's End Point

- Peter's ultimate goal is development of God's love in the believer: Most intimate relationship; if, one *abides*
- Foundation of Christ's teachings this last night: Love
 - Begins with love between Christ and believer
 - Extends from believer to each believer (Body of Christ)
 - Marital relationship reflects Christ-believer relationship
(1y 5:22-33, Re 21:1-3)

Christ Promises Joy

- Joy is enduring the trial/testing and growing in grace via repentance to achieve the goal: Christ-likeness
 - Christ will endure the stauros for the *joy* of pleasing the Father and by bringing many to Him - salvation (1b 12:2)
 - Since believers are of His nature they will have His joy in them while bringing the message of salvation to many
 - Our joy in Him will be complete as we mature in Him

The Empirical Face of Love

- The visible proof that one is acceptable to the Vine; a willing obedience to the teachings of Jesus
 - Jesus repeats this frequently showing how important this single point is to one's assurance of faith
 - Only branches accepted by the vine will show obedience
 - Branches masquerading as believers reject His teachings but will develop works that *appear* obedient: Bad fruit

Total Dependence on the Vine

- The branch is totally dependent on the vine for sustenance to produce fruit, which is its function
 - The dependent branch (Saved) has independent aspects which sprout and must be pruned to produce much fruit (Hagiazo Process)
 - The independent branch (Lost) is rejected by the vine becoming a dead branch fit only for burning; these are removed so new branches can be grafted into the vine

Nature Reveals God's Truth

- God did not haphazardly design an abstract nature
 - Lost man envisions a haphazardly designed nature because of the inner chaos of sin (Ro 1:18-25)
 - Saved man understands that nature illustrates the existence and truth of God (Ps 19:1-6)
- Metaphor of the vine-branch designed from creation to reveal the truth of His unity with believers

Religions Promote Dead Branches

- Religions (Systems of works) promote independence, dead branches, masquerading as the *Right way*
- Evangelicalism has embraced the confusion of sinful scientisms emasculating its relationship with the vine
- If not pruned, dead branches would poison the good branches leaving the vine lifeless: Lucifer's goal