

The Reality of What it Means to Abide in Christ John 15:1-6

John 15:1–6 (NKJV)

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 bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵ “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

Introduction

Hudson Taylor was the founder of the China Inland Mission, and under God was responsible in the mid-19th century for leading hundreds of missionaries into China’s

interior for the first time. In 1869, when he was 37 years old, he came he entered a new phase of life. He began to drink more deeply at the experiential fountain of John 15:1–11. He was given a deeper, and more constant, more satisfying experience of abiding in Christ.

His son Fredrick Howard Taylor wrote in 1932, Here was a man almost sixty years of age, bearing tremendous burdens, yet absolutely calm and untroubled. Oh, the pile of letters! any one of which might contain news of death, of lack of funds, of riots or serious trouble. Yet all were opened, read and answered with the same tranquility — Christ his reason for peace, his power for calm. Dwelling in Christ, he drew upon His very being and resources. . . . And this he did by an attitude of faith as simple as it was continuous. Yet he was delightfully free and natural. I can find no words to describe it save the Scriptural expression “in God.” He was in God all the time and God in him. *It was that true “abiding” of John fifteen.*² So this passage of Scripture has proved to be enormously important in both the experience and the articulation of the doctrine of union with Christ

Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret*, Kindle Edition, location 2,087. Emphasis added.

FEBRUARY 3, 2014

Glorifying God by Bearing Fruit in Union with Christ

Desiring God 2014 Conference for Pastors

The Pastor, the Vine, and the Branches: The Remarkable Reality of Union with Christ

Lesson:

I. Two Vines

II. Two Branches

III. Two Realities

1. The Good Branch

2. The Bad Branch

1. The Good Branches

A. Purged

B. Persistent

C. Poor

2. The Bad Branches

A. Devoid

B. Defectors

C. Destroyed

1. The Good Branches

A. Purged

² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He

prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

και παν το καρπον φερον καθαιρει αυτο ινα πλειονα καρπον φερη

and every *branch* that bears fruit
³You are already clean

this identifies the Christian. The True believer

bears P.A Part

pheró: to bear, carry, bring forth

Original Word: φέρω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: pheró

Phonetic Spelling: (fer'-o)

Definition: to bear, carry, bring forth

Usage: I carry, bear, bring; I conduct, lead; perhaps: **I make publicly known.**

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Isaiah 43:21 (NKJV)

²¹ This people I have formed for Myself;
They shall declare My praise.

Jeremiah 32:38–40 (NKJV)

³⁸ They shall be My people, and I will be their God;
³⁹ then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. ⁴⁰ And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

John 3:21 (NKJV)

²¹ **But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”**

Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation

with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Hebrews 13:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 4:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 1:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Hebrews 10:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

James 2:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! ²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

2....and every branch that bears fruit He prunes,

every__believer gets pruned, there are no exceptions.

Just as every branch that does not bear fruit He takes away. So every one that does bear fruit, will be pruned.

To understand this we need to know what is meant by the term prune.

prunes,

kathairó: to cleanse

Original Word: καθαίρω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: kathairó

Phonetic Spelling: (kath-ah'-ee-ro)

Definition: to cleanse

Usage: I cleanse, purify, prune.

Cognate: 2508 kathaírō – make clean by purging (removing undesirable elements); hence, "pruned (purged)"; eliminating what is fruitless by purifying (making unmixed). [See 2513](#) (katharos).

It is used in a adjective form in.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

katharos: clean (adjective)

Original Word: καθάρως, ἅ, ὄν

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: katharos

Phonetic Spelling: (kath-ar-os')

Definition: clean (adjective)

Usage: clean, pure, unstained, either literally or ceremonially or spiritually; guiltless, innocent, upright.

2513 *katharós* (a primitive word) – properly, "without admixture" (BAGD); what is separated (purged), hence "clean" (pure) because unmixed (without undesirable elements); (figuratively) spiritually clean because purged (purified by God), i.e. free from the contaminating (soiling) influences of sin.

Cleanseth (καθαίρει [*kathairei*]). Present active indicative of old verb καθαίρω [*kathairō*] (clean) as in verse 3, only use in N. T., common in the inscriptions for ceremonial cleansing, though καθαρίζω [*katharizō*] is more frequent (Heb. 10:2)

Robertson, A. T. (1933). [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (Jn 15:2). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

It is found only here in the NT, but the cognate word 'clean/pure' (*katharos*) is found twenty-seven times in the NT, and four times in the Fourth Gospel (13:10 [2×], 11; 15:3)

Kruse, C. G. (2003). [John: an introduction and commentary](#) (Vol. 4, p. 312). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

In Ezek 15:4 lxx, branches are cut off and thrown into the fire at the yearly pruning, where the word for "pruning" is *katharsis* (*tēn kat' eniauton katharsin*, "the yearly cleansing" or "pruning"). John uses the word *kathairein* ("to cleanse") to describe the

“pruning” of the branches so that they are “clean” (*katharoi*, 15:2–3). In a play on words, John states that the branches remaining on the vine and bearing fruit are “cleansed” (*kathairei*), while those that do not bear fruit are “taken away” (*airei*). Pruning thus does not portend destruction, as it does in Ezekiel, or even punishment or discipline, but instead ensures that the vine is abundantly fruitful

Thompson, M. M. (2015). *John: A Commentary* (First edition, p. 324). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

English speakers immediately recognize this second word’s cognates in their language—catheter, cathartic, catharsis, (Cath-arine/Kathy)—and so rightly hear the meanings “cleansing, purifying,” and “purging” inside the word

Bruner, F. D. (2012). *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (p. 879). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans.

The next verse helps to clarify what Jesus has in mind with the word prune.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

clean

katharos: clean (adjective)**Original Word:** καθάρως, ἅ, ὄν**Part of Speech:** Adjective**Transliteration:** katharos**Phonetic Spelling:** (kath-ar-os')**Definition:** clean (adjective)**Usage:** clean, pure, unstained, either literally or ceremonially or spiritually; guiltless, innocent, upright.

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Jesus uses this earlier
John 13:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” ¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”

Clearly, here he is referring to the saving work of regeneration.

The ones that are clean are the eleven disciples, and the one that is not clean is Judas Iscariot.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

ηδη υμεις καθαροι εστε δια τον λογον ον λελαληκα υμιν

This regenerating cleansing work took place through the Word of God.

The Church Fathers, especially Luther (see the “Historical Interpretation,” below), will remind us that it is Jesus’ *Word* that cleanses disciples, not just their suffering per se; i.e., it is Jesus himself and not our bad experiences all by themselves (though those experiences may be what Jesus uses) that cleanses.

Bruner, F. D. (2012). [*The Gospel of John: A Commentary*](#) (p. 880). Grand Rapids, MI;Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans.

John 3:3–5 (NKJV)

3 Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

⁵ Jesus answered, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.**

Isaiah 44:3 (NKJV)

³ For I will pour water on him who is thirsty,
And floods on the dry ground;
I will pour My Spirit on your descendants,
And My blessing on your offspring;

Ezekiel 36:25–28 (NKJV)

²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*. ²⁸ Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Ephesians 5:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

Titus 3:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

James 1:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV)

²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

John 6:63 (NKJV)

⁶³ **It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they are life.***

John 17:17 (NKJV)

17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Lets look again at verse 2 and 3

² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

Notice that Jesus Points out that You (the eleven) are already clean

³You are already clean

are

ΕΣΤΕ

eimi: I exist, I am

Original Word: εἰμί

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: eimi

Phonetic Spelling: (i-mee')

Definition: I exist, I am

Usage: I am, exist.

1510 eimí (the basic Greek verb **which expresses being, i.e. "to be"**) – am, is. 1510 (eimí), and its counterparts, (properly) convey "straight-forward" being (**existence**, i.e. without explicit **limits**).

This is our positional purity. The Fact of Forgiveness. Our Reconciled right standing, our imputed righteous from God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

But He also says that

and every branch that bears fruit He prunes that it may bear more fruit.

Prunes is a present tense verb.

He **is** pruning, cleansing

This is an on going process, a practical sanctification that is happening on a daily basis.

Because He wants them to be spiritually productive, the Father takes **every branch that bears fruit** and **prunes it so that it may bear more fruit**. Pruning

was ... an essential part of first-century viticultural practice, as it is today. The first pruning occurred in spring when vines were in flowering stage. This

involved four operations: (1) the removal of the growing tips of vigorous shoots so that they would not grow too rapidly; (2) cutting off one or two feet from the end of growing shoots to prevent entire shoots being snapped off by the wind; (3) the removal of some flower or grape clusters so that those left could produce more and better-quality fruit; and (4) the removal of suckers that arose from below the ground or from the trunk and main branches so that the strength of the vine was not tapped by the suckers.

(Colin Kruse, *The Gospel According to John*, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 315)
MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12-21](#) (p. 147). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

The Father prunes the true branches by removing anything that would sap their spiritual energy and hinder them from fruitful results. His pruning involves cutting away anything that limits righteousness, including the discipline that comes from trials, suffering, and persecution. The knowledge that the Father uses the pain that Christians endure for their ultimate good should eliminate all fear, self-pity, and complaining. The classic text in Hebrews reminds those undergoing God's painful, pruning chastening,

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12-21](#) (p. 147). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

Hebrews 12:7–11 (NKJV)

⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

In the Father's infinite wisdom and absolute, sovereign control of all of life's circumstances, He "causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12-21](#) (p. 148). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

Romans 5:3–5 (NKJV)

³ And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;
⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope.
⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Deuteronomy 8:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end—

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

James 1:2–4 (NKJV)

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1 Peter 1:4–7 (NKJV)

⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

But suffering is merely the handle of the Father's knife; the blade is the Word of God.

The Word is instrumental in believers' initial cleansing at salvation (cf. Rom. 1:16), and it also continually purges, prunes, and cleanses them.

God uses His Word as the pruning knife, because it "is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12), but He uses affliction to prepare His people for the Word's pruning. The psalmist affirmed the connection between affliction and the Word's work in his life when he wrote, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.... It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes" (Ps. 119:67, 71). Psalm 94:12 also makes that connection: "Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, and whom You teach out of Your law."

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12-21](#) (p. 148). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

1. The Good Branches

A. Purged

B. Persistent

4 **Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,**

unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;

6 If anyone does not abide in Me

4 **μεινάτε** εν εμοι καγω εν υμιν καθως το κλημα ου δυναται καρπον φερειν αφ εαυτου εαν μη μεινη εν τη αμπελω ουτως ουδε υμεις εαν μη εν εμοι μεινητε

μεινάτε A A Imperative **menó: to stay, abide, remain**

Original Word: μένω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: menó

Phonetic Spelling: (men'-o)

Definition: to stay, abide, remain

Usage: I remain, abide, stay, wait; with acc: I wait for, await.

Notice it is not abide “with me” but “in Me”. Consistent with the picture of the vine and the branches, any branch that is “just with the vine”

is not in the vine and does not have the life of the vine.

The “Abide or Remain” is a salvific term. it is used through out scripture

John 8:30–31 (NKJV)

³⁰ As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

John 3:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

John 5:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

John 6:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

John 6:56 (NKJV)

56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood **abides** in Me, and I in him.

Acts 11:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

²² Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. ²³ When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should **continue** with the Lord.

προσμένω

to stay with (steadfast) v. — to remain firm and steadfast in one's association (with someone or something).

Acts 14:21–22 (NKJV)

²¹ And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to **continue** in the faith, and *saying*, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

ἐμμένω

to continue v. — to continue a certain state, condition, or activity.

Romans 9:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ (for *the children* not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election **might stand**, not of works but of Him who calls),

μεινᾶτε A A Imperative

menó: to stay, abide, remain

While continuing to appeal to the metaphor of the vine, branches, and fruit, Jesus now exhorts his disciples to remain faithful, to persevere in discipleship, as he says, “Abide in me” (8:31; see also 1:32, 33; 5:38; 6:27, 56). Such faithfulness requires that Jesus abide in his disciples (“and I in you”). Even as the branches cannot bear fruit unless they are attached to the life-giving vine, so without Jesus’ continued presence, the disciples will be unable to remain in him. In other words, the relationship of mutual abiding that Jesus calls for is not a relationship of equals, or of equal contributions: Jesus’ indwelling makes abiding and obedience possible because he is the life of the Father given to the branches.

Thompson, M. M. (2015). [*John: A Commentary*](#) (First edition, pp. 324–325). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Some Commentators have gone to great lengths to explain the term “Abide in Me” verse 4

Some say

1. It is Conditional- If you remain in me, I will remain in you.
2. It is a Comparison- Remain in Me as I remain in you.
3. It is a Mutual Commandment- Let us both remain in each other.

There may be some flavors of all three in the text because when looking at the whole of Scripture you can see these principles.

But it does not have to be that difficult.

In the Context, Jesus is saying that he is the true vine, as opposed to the false, dead vine of false religious Judaism. Or we could extrapolate and say that Jesus is the True Vine, as a opposed to all other false religions of human works.

So simply put, Jesus is saying STAY with me, I am the ONLY WAY, The ONLY Truth, The ONLY life. No man can come to the Father but by me.

Based on the imagery of the vine, Jesus is the only source of life,
If you are not Genuinely connected to Him, then you are without life. You are doomed for destruction.

The command to “Abide in Me” has presented some problems to some. They see this is a means of obtaining Salvation.

Obey this command to Abide, and then and only then, I will abide in you.

Hence a Works, commandment driven salvation.

But first we know that Salvation is not by works, or obedience to the law or laws.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 3:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

So the Clear of Scripture says NO to works Salvation

But the also needs to be noted That Scripture does present the call to salvation in the form of a command,

Acts 17:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,

Acts 3:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Matthew 3:1–2 (NKJV)

3 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

You may say, that is just repentance, you are not commanded to believe.

But you are commanded to BELIEVE

Mark 1:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Romans 16:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

Other callings to sinners are commands

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ **Take** My yoke upon you and **learn** from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

Acts 11:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

Acts 26:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’

Romans 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Acts 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

The point is that All of the what we call responses to the Gospel are in the form of Commands

You are commanded to believe

You are commanded to Repent

You are commanded to receive and Learn.

But we know that Scripture teaches clearly that the sinner cannot come, cannot believe, cannot repent, cannot receive and cannot learn.

All ability to respond to the commands of the Gospel have to be a gift. God By Grace has to grant them.

Acts 11:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

Acts 26:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’

Romans 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Acts 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

John 6:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

John 6:63 (NKJV)

⁶³ **It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life.**

John 6:64–65 (NKJV)

⁶⁴ **But there are some of you who do not believe.”**

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

⁶⁵ And He said, **“Therefore I have said to you that no**

one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

Spurgeon - “You are to take care that you abide in Christ as much as if all depended upon yourself; and yet you can look to the promise of the covenant, and see that the real reason for your abiding in Christ lies in the operation of his unchanging love and grace.”

Augustine wrote
Command what you will, but grant what you command.

So the command in verse 4

4 -Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

Is no different than all the other commands related to salvation.

But also see warning in this text.

This a a warning of those that claim to be in Christ and are not.

Continuing in the faith is the proof of true Salvation.

Notice the command is not to bear fruit but rather it is to Abide, to Remain.

Remaining, Continuing is the issue.

In the background is was of the most sobering reminders of what it means NOT to remain.

Judas Iscariot.

This is a theme in scripture. That remaining and Continuing in Christ is the main evidence of True Saving faith.

John 6:64–66 (NKJV)

⁶⁴ **But there are some of you who do not believe.”**

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

⁶⁵ And He said, **“Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”**

⁶⁶ From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

John 8:31 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

Romans 2:7 (NKJV)

⁷ eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

Romans 11:22 (NKJV)

²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Colossians 1:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—²³ if indeed (1st class conditional) you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Galatians 4:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

Hebrews 3:6 (NKJV)

⁶ but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Hebrews 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

Hebrews 4:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.

Hebrews 10:38–39 (NKJV)

³⁸ *Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him.*”

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

This abiding is know as the perseverance of the Saints

Matthew 24:13 (NKJV)

¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Luke 8:13–15 (NKJV)

¹³ But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. ¹⁴ Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵ But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience.

ὑπομονή

steadfast endurance n. — the power to withstand hardship or stress; especially the inward fortitude necessary.

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Chapter 17. Of the Perseverance of the Saints

1. Those whom God has accepted in the beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, and given the precious faith of his elect unto, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved, seeing the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, from which source he still begets and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality; **1** and though many storms and floods arise and beat against them, yet they shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are

fastened upon; notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from them, ² yet he is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraved upon the palm of his hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.

3. And though they may, through the temptation of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein, ⁹ whereby they incur God's displeasure and grieve his Holy Spirit, ¹⁰ come to have their graces and comforts impaired, ¹¹ have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded, ¹² hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves, ¹³ yet shall they renew their repentance and be preserved through faith in Christ Jesus to the end. ¹⁴

1. The Good Branches

- A. Purged
- B. Persistent
- C. Poor**

Good branches are destitute without the vine
100 % dependent on the vine

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

5 εγω ειμι η αμπελος υμεις τα κληματα ο μενων εν εμοι καγω εν αυτω ουτος φερει καρπον πολυν οτι χωρις εμου ου δυνασθε ποιειν ουδεν

**4 ...the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,
unless it abides in the vine,**

dunamai: to be able, to have power

Original Word: δύναμαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: dunamai

Phonetic Spelling: (doo'-nam-ahee)

Definition: to be able, to have power

Usage: (a) I am powerful, have (the) power, (b) I am able, I can.
Cognate: 1410 δύναμαι (a primitive verb) – to show ability (power); able (enabled by God), empowered. See the cognate-noun, 1411 /δύναμις ("ability, power").

4neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

oudé ("neither indeed," "nor indeed") introduces a statement that is negated factually and deductively (it occurs 137 times in the NT). That is, the negation rules out (invalidates) the statement that precedes it, and what naturally extends from it. This is analogous to the following: Because 100 is not enough, then neither are 90, 80, or 70 because they are all included in 100. Thus if "A" (100 in the previous example) is invalid, so is what necessarily follows (statement "B" – 90, 80, 70). [Regardless of how 3761 (oudé) is translated, it means: If "A" (the preceding statement) isn't true (valid) – then "B" (which extends from it) is also not valid. As in the

previous example: If 100 is not enough (valid), then automatically neither are 90, 80, 70, etc.]

5....for without Me you can do nothing.

without Me

chóris: separately, separate from

Original Word: χωρίς

Part of Speech: Adverb

Transliteration: chóris

Phonetic Spelling: (kho-rece')

Definition: separately, separate from

χωρίς chōris; adv. akin to **χῆρος chēros** (*bereaved*); *separately, separate from*:—apart(10), besides(2), independent(2), itself(1), separate(1), without(25).

Thomas, R. L. (1998). *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

Usage: apart from, separately from; without.

5565 xōrís (a preposition, also used as an adverb which is probably derived from 5561 /xōra, "an open or detached space") – properly, apart from, separated ("without"); (figuratively) detached, rendering something invalid or valid.

John 1:3 (NKJV)

³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Romans 3:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Ephesians 2:12 (NKJV)

¹² that at that time you were **without** Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet **without** sin.

5....for without Me you can do nothing.

Original Word: δύναμαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: dunamai

Phonetic Spelling: (doo'-nam-ahee)

Definition: to be able, to have power

Usage: (a) I am powerful, have (the) power, (b) I am able, I can.

Cognate: 1410 δύναμαι (a primitive verb) – to show ability (power); able (enabled by God), empowered. See the cognate-noun, 1411 /δύναμις ("ability, power").

5....for without Me you can do nothing.

oudeis and outheis, oudemia, ouden and outhen: no one, none

Original Word: οὐδείς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: oudeis and outheis, oudemia, ouden and outhen

Phonetic Spelling: (oo-dice')

Definition: no one, none

Usage: no one, none, nothing.

3762 oudeís (from 3756 /ou "no, not" and 1520 /heís, "one") – properly, not one; no one, nothing.

3762 /oudeís ("no one, nothing at all") is a powerful negating conjunction. It rules out by definition, i.e. "shuts the door" objectively and leaves no exceptions. 3762 (oudeís) is deductive in force so it excludes every (any) example that is included withing the premise (supposition).

[3762 /oudeís ("not one, none") categorically excludes, declaring as a fact that no valid example exists.]

ὅτι χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν. The branch is wholly dependent on the tree, by whose sap it is quickened and made fruitful

Bernard, J. H. (1929). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*. (A. H. McNeile, Ed.) (p. 481). New York: C. Scribner' Sons.

Matthew 5:3 (NKJV)

3 **“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Luke 21:3–4 (NKJV)

³ So He said, “Truly I say to you that this **poor** widow has put in more than all; ⁴ for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”

ptōxós (from ptōssō, "to crouch or cower like a beggar") – properly, bent over; (figuratively) deeply destitute, completely lacking resources (earthly wealth) – i.e. helpless as a beggar. [4434](#) (ptōxós) relates to "the pauper rather than the mere peasant, the extreme opposite of the rich" (WP, 1, 371).

Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Jeremiah 32:40 (NKJV)

⁴⁰ And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

2 Chronicles 30:12 (NKJV)

¹² Also the hand of God was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, at the word of the Lord.

John 3:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.

2 Corinthians 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God,

Hebrews 13:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

James 1:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
¹⁸ Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

John 6:45 (NKJV)

⁴⁵ *It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'* Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Without me you can do nothing. This is the conclusion and application of the whole parable. So long as we are separate from him, we bear no fruit that is good and acceptable to God, for we are unable to do anything good. The Papists not only extenuate this statement, but destroy its substance, and, indeed, they altogether evade it; for, though in words they acknowledge that *we can do nothing without Christ*, yet they foolishly imagine that they possess some power, which is not sufficient in itself, but, being aided by the grace of God, co-operates, (as they say,) that is, works along with it; for they cannot endure that man should be so much annihilated as to do nothing of himself. But these

words of Christ are too plain to be evaded so easily as they suppose. The doctrine invented by the Papists is, that we can do nothing without Christ, but that, aided by him, we have something of ourselves in addition to his grace. But Christ, on the other hand, declares that we can do nothing of ourselves. *The branch, he says, beareth not fruit of itself;* and, therefore, he not only extols the aid of his co-operating grace, but deprives us entirely of all power but what he imparts to us. Accordingly, this phrase, *without me*, must be explained as meaning, *except from me*.

Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on the Gospel according to John*](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 109–110). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

The last sentence of this section introduces a warning, lest in our budding enthusiasm for bearing fruit for God we forget that it cannot be done without him. “Apart from me you can do nothing,” says Jesus.

This statement may be applied in two ways. On the one hand, it may be applied to Christians; and if that is done, we have the following: (1) great work to be done, (2) the possibility of attempting to do it, but without Christ, and (3) the inevitable failure that must result from such effort. Spurgeon, who preached a marvelous sermon on just these words, observed, “Without Jesus you can talk any quantity; but without him you can do

nothing. The most eloquent discourse without him will be all a bottle of smoke. You shall lay your plans, and arrange your machinery, and start your schemes; but without the Lord you will do nothing. Immeasurable cloudland of proposals and not a spot of solid doing large enough for a dove's foot to rest on—such shall be the end of all!" It is good that it is so, for if it were not so, I am afraid that we would try to do it all without him. Nothing is what shall come of our efforts, if it is not Christ working.

On the other hand, there is also encouragement in this verse when we realize that it may be applied to those who are yet Christ's enemies. "Without Christ we can do nothing." That is humbling. But if that is true for those who are united to Christ by faith, in whom he nevertheless dwells, how much truer it is of those who are not at all united to him. They may try to do something against the gospel. They may try to destroy Christ's work. But all their efforts will come to nothing, for only the hand of man (and not that of God) is in them